



Talking About Touching[®] **A Personal Safety Curriculum**

Grades 1–3

THIRD EDITION

Teacher's Guide

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568 First Avenue South, Suite 600, Seattle, WA 98104-2804
800-634-4449 • www.cfchildren.org
Printed in the U.S.A.



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- Scope and Sequence
- Take-Home Letters 1–9
- Appendices A–J
- Guidelines for Choosing Babysitters
- *What Do I Say Now?* Parent Handout

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Overview

Program Description

What Is the *Talking About Touching* Program?

The *Talking About Touching* program for grades 1–3 focuses on teaching children basic skills that will help them keep safe from dangerous or abusive situations. Adults can make every effort to provide a safe environment for children, but they cannot always be there to protect children from exposure to every dangerous or abusive situation. Using the materials provided in the *Talking About Touching* kit, parents, caregivers, child-care providers and teachers can work together to provide the rules, information, encouragement, and practice that children need to help protect themselves. This curriculum is part of a series that extends from preschool/kindergarten to grade 3.

What Approach Does the *Talking About Touching* Program Use?

At each grade level, the *Talking About Touching* curriculum addresses the subject of child sexual abuse within a general framework of safety, starting in Unit I with common safety issues affecting children. Lesson topics include walking safety, fire safety, and gun safety. This basic context of safety is reinforced in Unit II, in which lessons about touching safety are introduced. Unit II opens with lessons that emphasize the positive aspects of touch in children’s everyday lives. The overall focus on safety, rather than sexuality, helps defuse the potentially difficult nature of talking to children about sexual abuse. This safety focus provides a straightforward way for adults to communicate with children about the subject. The goal of the lessons in Unit III is to increase children’s ability to stand up for themselves in an assertive, but not aggressive, way and to ask for help in difficult, uncomfortable, or dangerous situations.

The *Talking About Touching* program recognizes the key role that parents play in protecting children from abuse. The curriculum includes *What Do I Say Now?*, a parent education video designed to provide parents with knowledge and skills for abuse prevention. Parents and caregivers are reminded of the positive aspects of touch in healthy child development. By using a safety orientation when talking with children about sexual abuse, teachers and parents are able to reinforce the same strategies and vocabulary at school and at home. The program encourages parents to use anatomically correct language and a natural, matter-of-fact tone when talking with their children about their bodies. By doing so before the topic of sexual abuse is introduced, the children will be better able to report any abusive situation to their parents if it ever becomes necessary.

GRADE 1 Scope and Sequence

Optional parent handout

Unit I

Personal Safety

The goal of this unit is to increase children’s knowledge of and adherence to rules that will help keep them safe.

Lesson 1: Learning Bicycle Safety—Wearing Your Helmet

Following safety rules helps keep people safe. Children can bicycle safely by wearing a helmet and following specific rules.

Lesson 2: Learning Gun Safety—Never Playing with Guns

Handling and playing with guns is dangerous for children.

Lesson 3: The Always Ask First Rule

Children need to ask parents or the person in charge first before going somewhere with someone or accepting a gift from someone.

Unit II

Touching Safety

The goal of this unit is to strengthen children’s ability to distinguish between safe touch and unsafe touch and to increase their knowledge of safety rules about touching.

Lesson 4: Identifying Touches—Safe Touch/Unsafe Touch

Safe touch is good for your body, and it makes you feel cared for, loved, and important. Unsafe touch is not good for your body and hurts your body or feelings.

Lesson 5: Dealing with Unsafe Touch

Children can develop skills to help them avoid or resist unsafe touches.

Lesson 6: Physical Abuse—Telling a Grown-Up

Children should tell a grown-up they trust if they are being abused.

Lesson 7: Saying “No” to Unwanted Touch

It is okay for children to say “No” to unwanted touch.

**Talking About Touching®** Grades 1–3**Lesson 8: The Touching Rule**

Learning the Touching Rule helps children stay safe. The Touching Rule is: No one should touch your private body parts except to keep you clean and healthy.

Lesson 9: Learning the Safety Steps (Booster Lesson)

The Safety Steps help children know what to do if someone breaks the Touching Rule. The Safety Steps are (1) Say words that mean “No”; (2) Get away; and (3) Tell a grown-up.

Lesson 10: Using the Touching Rule (Booster Lesson)

Children should not keep secrets about touching. It is never too late to tell about touching that breaks the Touching Rule.

Unit III**Assertiveness and Support**

The goal of this unit is to increase children’s ability to stand up for themselves in an assertive, but not aggressive, way and to ask for help in difficult, uncomfortable, or dangerous situations.

Lesson 11: Standing Up for Yourself by Saying “No”

Being assertive and standing up for themselves can help keep children safe.

Lesson 12: Getting Help If You Are Bullied

When assertive behavior doesn’t work, it’s all right to ask for help.

Lesson 13: Sam’s Story

Children need to follow the Safety Steps—say words that mean “No,” get away, and tell a grown-up—if someone breaks the Touching Rule. Children should not keep secrets about touching.



GRADE 2 Scope and Sequence**Optional parent handout****Unit I****Personal Safety**

The goal of this unit is to increase children’s knowledge of and adherence to rules that will help keep them safe.

Lesson 1: Fire Safety—Creating a Family Safety Plan

Knowing and following specific fire safety rules are important factors in keeping children safe.

Lesson 2: Gun Safety—Never Playing with Guns

Handling and playing with guns is dangerous for children.

Lesson 3: Home Safety—Answering the Phone

Responding appropriately to unsafe phone calls is an important skill for children to know.

Lesson 4: The Always Ask First Rule

Children need to ask the person in charge first before going somewhere with someone or accepting a gift from someone.

Unit II**Touching Safety**

The goal of this unit is to strengthen children’s ability to identify differences among safe touch, unsafe touch, and unwanted touch and to follow safety rules about touching.

Lesson 5: Identifying Touches—Safe Touch/Unsafe Touch

Safe touch is good for your body, and it makes you feel cared for, loved, and important. Unsafe touch is not good for your body and hurts your body or your feelings.

Lesson 6: Unsafe Touch—Preventing Physical Abuse

Children should tell a grown-up they trust if they are being physically abused.

Lesson 7: Unwanted Touch

It is okay for children to say “No” to unwanted touch.

Talking About Touching® Grades 1–3**Lesson 8: The Touching Rule** (Booster Lesson)

Learning the Touching Rule helps children stay safe. The Touching Rule is: No one should touch your private body parts except to keep you clean and healthy.

Lesson 9: Learning the Safety Steps (Booster Lesson)

The Safety Steps help children know what to do if someone breaks the Touching Rule. The Safety Steps are (1) Say words that mean “No”; (2) Get away; and (3) Tell a grown-up.

Lesson 10: Secrets About Touching—Telling a Grown-Up

Children should not keep secrets about touching. It is never too late to tell about touching that breaks the Touching Rule.

Lesson 11: Using the Touching Rule with Peers—Asking for Help

When older or bigger children try to break the Touching Rule, it is important to ask for help.

Unit III**Assertiveness and Support**

The goal of this unit is to increase children’s ability to stand up for themselves in an assertive, but not aggressive, way and to ask for help in difficult, uncomfortable, or dangerous situations.

Lesson 12: Finding Support—Talking to a Grown-Up

Adults are part of a support system for children who need to talk about upsetting past experiences.

Lesson 13: Standing Up for Yourself If You Are Bullied

Bullying is unkind and unfair. Being assertive lessens the likelihood of being a target of bullying.

Lesson 14: Speaking Out Against Bullying

Speaking out against bullying is an important step toward stopping bullying behavior.

GRADE 3 Scope and Sequence**Optional parent handout****Unit I****Personal Safety**

The goal of this unit is to increase children’s knowledge of and adherence to rules that will help keep them safe.

Lesson 1: Walking Safety

Following specific walking safety rules helps keep children safe.

Lesson 2: Fire Safety—Never Playing with Fire

Knowing and following specific fire safety rules are important factors in keeping children safe.

Lesson 3: Gun Safety—Never Playing with Guns

Handling and playing with guns is dangerous for children.

Lesson 4: The Always Ask First Rule

Children should always ask first if someone wants them to do something or go somewhere with him or her.

Unit II**Touching Safety**

The goal of this unit is to strengthen children’s ability to identify differences among safe touch, unsafe touch, and unwanted touch and to adhere to safety rules about touching.

Lesson 5: Identifying Touches—Safe Touch/Unsafe Touch/Unwanted Touch

The ability to differentiate among safe touch, unsafe touch, and unwanted touch is an important factor in keeping children safe.

Lesson 6: Physical Abuse—Telling Secrets

Children should tell a grown-up they trust if they are being abused.

Lesson 7: The Touching Rule and the Safety Steps (Booster Lesson)

Learning the Touching Rule helps children stay safe. The Touching Rule is: No one should touch your private body parts except to keep you clean and healthy. The Safety Steps help children know what to do if someone breaks the Touching Rule. The Safety Steps are (1) Say words that mean “No”; (2) Get away; and (3) Tell a grown-up.

Talking About Touching® Grades 1–3**Lesson 8: Using the Touching Rule** (Booster Lesson)

Using the Touching Rule and the Safety Steps help children stay safe.

Lesson 9: Telling Touching Secrets

Children should not keep secrets about touching. It is never too late to tell about touching that breaks the Touching Rule.

Unit III**Assertiveness and Support**

The goal of this unit is to increase children’s ability to stand up for themselves in an assertive, but not aggressive, way and to ask for help in difficult, uncomfortable, or dangerous situations.

Lesson 10: Learning to Be Assertive—Standing Up for Yourself

Children need to respond assertively and safely when they find themselves in uncomfortable or dangerous situations in public places.

Lesson 11: Solving a Problem—Talking It Out

Adults are part of a support system for children who need to talk about upsetting past experiences.

Lesson 12: Dealing with Bullying—Asking for Help

Bullying is unkind and unfair. When standing up to being bullied doesn’t work, asking for help is another way for children to be assertive.

Lesson 13: Harassment—Knowing What to Do

Harassment includes unwanted touch and rude comments or actions. Children should respond assertively to harassment and tell a trusted grown-up.

What Classroom Materials Are Included in the *Talking About Touching* Curriculum?

Lesson Cards

Each lesson builds on and reinforces the skills learned in the previous lesson. The basic strategy of the curriculum is to provide information and self-protective skills designed to reduce children's vulnerability in dangerous or abusive situations. Children are first taught rules about general safety: for example, wearing a helmet when riding a bicycle, walking facing traffic, and never playing with fire or guns. Rules about touching safety that focus on preventing sexual abuse are then introduced. The messages are simple and straightforward. Using lesson cards with stories and photographs, the teacher introduces each concept. Children are then given the opportunity to practice each skill.

Sam's Story (Big Book, Small Book, CD)

The curriculum includes a Big Book entitled *Sam's Story*, which tells about Sam and how she learns to use the Touching Rule. The Big Book is intended to be read aloud. A small book version of *Sam's Story* is also included with the materials, both for children to "read" to themselves and for parents or caregivers to check out and read to their children at home. *Sam's Story* is available on CD as well so that children can listen to the story and songs in a learning center or listen while the teacher turns the pages of the Big Book. The songs are taught to the children as part of the lessons.

Safety Steps Poster

A poster for each grade level is provided with the curriculum kit to offer a visual cue for children as they learn the Safety Steps.

How Are Families Involved?

Family Education Night

Family involvement is essential to the success of any personal safety program. Committee for Children recommends that you schedule a meeting with parents and caregivers before the implementation of the curriculum. Parents are encouraged to support and reinforce the program's safety messages and rules at home and to initiate discussions about family safety rules with their children. An easy-to-follow outline for a Family Education Night is included in the Involving Families section of the Teacher's Guide (see page 46).

What Do I Say Now? (Video)

What Do I Say Now?, a video for parents and caregivers, covers the basic points of how to protect children from child sexual abuse. The video provides information about child sexual abuse, guidelines for talking to children about personal safety, and ideas for responding to disclosure. The video can be shown at the Family Education Night or be made available to parents and caregivers to check out for viewing at home. Guidelines for using the video, discussion questions, and a handout master are included with the video.

Take-Home Letters

Master copies of the Take-Home Letters are provided in the Involving Families section of the Teacher's Guide (see page 35). These letters are an integral part of the program—they describe essential themes of the lessons and offer suggested activities for parents or caregivers to do at home with their children. The letters play a key role in the effectiveness of the curriculum, so be sure to send them home when suggested on the lesson cards.

Background Information

What Is Child Sexual Abuse?

Child sexual abuse is the exploitation or coercion of a child by an older person (adult or adolescent) for the sexual gratification of the older person. Child sexual abuse involves a continuum of behavior ranging from verbal, nonphysical abuse to forcible touching offenses. It can take the form of a single encounter with an exhibitionist, occasional fondling by a casual acquaintance, years of ongoing abuse by a family member, rape, or exploitation through pornography and/or prostitution.

How Big Is the Problem?

Studies indicate that about 20% of American women and 5%–10% of American men have experienced some form of sexual abuse as children. The peak ages of vulnerability are from 7 to 13 years, although reports also indicate that one-third to one-half of child sexual abuse victims are under the age of 7 (Finkelhor, 1994; Briere et al., 1996). The incidence of child sexual abuse for children with disabilities is 1.75 times greater than for children without disabilities (National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect, 1993). The sexual abuse of children occurs in every class, race, religion, neighborhood, cultural group, and ethnic group.

What Are the Dynamics of Child Sexual Abuse?

Child sexual abuse is rarely committed by the “dangerous stranger” about whom children have traditionally been warned. Based on general population surveys, in 70%–90% of the reported cases, the perpetrator is actually someone the child knows. Of all offenders, 90% are male, and teenagers represent up to 40%. Abuse by parent figures constitutes between 6% and 16% of all cases, and abuse by any relative is reported in approximately 25% of all cases (Finkelhor et al., 1990; Saunders, Kilpatrick, Resnick, Hanson, and Lipovsky, 1992). In clinical studies, parent figures make up a third of the offenders, and all relatives constitute half of the offenders (Elliott and Briere, 1994; Gomes-Schwartz, Horowitz, and Cardarelli, 1990).

Most often, the abuse begins at a very young age with the handling of the child's genitals, and it is kept secret through bribes, threats, or special attention. The “average” sexual abuse “incident” is



not a one-time event. Rather, it is an ongoing cycle of exploitation that lasts for one or more years. Often, the abuse escalates to penetration and/or oral-genital contact (Conte and Schuerman, 1987; Elliott and Briere, 1994; Finkelhor et al., 1990; Russell, 1984; Gomes-Schwartz et al., 1990).

Why Don't Children Tell About Abuse?

Children don't tell about sexual abuse for a number of reasons. In the early stages, they may simply be unaware that the touching is inappropriate. Later, they may be bribed or coerced into keeping it secret by threats of frightening consequences to themselves or their families. Children are often made to feel responsible not only for the abuse itself, but also, if they should tell, for any consequences to their families. Finally, children may conceal the abuse because they simply do not know how or whom to tell.

What Is the Impact of Child Sexual Abuse on the Child?

Early sexual victimization can result in life-long problems. The degree of trauma depends on the age and personality of the child, the offender's relationship to the child, the nature and duration of the abuse, and the way disclosure is handled (especially the degree of support that the family offers the victim). Increased vulnerability to re-victimization, prostitution, delinquency, suicide or suicide attempts, and depression are often associated with early and long-term abuse.

Prevention Research

Can Young Children Learn Personal Safety Skills?

A wide variety of child sexual abuse prevention programs have been evaluated in the last 15 years. A meta-analysis of 27 studies indicates that children who participated in prevention programs had statistically significant improvement of their knowledge of personal safety skills over control group children (Davis and Gidycz, 2000). In studies of elementary students, researchers found that program participants exhibited more knowledge and skills, plus more ability to discriminate between appropriate and inappropriate touch, compared with controls. These results were also true for preschool programs that involved more active modes of training. Although very young children did not achieve 100% accuracy in recognizing and responding to potentially abusive situations, they did score higher than control children in most studies (Wurtele and Saslawsky, 1986; Woods and Dean, 1986; Wurtele, Marrs, and Miller-Perrin, 1987). The meta-analysis of studies shows that children in early elementary school and preschool learned most from prevention programs (Davis and Gidycz, 2000).

Although knowledge measures show improvement in student learning (Conte, Rosen, Saperstein, and Shermack, 1985; Wurtele and Miller-Perrin, 1992), not all concepts are equally well understood due to developmental variation in comprehension. Resistance skill scores are higher when children participate in active-learning programs that provide multiple opportunities for children to practice the skills during the program (Blumberg, Chadwick, Fogarty, Speth, and Chadwick, 1991; Wurtele, Marrs, and Miller-Perrin, 1987).



What Kinds of Prevention Programs Help Children Learn Skills Best?

Children are more likely to learn self-protection strategies if they have received comprehensive prevention instruction, including opportunities to practice the skills in class, multi-day presentations, and materials to take home and discuss with their parents (Davis and Gidycz, 2000; Finkelhor, Asdigian, and Dziuba-Leatherman, 1995). Programs incorporating more active modes of teaching (modeling, rehearsal, and reinforcement) have resulted in greater gains in knowledge and skills than those employing a didactic approach (Davis and Gidycz, 2000; Wurtele and Saslawsky, 1986; Woods and Dean, 1986; Wurtele, Marrs, and Miller-Perrin, 1987). Resistance skill scores are higher when children participate in active-learning programs that provide multiple opportunities for children to practice the skills during the program (Blumberg, Chadwick, Fogarty, Speth, and Chadwick, 1991; Wurtele, Marrs, and Miller-Perrin, 1987).

What Kinds of Prevention Programs Are Found to Be Ineffective?

In general, one-time presentations focused on personal safety, such as single puppet shows or video presentations, have been found to be ineffective in teaching children personal safety skills (Davis and Gidycz, 2000). The approach that teaches young children to use their feelings as a guide to determine whether a situation is unsafe has also been found to be ineffective with young children. When children are taught to use a safety rule as the primary decision-making tool, they demonstrate a greater ability to recognize unsafe situations (Wurtele, Kast, Miller-Perrin, and Kondrick, 1989).

Do Children Use Prevention Skills?

When researchers at the University of New Hampshire asked 2,000 young people between the ages of 10 and 16 this question, they found that a surprisingly high percentage (40%) of them reported specific instances in which they used information or skills that they had learned in an anti-victimization program to protect themselves (Finkelhor and Dziuba-Leatherman, 1995).

One goal of personal safety programs is to encourage children to report past or ongoing abuse. One method of assessing this skill is to ask children whether they think they should tell someone if they were involved in an abusive situation. Prior to participating in a personal safety program, few participants thought they should report secret touching (Wurtele and Sarno, 1996). Post-program findings indicate that both preschool- and school-aged children were more willing to tell; however, preschoolers had difficulty describing the abusive situation to a resource person (Wurtele and Sarno, 1996).

These studies suggest that well-conceived and well-implemented programs may influence children's ability to use abuse prevention skills. More research would be helpful on this subject, although there is difficulty in implementing a study that would accurately test children's use of prevention skills without exposing them to realistic role-play of unsafe situations. This, of course, is neither ethical nor appropriate.

Are There Unintended Negative Effects of Personal Safety Instruction?

The majority of studies to date (Wurtele, 1989; Finkelhor and Dziuba-Leatherman, 1995) do not support the contention that personal safety instruction produces fear and anxiety about safety

issues in children exposed to such programs. Children's appropriate-touch recognition scores did not decrease significantly, indicating that program participants are not likely to misinterpret nurturing touches or make false accusations (Wurtele, Kast, Miller-Perrin, and Kondrick, 1989). In their nationally representative study of youth, Finkelhor and Dziuba-Leatherman found that some respondents reported that exposure to personal safety training resulted in more worry about abuse and more fear of adults. However, the children with increased worry and fear are also the children who, along with their parents, reported having the most positive feelings about the programs and the greatest utilization of skills. This data suggest that the level of worry and fear induced by the programs may simply be appropriate to the subject (Finkelhor and Dziuba-Leatherman, 1995). Exploring this topic in greater depth, one initial study (Casper, 1999) looked at characteristics of children with positive or negative reactions to a prevention program. One finding of this study is that children who are generally more anxious and who feel that they have no control over what happens to them, especially girls, are more likely to become afraid of being touched inappropriately. This study recommended careful preparation and debriefing for these children to alleviate anxiety aroused by the program.

Has the *Talking About Touching* Program Been Evaluated?

The 1996 edition of *Talking About Touching: A Personal Safety Curriculum* was evaluated using pre- and post-interviews with students receiving the program. The interviews included questions regarding specific safety skills presented in the program, assessing both comprehension and skills. Scores from the interviews showed a statistically significant improvement in the knowledge and application of the safety skills taught (Sylvester, 1997).

The *What Do I Say Now?* family video was evaluated as part of a one-hour child sexual abuse (CSA) prevention workshop. Forty-five parents with children ages two to six were randomly assigned to either the CSA or a home-safety workshop (control group). A posttest survey was given to parents assessing beliefs related to CSA, and telephone interviews regarding parent-child communication about CSA were conducted two to eight weeks later. Parents attending the CSA workshop were more likely than control parents to believe child education could be effective in preventing abuse. CSA-group parents also reported significantly greater communications with their children about CSA at follow-up. Results offer early support that the *What Do I Say Now?* video can increase parent-child communication about this important topic (Burgess and Wurtele, 1998).

An evaluation of the *Talking About Touching* program was conducted in five urban elementary schools in midwestern Canada. Student knowledge gain was evaluated using knowledge pre- and posttests (n = 883 in grades two through six) and brief interviews (n = 37 in kindergarten through grade one). T-tests indicated significant gains in personal safety knowledge for grades two through six. Similar improvements were shown for kindergarten through grade one students through descriptive analysis. Parent surveys following implementation revealed considerable support for the program with little negative feedback. Teachers reported that *Talking About Touching* training offered useful information and indicated overwhelming endorsement of the program (Madak and Berg, 1992).

Curriculum Foundation

The content and method of instruction in the *Talking About Touching* curriculum were developed using information from current research on child abuse prevention. According to this research, the most effective prevention programs are comprehensive and include multi-day presentations, active-learning strategies, and supporting materials for parents. The *Talking About Touching* program is based on this model.

Information About Offenders

Because the majority of child molesters are people known to the child, prevention efforts should not be focused on “stranger danger.” The *Talking About Touching* curriculum teaches children to recognize, resist, and report specific unsafe behaviors, regardless of the person’s relationship to the child. Lesson stories are based on what we know about how offenders commonly groom children to be victims: for example, by buying children gifts, telling them to keep the touching a secret, and giving them special attention.

Integration with Safety Instruction

The *Talking About Touching* curriculum teaches basic rules and skills for protective action in a variety of dangerous situations. Walking, traffic, fire, and gun safety lessons are taught first, establishing a parallel logic to the later touching safety lessons. This allows teachers and students to establish a comfort level with the instruction format before introducing touching rules. It also enables adults and children to view abuse prevention within the context of safety education rather than sex education.

Rules-Based Approach

Research indicates that young children are more successful in applying a rules-based, rather than a feelings-based, approach to safety (Wurtele, Kast, Miller-Perrin, and Kondrick, 1989). Instead of relying on feelings as a measure of safety, the *Talking About Touching* curriculum emphasizes learning and applying simple safety rules.

Social Learning Theory

Talking About Touching teaching strategies are based on Social Learning Theory, which was first outlined by Bandura (1973). According to this theory, children learn best by first observing a skill demonstration and then practicing the skill while receiving feedback and reinforcement. In *Talking About Touching* lessons, the teacher models the skill or skills being taught, then provides an opportunity for the students to practice. The teacher gives feedback on performance and further reinforces effective use of skills through “transfer of learning” suggestions.

Booster Lessons

Periodic review of safety rules and skills contributes greatly to retention. Two lessons at each grade level of the *Talking About Touching* curriculum are identified as Booster Lessons. Present them in

sequence with the rest of the lessons. Then, following the completion of the program, present each Booster Lesson twice more during the year.

Family Inclusion

The most effective prevention programs are those in which parents are actively involved. Children can be taught skills that will help protect them from molesters, but they cannot be expected to always be able to protect themselves. Parents and caregivers need to be actively involved in creating a safe environment for their children. The *What Do I Say Now?* video, discussion questions, and handout, were all developed to support adults in becoming active participants in prevention. The *Talking About Touching* curriculum also includes Take-Home Letters for parents, an outline for a Family Education Night presentation, and a small book version of *Sam's Story*, which can be checked out by parents for reading to their children at home.

Private Body Parts

When teaching touching safety rules, you will have to decide what terminology to use for private body parts. It is recommended that you use anatomically correct names. For boys, the private body parts are the penis in the front and the buttocks, or bottom, in the back. For girls, the private body parts are the vulva, vagina, and breasts in the front and the buttocks, or bottom, in the back. By using these terms in a natural, matter-of-fact way, you will help children communicate accurately about any touching problems or questions they may have. The video *What Do I Say Now?* also encourages parents to use anatomically correct terms with children.

In some communities and schools, using these terms may be difficult. The *Talking About Touching* program, therefore, offers the option of simply referring to private body parts as “those parts of the body covered by a bathing suit.” You will need to decide which approach is most appropriate for your classroom and community.

Bullying/Harassment

Research supports the need for early intervention and prevention of bullying and harassment. Nan Stein of the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women has studied bullying as an antecedent to sexual harassment (1995). She advocates using the subject of bullying as a way to universalize the discussion of sexual harassment and aid in the development of empathy for victims. For all these reasons, lessons specifically addressing bullying and harassment have been added to the grades 1–3 *Talking About Touching* curriculum. Findings indicate that 81% of eighth- to eleventh-grade students in America's public schools have experienced some form of sexual harassment during their school lives. Most students' first experience with sexual harassment occurs between sixth and ninth grade, while 6% experience it even before third grade (AAUW, 1993).

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Implementing the Program

Implementation Planning

Schoolwide Implementation

The *who*, *where*, and *when* of implementing the *Talking About Touching* program are critical issues for ensuring its effectiveness. Committee for Children recommends that students receive the program at each primary grade level (K–3) and that all school staff be trained. There are many advantages to instituting this approach. It takes time to change behavior and learn new skills. The program is most effective when students receive consistent instruction for several years. Not only will the safety skills be reinforced each year, but the children will also process the information differently as they mature. If schoolwide implementation is not possible, it is helpful to have at least two teachers within a school teaching the *Talking About Touching* curriculum so they can support each other and share concerns and successes. In addition, certain skill practices are best modeled with the help of another adult in the classroom.

Creating a *Talking About Touching* Support Team

If your school has decided to implement the curriculum schoolwide, Committee for Children recommends creating a support team to provide leadership and coordination in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the curriculum. When choosing support team members, look for staff and parents who are committed to the successful implementation of the *Talking About Touching* program and who have enough flexibility in their work schedules to be able to offer support. Support team members might include the following:

- Principal or vice principal
- Counselor, social worker, or school psychologist
- Nurse
- Parent representative(s)
- Classroom teacher(s) representing those who teach the curriculum

Who Should Teach the Curriculum?

Committee for Children has found that classroom teachers are usually the most effective curriculum presenters. There are several reasons for this:

- Teachers have established themselves as support people to whom the students can turn at any time.
- Teachers can ensure that all students receive the same information, and can follow up when a student has missed a lesson.
- Teachers' knowledge of individual students enables them to respond to behavioral indicators of changes.

- Teachers notice when a child hasn't grasped the concepts of a lesson, and, if necessary, they can reteach or review concepts.

If a particular classroom teacher feels uncomfortable with the materials, it is better for someone else, such as the school counselor, social worker, or nurse, to teach the curriculum. Ideally, the teacher would still familiarize him- or herself with the materials and be present when lessons are taught so students know that the teacher is supportive. The teacher would also be able to identify classroom opportunities for skill practice and activities, and to facilitate the transfer of learning. School counselors, social workers, and nurses will often help facilitate implementation. They can provide assistance in planning for training, organizing discussion groups for teachers, assisting teachers in modeling skill practices, observing lesson presentations, and giving feedback. They can also inform classes about the services that school counselors, social workers, and nurses provide to the students.

Family Involvement

Research suggests that children will learn more and feel less anxious about the subject of sexual abuse if their parents talk to them and help them practice prevention skills (Casper, 1999). Therefore, parental support is crucial to the success of the *Talking About Touching* curriculum.

Involving parents in both planning and implementation will help strengthen parent cooperation and support. Ways to involve parents include:

- Offering an overview of the curriculum at a Family Education Night (or during individual parent conferences).
- Presenting the video *What Do I Say Now?* at the Family Education Night (or making it available for parents and caregivers to check out).
- Sending home the Take-Home Letters that accompany certain lessons.

An outline for a Family Education Night presentation and master copies of the Take-Home Letters are in the Involving Families section of this Teacher's Guide (see page 35).

Staff Training

All school staff should understand their role in identifying and reporting child abuse. A written reporting procedure should be distributed to all staff. Each year, the school's reporting procedures should be reviewed, and a complete training on issues of abuse should be offered to new staff. Committee for Children offers training for teaching the *Talking About Touching* curriculum more effectively. This should be offered to teachers and other staff who will teach the curriculum. Committee for Children also offers training for trainers.

All staff should learn to recognize the signs of child abuse and be trained in how to respond to disclosure. Students are more likely to use self-protection strategies if they are supported by the entire school staff through teaching, monitoring, and reinforcement of the skills presented in the curriculum.

Talking About Touching® Grades 1–3

Many states have produced their own training videotapes that outline individual state guidelines for reporting. Contact your state or local office of the Department of Health and Human Services, the appropriate Child Protective Services agency, or your state Attorney General's office for more information. Other resources are listed in Appendix J (see page 65).

Following are elements to consider when planning staff training.

Include the Following People:

Teachers	Bus drivers
Parents	Food service personnel
Volunteers	Special education assistants
Teaching assistants	Substitute teachers
Custodians	Specialists
Secretaries	Other

Be Sure to Cover the Following Topics:

- Basic knowledge of child abuse and neglect
- Physical and behavioral indicators of child abuse and neglect
- Local and state laws regarding reporting
- Child abuse and neglect reporting policies
- Overview of the concepts and skills taught in *Talking About Touching* lessons
- Modeling and practice of key teaching strategies

Additional Subjects You May Want to Include:

- Overview of age-appropriate touching of students by staff
- Childhood growth and development, including what constitutes normal sexuality in children
- Positive discipline techniques
- Setting limits
- Presentation by local Child Protective Services representative to familiarize staff with CPS procedures and personnel

How to Teach the Curriculum

The Lesson Cards

The lessons are designed to provide ease of presentation and to ensure that the concepts and strategies are presented in a straightforward and consistent manner. The lessons should be taught in sequence, as each builds upon skills presented in previous lessons. The preparation section (in the left column of each card) contains the following:

- Concepts
- Objectives
- Materials
- Notes to the Teacher

The body of each lesson (in the center and right columns) contains the following:

- Warm-Up/Review
- Story and Discussion
- Skill Practice
- Activities
- Summary

The final section of each card (at the end of the right column) guides the teacher in providing follow-up and reinforcement of the concepts and skills presented in the lesson. This section includes:

- Transfer of Learning
- Additional Activity Ideas
- Take-Home Reminder

Preparation

Prepare for each lesson by first reading the preparation section (in the left column of each card), which includes the following:

Concepts. The concepts identify the main ideas and skills taught in the lesson.

Objectives. The objectives are framed in terms of skills that the students should be able to perform after learning the lesson. Teachers should keep these objectives clearly in mind when teaching each lesson.

Materials. Here you'll find a list of all the materials you will need to teach the lesson and do the activities.

Notes to the Teacher. This section provides background information related to the safety skills taught in each lesson. After you have reviewed these topics, consider the Story and Discussion questions, noting especially how they present and reinforce each of the safety skills. Prepare for the Skill Practice, being sure that you have all necessary materials. Familiarize yourself with the Activity. And prepare for the Transfer of Learning by choosing which classroom activities you could target for practicing the new skills. If you have time, you may also want to try one of the Additional Activity Ideas. These usually include reading selected books to the class or having students to read them on their own (see Appendix I). Save this reading activity for a later time (rather than directly following a lesson) as a means of reinforcing key concepts presented in the lesson.

Using Puppets

Educators have long observed young children's captivated response to puppets. Puppets seem to have a magical effect on children's engagement in a topic. Preliminary research indicates that the use of puppets can increase the effectiveness of programs (Davis and Gidycz, 2000).

Talking About Touching® Grades 1–3

First-graders in particular are responsive to puppets, so in Grade 1, the Warm-Up/Review and Skill Practice sections can all be adapted for using a puppet simply by having the puppet speak the words the teacher normally would. Keep in mind that the children do not need a polished performance. The mere presence of a puppet, accompanied by simple movements and a normal voice, will delight them.

Opportunities for using puppets are included in many of the lessons at each grade level. A puppet icon appears on the lesson cards wherever a puppet might be used. A hand puppet with a kindly demeanor, arms, and recognizable face is recommended. The arms are necessary so that the children can identify different kinds of safe touch (for example, holding hands, shaking hands, or patting on the back).

Teaching a Lesson

Following are some tips for handling the various lesson sections in the classroom.

Warm-Up/Review. This section provides a brief review of the previous lesson or a warm-up activity to help set the tone for the current lesson. By observing the children, you will be able to determine whether you need to reteach the previous lesson or provide additional time for skill practice.

Story and Discussion. When presenting a lesson, direct the students to look at the photograph on the front of the lesson card while you read the text of the story and discussion questions on the back. Make sure all the students have a chance to see the photograph. On the text side of the card, all the lines that you will say to the students appear in **bold type**.

The success of the program hinges on your ability to successfully facilitate classroom discussion. The format of the suggested discussion questions discourages simple yes/no responses—they begin with phrases like “What might happen if . . . ?” or “How do you think . . . ?” or “How can you tell . . . ?” Do not become sidetracked in discussions that are not directly related to the lesson objectives.

When responding to students, refrain from placing value judgments on their answers. Saying, for example, “That’s one idea. What is another?” encourages more participation than “That’s a good idea. Does anyone have another one?” The latter response may inhibit students who fear that their own suggestions may not be as “good.” When students get stuck on a particular category of ideas, such as physical solutions to a problem, you might say, “These ideas are alike [in this way]. Does anyone have a different idea?”

Possible responses appear in parentheses after each question. These are meant as suggestions, not absolutes—the children will naturally generate additional ideas.

Skill Practice (Teacher Modeling). After presenting the story and discussing the targeted skill, you will need to demonstrate, or model, the skill to be practiced. Research has shown that modeling is an effective means of promoting the learning of prosocial skills (Bandura, 1986; Gresham and Elliot, 1993). Modeling is also valuable because it allows teachers to share their human side, and it shows that modeling can be fun and that mistakes are okay.

You and a student can model most skills, although you may want to enlist another adult to help with some of the practices. Ideally, you'll want to rehearse the skill with the student or adult assistant. If this isn't possible, at least spend some time before each lesson thinking about how you will model the particular skill. Whenever you (or the other adult) play the role of someone who is trying to get a child to do something unsafe, you may want to have that person wear a hat or scarf to clarify that this is just a role-play. Another option is to use a puppet to play the role.

When modeling a particular skill, keep in mind the following guidelines (some will not apply to every situation):

- Model the skill by playing the role of the child in the story.
- As you model the skill, use language a child would use. You can also adapt the situation to allow for regional or cultural differences.
- Model the behavioral steps. You may want to replay the scene, pointing to the steps on the poster as you do them.
- Keep the demonstration simple by performing the steps without a lot of extraneous dialogue or action.

After modeling the skill, doing the following can be beneficial:

- Have the class identify the steps you followed.
- Discuss the outcome of using the skill.
- Invite a critique by asking what you did well and how you might improve.
- Model self-reinforcement. Say, for example, "I think I did a good job."

At first, you may feel uncomfortable modeling skills. With practice, however, modeling can quickly become an enjoyable activity.

Skill Practice (Student Practice). Without student practice of a skill, the positive effects of modeling are usually short-lived. Student skill practices provide an effective means for practicing behavioral skills (Gresham and Elliott, 1993). Suggested skill practice scenarios are listed on the lesson card.

Students who perform with you or another student in front of the class should receive immediate feedback from you and the rest of the class. Phrase your questions to elicit constructive comments. For example: "Did Diane follow the safety rules?" "What did Diane do well?" "What could she do differently?"

Provide reinforcement in the form of encouragement when skill practices are done well. Make comments specific, such as, "You did a good job of looking right at me when you said that."

Be prepared—many students may want to be on stage. If your class size is 20 or greater, some children may not be able to sit still through all the student skill practices. Additional skill practices can be performed during the week, and thus serve as reinforcements of the lessons.

Be sure that every student has a chance to participate in a skill practice with you or another child to ensure that they all learn the targeted skill. It is not necessary to force every student to perform in front of the class. Instead, the emphasis should be on providing an opportunity for each student to participate in practicing the new skill, either individually or in groups.

Talking About Touching® Grades 1–3

Activities. Activities appear on the lesson cards after the Skill Practice section. They include physical exercises, games, project suggestions, and other ideas for providing closure to the lesson. Items needed for activities are noted in the Materials list.

Summary. To provide a review and closure, a summary script is provided in each lesson.

Transfer of Learning. The long-term effectiveness of the skills presented in this curriculum requires applying the skills to real-life situations. While this section is short and appears at the end of the lesson, it is nonetheless one of the most critical. It offers the teacher ideas for how to facilitate the students' use of the newly taught skill in the classroom, on the playground, and at home.

Additional Activity Ideas. For some lessons, additional activities are suggested. Ideas often include the option of reading recommended books to the class. An annotated list of books that reinforce lesson themes and concepts is located in Appendix I (see page 61). You may choose to read any of the books aloud in class and/or to send books home with children for independent reading or as read-alouds with parents. If you decide to incorporate classroom read-alouds, it's best not to do so immediately following a lesson so children are not sitting too long at one time.



Take-Home Reminder. Parents and caregivers must be informed about the *Talking About Touching* program so they can support their children's learning and use of safety and touching rules. The Take-Home icon appears at the end of those lessons that include Take-Home Letters. Master copies of the letters are located in the Involving Families section (see page 35).

Classroom Guidelines

Below are suggestions to help maximize your efforts at making the *Talking About Touching* program an integral—and meaningful—part of your curriculum.

Setting up the classroom. The physical setup of the classroom will affect student involvement and interaction during the lesson and have a direct bearing on the quality of their learning experience. If possible, arrange the classroom so that the lessons can be presented in a circle or horseshoe arrangement. This allows students to see each other and the teacher clearly, encouraging involvement and inviting discussion. This arrangement also provides a stage for the skill practice in the center of the circle or at the open end of the horseshoe.

Some teachers have found it helpful to teach *Talking About Touching* lessons at a “station” with a small group of students, while a teaching assistant or parent monitors the rest of the class in other activities. This provides the opportunity for more students to be actively involved in the lessons, and it can help keep behavior-management problems in check.

Establishing ground rules. Establish clear behavioral guidelines for conduct at the beginning of the program. Encourage students to participate in making the rules. Practice phrasing each rule in a positive way that clearly defines the expected behaviors. For example, instead of saying, “Don't talk out of turn,” say, “Raise your hand and wait until you're called on.” Setting a positive tone from the start will be a great aid in the effective implementation of the *Talking About Touching* program.

Setting the pace. The *Talking About Touching* program is designed to appeal to children’s physical and intellectual pacing needs. It’s up to you to establish a smooth pace while getting the concepts and skills across. Teachers with large classes will find this especially challenging. Sometimes certain students will be so interested in a given lesson that your challenge will become allowing those interested students to be heard while keeping everyone interested and involved.

Encouraging participation. You may have children in your classroom who are generally more anxious than the others or who feel overwhelmed by aspects of their lives that are beyond their control. These children may feel heightened anxiety following *Talking About Touching* lessons. If possible, spend extra time with these children, preparing them beforehand and talking with them afterward. Involving their parents will also help lessen these children’s anxiety.

With most lessons, some students will eagerly participate in group discussions and activities; others will hang back and participate very little. As a result, you will want to develop facilitation techniques that encourage all students’ participation. When asking questions, for example, pay attention to the wait time. By waiting 5–10 seconds, you can usually double participation—by then, most of the students will have had adequate time to think about their answers.

You may notice that some children thrive on the physical activities and skill practices but “drop out” during discussions. You can encourage their participation by having them physically point to the photograph for certain answers—after you’ve asked, for example, “How can you tell that Maria is thinking about what to do?” Another method is to include short role-plays in the story section, such as “Can you show me what a sad face looks like?”

To ensure that all students have an opportunity to be heard, you can first have everyone share their answers with the child sitting next to them. Follow this up with an invitation to everyone to share their ideas with the entire group. This is especially helpful when working with large groups. You may also ask a question and, once students’ hands are up, say, “I will call on Enrique, Joan, and Samuel this time.” If you use this method, assure the students that you will call on everyone at some point during the lesson.

Sometimes students will stay focused on answering a particular question even after you’ve moved on to another. One way to deal with this is to simply say, “Now I have another question” and proceed to the next one. This will help the students stay with you.

Rephrasing a question is another way to encourage involvement. This can be accomplished by saying, “Think of one thing Jamie can do about his problem and then raise your hand.” Wait until all hands are raised before calling on any one student. When you practice these and similar techniques, classroom discussions can be kept lively and flowing, and participation can become the norm.

Handling disruptive behavior. If students give silly answers, redirect them to the task at hand by referring to the question being discussed. You can say, for example, “That’s one way of looking at it” or “That’s one idea. What is another?” Then move on quickly to respond to another student’s suggestion.

When one student's behavior threatens to disrupt a lesson, gently remind him or her of classroom ground rules. Restless fidgeting can sometimes be curbed by letting the child hold a stuffed animal or squeeze a soft ball. An extremely disruptive student can be directed to sit nearby but slightly apart from the group. She or he can still benefit from the lesson but be less of a distraction to the other students. If the disruptive behavior seems to be directly related to lesson content, this may be an indicator that the child has been abused. Follow up later by talking with that child one-on-one.

If a child discloses during a lesson, explain that you will talk to him or her privately after the lesson.

If the group as a whole becomes restless, set the lesson aside. You can always come back to it later. Most lessons can be divided into sections if necessary. If restlessness is a recurring problem, however, you may want to schedule the lessons at a different time of day.

Finding the time to teach the program. The *Talking About Touching* program fits well into curriculum guidelines. It not only teaches safety skills, but also academic readiness skills and concepts common to health education curricula. The curriculum should not be viewed as an add-on, but as a tool for meeting key grade-level objectives.

Individual lessons provide an appropriate focus for circle time. You may want to schedule lessons for specific days and times. In order to help every child in your class be safe, be sure to provide reviews for any students who miss lessons.

Depending on the class size, each lesson will take approximately 25–40 minutes. The Warm-Up/Review takes 5 minutes. The Story and Discussion section takes 10–15 minutes, depending on the lesson. The Skill Practice, including teacher modeling of the skill and student practice, takes 10–20 minutes. Activities take an additional 5–10 minutes and can be assigned at different times during the week.

Child Abuse Disclosure

Recognizing and Responding to Disclosure

Teachers are in a unique position to recognize and help abused children. A teacher's daily contact with students affords opportunities to observe changes in behavior and to be a resource for students if they need to talk with someone they can trust. Children disclose abuse in a variety of ways. They may come in to talk privately about what is going on, but this is one of the less common ways for children to disclose. More common ways include those outlined below.

Indirect hints: "My brother wouldn't let me sleep last night." "Mr. Jones wears funny underwear." "My babysitter keeps bothering me."

In the case of physical abuse or neglect, a child may say: "I don't see my mom much anymore." "I was alone all weekend." "I don't like my new daddy." "My mom gets mean when she drinks."

A child may talk in these terms because she or he hasn't yet learned more specific vocabulary, feels too ashamed or embarrassed to talk more directly, or has promised not to tell. Gently encourage the child to be more specific, within the limits of his or her vocabulary, but bear in mind that in order to make a report you do not need to know exactly what form the abuse has taken.

Disguised disclosure: "I know someone with a touching problem." "What would happen if a girl told her mother she was being molested, but her mother didn't believe her?"

In the case of physical abuse or neglect, a child may say: "I know someone who gets beaten up by his dad." "What would happen if a girl told you her parents never take care of her?" Here the child might be talking about a friend or sibling, but is just as likely to be talking about her- or himself. Encourage the child to tell you what he or she knows about the "other child." In many cases, the child will eventually tell you whom she or he is talking about.

Disclosure with strings attached: "I have a problem, but if I tell you about it, you have to promise not to tell anyone else."

Most children are all too aware that negative consequences will result if they break the secret of abuse. Often the offender uses the threat of these consequences to force the child to remain silent. Let the child know that you want to help and that the law requires you to make a report if any child discloses abuse. Just as the abuse itself is against the law, it is also against the law for you not to report. Respect confidentiality by discussing the abuse only with those directly involved in the legal and support processes. These people might include the school nurse or counselor, school principal, and/or the CPS investigator.

Suggestions for responding to disclosure include:

- Find a private place to talk with the child.
- Do not panic or express shock.
- Express your belief that the child is telling the truth.
- Use the child's vocabulary.
- Reassure the child that it is good to tell.
- Reassure the child that it is not his or her fault, that he or she is not bad.
- Determine the child's immediate need for safety.
- Let the child know that you will do your best to protect and support her or him.
- Tell the child what you will do.
- Report to the proper authorities.

If a child discloses during a lesson, acknowledge the child's disclosure and continue the lesson. Later, find a place where you can talk with the child alone. You may want to schedule the lessons before a playtime or recess so that, if need be, you have a natural opportunity to talk with a child privately.

Remember, your role is not to investigate the situation. It is your responsibility to report the abuse, set in motion the process of getting help for the child, and be supportive of the child.

Reporting Child Abuse

The Law

Child abuse laws vary depending on the state or province, as do those persons or agencies responsible for reporting and/or investigating suspected cases of abuse. For your state or province's reporting laws, contact your local Child Protective Services office or law enforcement agency. Educators who suspect child abuse are ethically and legally obligated to report it. Those who are mandated to report usually include teachers, school administrators, physicians, nurses, medical examiners, mental health professionals, social workers, day care providers, foster care workers, residential or institutional workers, and law enforcement officers.

Reporting laws specify that mandated reporters who "have reasonable cause to believe" that a child is being neglected or abused must report that suspicion to the state protective service or the police. Because each state has its own legal requirements and timelines for reporting, be sure to find out exactly what your state requires. Failure to report can result in a jail sentence and/or a significant fine.

School Policy

Individual schools often have their own reporting procedures. Some schools require that the head teacher or principal be informed so he or she can then make the official report. Other policies require that the principal be informed before the teacher makes the report. Failure by administrators to report does not release teachers who suspect abuse from their legal obligations. By fully understanding your school's policy and local laws about reporting child abuse, you will be able to act appropriately in any given situation.

Reporting Specifics

Reporting is a request for an investigation. Mandated reporters do not need to prove the abuse. It is the role of the state protective services or the police to investigate the report. They will determine the nature and extent of the problem, evaluate the child's condition and safety, and take appropriate action to protect the child. If additional incidents occur after the initial report has been made, make another report. Thorough documentation of injuries or disclosures will help ensure a successful investigation.

Mandated reporters are protected in most states and provinces in terms of liability and confidentiality. Reporters who have acted "in good faith" are immune from any civil or criminal charges that might result. A reporter can ask for confidentiality, in which case the reporter's name will not be released without written consent (except to those directly involved in the investigation) or unless the reporter is called upon to testify in court. Anonymous reports are accepted, but they are discouraged.

If a mandated professional is unsure whether she or he has reasonable cause to believe a child is being abused, she or he should call the state protective services for advice. Recognizing an abused child is often difficult and laden with uncertainty. Some guidelines suggested by many teachers include:

- Resolve doubt in favor of the child.
- Ask other staff who know the child whether they have concerns.
- Let the children in your care know they can talk to you.

- If you sense that a child is trying to tell you something, let the child know that you will believe him or her and help with any problem.
- Be direct. Go to a private place and ask gently whether the child is having a problem and needs help.
- Respect the child's privacy by not discussing the situation with others unnecessarily.
- Call a Child Protective Services worker and describe the situation to get clarification on whether to report.

Ongoing Response to the Sexually Abused Child

Many school personnel are uncertain about how to respond in an ongoing way to the child who has disclosed sexual abuse. The best approach is to acknowledge and try to normalize the situation as you would with a divorce, death, or other traumatic occurrence. It is not helpful to dwell on the abuse incident, thereby increasing the child's self-consciousness or shame. Neither is it helpful to tolerate inappropriate behavior out of fear of harming the child.

Possible responses that can help restore the child's self-esteem and sense of safety include the following:

- If school policy allows, maintain contact with the caseworker or therapist and the (non-offending) parent(s). You can be helpful in the treatment process, and they can be helpful to you in dealing with the child in the period following disclosure.
- Be cautious about touching a child who has been sexually abused. For these children, all touch may mean sexual touch. Even a nonintrusive touch, such as an arm around the shoulder, should be given only with the child's permission.
- Intervene immediately if a child acts out sexually with other children. Respond to the behavior as you would to any inappropriate behavior. Assure the child that you like him or her, but that what he or she is doing is not okay.
- Teach and model appropriate behavior. Do not allow the child to climb all over you. If necessary, you can sit the child on a chair next to yours (or near you on the floor). Sometimes you may need to refuse touches in a gentle, assertive way.
- If the child brings up the abuse, find a time and place to talk about it privately. Offer reassurance that you're sorry it happened, you know the situation is difficult, you're glad she or he told, and you promise to continue to support and care for her or him.
- Be respectful of the family. The family may feel shame, fear, and isolation. Respect their feelings and privacy. Do not discuss the abuse with anyone who's not involved.
- Be prepared for depression or letdown weeks or months after the disclosure. Withdrawal or acting out may recur.
- If the abuse is brought up in a group, deal with it then, matter-of-factly and briefly. Talk to the child later in private.
- All children need to know that they are likable. Abused children are particularly susceptible to feelings of low self-esteem. Positive messages about just "being" will help them build a sense of identity. The following messages have been helpful for many children: "I'm glad you're here." "It's good that you told. I can help you."

- Be aware of your own reactions and get support for any feelings of powerlessness, pain, fear, or anger. If you made the original report, tell yourself—and get someone else you trust to remind you—that it is good that you reported. Whatever pain exists now would be greater if you had not reported.

Clarifying Boundaries

Guidelines for Appropriate Touching of Students

Because there are some educators who have sexually exploited their students, we have all become more sensitive about how we touch students. The following are guidelines for assessing your interactions with students:

Evaluate. Think about how you touch students. Use common sense in deciding what practices you want to continue and those you may want to change. Talk with your colleagues to help clarify your comfort level with boundary issues. Consider how your behavior appears to others. Remember, everyone may not realize your good intentions.

Appropriate touch. Problems develop because of inappropriate touching. This does not mean we should not touch children. Children who do not receive appropriate touches are even more vulnerable to exploitation. Children need hugs, but hugs should come from their needs—not yours. Model appropriate touch with colleagues and students. Be more conscious of how and why you touch students. Give options. (“Would you like a handshake or a hug?”) Some children may not want to be touched at all. Respect that. All touching of students should be respectful and consistent.

Talk. Establishing appropriate boundaries is the key to prevention. Talk to your students about touch. Have clear ground rules for touching. Cultural influences, beliefs, and personal history all affect a student’s comfort level. Encourage students to let you know if they are concerned about the way you or someone else touches them. Listen carefully and take any needed action right away.

Extracurricular Activities

When you are planning to take students on a field trip or other activity outside the school, keep the following guidelines in mind:

- Let your administrator know where you’re going.
- Get parent permission.
- Take more than one student.
- Take more than one adult.

Student Interactions

- When alone with a student, leave the door open.
- Let another adult know when you will be meeting alone with a student.
- Don’t spend the majority of your time with one student or small group of students.
- Keep your personal life separate from your interactions with students.

Unique circumstances may arise when more intrusive touch is necessary. Special education, nursing, and coaching may require additional physical contact to maintain the health and safety of students. Always be clear (to yourself, students, and parents) about when, where, why, and how you are touching students.

References

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Gresham, F. M. and Elliot, S. N. (1993). "Social Skills Intervention Guide: Systematic Approaches to Social Skills Training." *Special Services in the Schools*, 8, 137–158.

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Involving Families

Take-Home Letters

Involving families is critical to the effectiveness of the *Talking About Touching* program. Children are much more likely to retain and use personal safety skills if they have multiple opportunities to discuss and practice them. The Take-Home Letters are tools to support this outcome. They detail the concepts that the children are learning in the lessons and provide ways for families to support and encourage this learning. Listed below are suggestions for using the letters.

- Send home Take-Home Letter 1 before starting the curriculum. You will need to retype it to reflect your decision about whether to hold a Family Education Night. All other letters are designed to be photocopied onto school letterhead and sent “as is.” (Note: Be sure to include all necessary contact information.)
- Consider personalizing the letters. For example, you could assign an “illustrator” to each letter and, for each one, have the designated student decorate his or her copy before you photocopy it for the class to take home. Or you could make copies first and then let each student illustrate the one he or she will take home.
- Attach the letters to your weekly newsletter.
- If you teach children whose families do not speak English, find someone to translate the letters before you send them home. Many school districts have translation services available.
- There are two versions of Take-Home Letter 4: Touching Safety. Take-Home Letter 4 is for those teachers who follow the recommended practice of teaching the anatomically correct names for private body parts in the classroom lesson (see page 18 for more information). Take-Home Letter 4A is for those teachers who prefer to use only the nonspecific “those parts covered by a swimsuit” terminology.
- Many teachers have found it helpful to photocopy all the letters at the beginning of the curriculum so the letters are ready to go.
- Each grade level’s Scope and Sequence (see pages 6–11) is an optional parent handout. It can be photocopied and distributed at the Family Education Night or sent out with Take-Home Letter 1 as a means of giving parents a complete outline of lesson concepts.

SAMPLE Take-Home Letter 1: The *Talking About Touching* Program

Dear Family,

Our class will soon begin using *Talking About Touching: A Personal Safety Curriculum* for grades 1–3. This program teaches children skills that will help keep them safe from dangerous or abusive situations. Children also learn to ask for help when they need it.

The program is divided into three units:

- **Personal Safety.** This unit teaches children rules that will help keep them safe in potentially dangerous situations.
- **Touching Safety.** This unit focuses on teaching children to identify unsafe touches and to say “No,” get away, and tell a grown-up if someone tries to touch their private body parts. Children are also taught to not keep secrets about touching.
- **Assertiveness and Support.** This unit gives children a chance to practice getting out of unsafe situations and to ask a grown-up for help if they need it.

Over the next few weeks, I will send you information about how you can help your child learn and practice safety rules.

Optional sentences:

1. We will have a Family Education Night on _____ (day, date, and time). At that time, you can learn more about the program and how you can help teach your child about safety rules.
2. The video *What Do I Say Now? How to Help Protect Your Child from Sexual Abuse* was produced for parents and caregivers of young children. If you are unable to attend the Family Education Night, you can check out the video from school to view at home. It will show you how to teach and reinforce safety skills taught in the lessons.
3. If you **do not** wish your child to participate in this program, please complete, sign, and return this letter by _____ (date).

If you have any questions, please give me a call.

Sincerely,

I **do not** wish for my child, _____, to participate in the *Talking About Touching* program.

Parent/Caregiver signature _____

Dear Family,

The first lessons in the *Talking About Touching* curriculum emphasize the importance of following safety rules. You can help your child learn to be safe if you talk about safety and practice using safety rules at home. Below are some important rules to talk about with your child.

Car safety. Children learn to always wear a seatbelt and sit in a booster seat until they are big enough for an adult seatbelt to fit properly. Booster seats are essential to your child's safety. Children outgrow forward-facing child safety seats when they reach approximately 40 lbs. From this point until children weigh 80 lbs and are about 4'9" tall, they must be properly buckled in booster seats, which lift them so that adult seatbelts fit them securely and safely. Without booster seats, an adult lap belt rides up over a small child's stomach, and the shoulder belt cuts across a child's neck. In a crash, this can cause serious or fatal injuries. Child safety seats with boosters are effective in protecting children in crashes. All children under age 12 should sit properly restrained in the back seat.

Bike safety. Children learn to always wear a helmet when they ride a bike. They also learn to make sure that the helmet fits correctly.

Gun safety. Children learn to never play with guns—the lesson explains that guns are not toys and they are dangerous. Reminder: Adults should always lock up any guns they might have in the house.

Fire safety. Children learn to never play with matches and never play with fire.

Phone safety. Children learn to never give out personal information on the phone.

Walking safety. Children learn to look in every direction before crossing a street, and if there's no sidewalk, to always walk on the side of the road facing traffic.

Congratulate your child on learning and following these safety rules.

Sincerely,



Dear Family,

In the next *Talking About Touching* lesson, children will learn what to do if someone wants them to go somewhere or someone wants to give them something. It will be helpful if you review the Always Ask First Rule with your child: Always ask your parents or the person in charge first if someone wants to give you something or someone wants you to go somewhere. Ask your child to demonstrate what he or she would do in the following situations:

- What would you do if a neighbor offered you a ride home?
- What would you do if you were in the park and someone you don't know asked you to help look for a lost ball?
- What would you do if someone who lives down the block wanted to give you a present?

If your child follows the Always Ask First Rule, you will always know where he or she is and with whom. You will also know who is trying to make friends with your child by offering gifts. Unfortunately, most children are abused by people they already know—friends, family, or acquaintances. By encouraging your child to always ask first, you will be better able to monitor his or her safety.

Thank you for helping teach this safety rule. Please call me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Dear Family,

In the next few *Talking About Touching* lessons, we will talk about touching safety. The children will learn that safety rules include rules about touching. The *Talking About Touching* curriculum teaches children that there are three kinds of touches:

- **Safe touches.** These are touches that keep you safe and are good for your body. They make you feel cared for, loved, and important. Safe touches include hugging, holding hands, pats on the back, an arm around the shoulder, and a shot from the doctor.
- **Unsafe touches.** These are touches that are not good for your body and hurt your body or your feelings (for example, hitting, pushing, pinching, kicking, and touching the private parts of your body).
- **Unwanted touches.** These may be safe touches, yet the child doesn't want to be touched in that way, by that person, or at that moment in time. It is okay for a child to say "No" to unwanted touches. Children can say "No" to any unwanted touch, even if the person touching them is someone they know. Help your child practice saying "No" in a strong yet polite voice. This will help children learn to set personal boundaries for keeping themselves safe.

The children will also learn the Touching Rule: No one should touch your private body parts except to keep you clean and healthy. They will learn that *private body parts* are "those parts covered by a swimsuit." They will also be taught the anatomically correct names for private body parts so that, if necessary, they are able to communicate accurately about any touching questions or problems they may have. It is recommended that you also use correct anatomical language when communicating with your child about this subject at home.

Thank you for being a partner in teaching safety to your child. I recognize that touching safety is a sensitive topic, so please call me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Dear Family,

In the next few *Talking About Touching* lessons, we will talk about touching safety. The children will learn that safety rules include rules about touching. The *Talking About Touching* curriculum teaches children that there are three kinds of touches:

- **Safe touches.** These are touches that keep you safe and are good for your body. They make you feel cared for, loved, and important. Safe touches include hugging, holding hands, pats on the back, an arm around the shoulder, and a shot from the doctor.
- **Unsafe touches.** These are touches that are not good for your body and hurt your body or your feelings (for example, hitting, pushing, pinching, kicking, and touching the private parts of your body).
- **Unwanted touches.** These may be safe touches, yet the child doesn't want to be touched in that way, by that person, or at that moment in time. It is okay for a child to say "No" to unwanted touches. Children can say "No" to any unwanted touch, even if the person touching them is someone they know. Help your child practice saying "No" in a strong yet polite voice. This will help children learn to set personal boundaries for keeping themselves safe.

In these lessons, the children will learn the Touching Rule: A bigger person should not touch your private body parts, except to keep you clean and healthy. They will learn that *private body parts* are "those parts covered by a swimsuit." It is recommended that you teach your child at home the correct anatomical names for private body parts so that, if necessary, he or she is able to communicate accurately about any touching questions or problems they may have.

Thank you for being a partner in teaching safety to your child. I recognize that touching safety is a sensitive topic, so please call me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Dear Family,

In this week's *Talking About Touching* lesson, the children are learning the Safety Steps that will guide them to know what to do if someone breaks the Touching Rule.

Safety Steps

1. Say words that mean "No."
2. Get away.
3. Tell a grown-up.

We encourage you to help your child think of different ways of saying "No" (for example: "No, thank you"; "Leave me alone"; "Stop that"; "I'm not allowed to play touching games"; "I don't like that"). Help your child understand that getting away can be as simple as moving away from someone or going to another room, or it might mean running home immediately. Help your child identify whom to tell and have him or her practice telling. Sometimes a child may not be able to get away; then the telling becomes even more important.

Practice the following situation with your child:

What if an adult you know wanted to touch your private body parts, and it wasn't to keep you clean and healthy? What words would you say that mean "No"? How would you get away? Whom would you tell? Whom else could you tell?

Children need to be able to identify adults to talk to, both inside and outside the family, since you may not always be available. They also learn in this lesson that it is never a child's fault if someone breaks the Touching Rule.

Encourage your child to come to you if she or he has any questions about using the Touching Rule or the Safety Steps.

Sincerely,



Dear Family,

Unit III of the *Talking About Touching* program teaches children to be assertive and to stand up for themselves in a bullying situation. In these lessons, the children practice saying “No” in a strong, clear way.

Learning to be assertive takes time, however. You can help at home by asking your child to show you how he or she would say “No” to someone who is bullying. Check to see that your child stands tall, looks directly at you, and says “No” in a strong voice. Let your child know whether he or she does a good job being assertive.

Remind your child that if it doesn’t feel safe to stand up to bullying, it is important to go to an adult for help. Review with your child which adults he or she might go to for help. Children need to be able to identify adults to talk to both inside and outside the family (for example, grandparent, neighbor, teacher, police officer), since you may not always be available.

Continue helping your child practice using these skills by suggesting “what if” situations. Ask your child what he or she would say and do and whom he or she would tell if the situation is confusing or dangerous. Also ask, “Whom else could you tell?” Help your child understand when to stand up to being bullied and when to ask for help.

If your child mentions being picked on or bullied at school, or he or she feels anxious about going out on the playground for any reason, be sure to tell me. The best way to stop bullying is to address it immediately.

Sincerely,

Dear Family,

We have reached the end of our personal safety curriculum, *Talking About Touching*. However, the curriculum is just the beginning of what we all need to do to help keep children safe.

Research shows that young children retain the skills they have learned only if they keep practicing them. For this reason, it is recommended that you review all the safety rules with your child on a regular basis, especially the Always Ask First Rule and the Touching Rule. You can also help your child practice the Safety Steps using pretend situations. Make sure that the pretend situations include people they know (babysitter, relative, neighbor), as well as people they don't know.

In addition, remind your child that:

- It is never a child's fault if someone breaks the Touching Rule.
- He or she should never keep secrets about touching.
- It is never too late to tell about a touching problem.

If you would like to check out the video *What Do I Say Now? How to Help Protect Your Child from Sexual Abuse*, please let me know.

We will review the safety rules in class later in the year. I will let you know when this is happening.

Sincerely,

Dear Family,

During the next two weeks, we will review the safety rules that the children learned in the *Talking About Touching* Program. In particular, we will go over the following rules:

- The Always Ask First Rule: Always ask your parents or the person in charge first if someone wants to give you something or someone wants you to go somewhere.
- The Touching Rule: No one should touch your private body parts except to keep you clean and healthy.
- The Safety Steps: (1) Say words that mean “No”; (2) Get away; and (3) Tell a grown-up.
- It is never a child’s fault if someone breaks the Touching Rule.
- Never keep secrets about touching.
- It is never too late to tell about a touching problem.

Now would be a good time for you to review these rules with your child and to make sure she or he understands them. You can practice at home with your child by asking the following questions:

- What would you do if a babysitter wanted to play a touching game with you?
- What would you do if a bigger child who lives in our neighborhood grabbed your private parts while playing a game with you?
- What would you do if someone you don’t know wanted you to get into his or her car?

If you have any questions, be sure to let me know.

Sincerely,

Dear Family,

During the next two weeks, we will review for the last time this year the safety rules that the children learned in the *Talking About Touching* program. We will go over the following rules:

- The Always Ask First Rule: Always ask your parents or the person in charge first if someone wants to give you something or someone wants you to go somewhere.
- The Touching Rule: A bigger person should not touch your private body parts except to keep you clean and healthy.
- The Safety Steps: (1) Say words that mean “No”; (2) Get away; and (3) Tell a grown-up.
- It is never a child’s fault if someone breaks the Touching Rule.
- Never keep secrets about touching.
- It is never too late to tell about a touching problem.

Now would be a good time for you to talk to your child again about all these rules and to make sure he or she understands them. You can practice at home with your child by asking the following questions:

- What would you do if a neighbor wanted you to go to his house and have a snack?
- What would you do if a bigger boy you know hugged you and started touching your bottom?
- What would you do if someone you don’t know tried to help you zip up your pants when you were in a public bathroom?

If you have any questions or concerns, be sure to let me know.

Thank you for your partnership this year in helping your child learn about personal safety.

Sincerely,

Family Education Night

Preparation Tips

1. Read through the *What Do I Say Now?* Guidelines for Use (see page 48).
2. Preview the *What Do I Say Now?* video.
3. Read the discussion questions inside the video jacket and select five or six that you might use to spark discussion. If you expect a large group, you could write selected questions on a flip chart or on handouts to be distributed to smaller groups for discussion.
4. Fill in the phone numbers for your local Child Protective Services agency, police department, and crisis hotline to the parent handout outlining the material presented on the video (see page 49). Photocopy this handout for each participant.
5. Photocopy the Scope and Sequence for the appropriate grade level(s) to hand out (see pages 6–11).
6. Photocopy the Guidelines for Choosing Babysitters to hand out (see page 50).
7. Select sample lessons from the curriculum to “teach” to the adults. Be sure to include at least one on touching safety.

Presentation Outline

Time: 2 hours

A. Introductions

B. Objectives

- To learn about the *Talking About Touching* program in the classroom
- To learn new ways to help protect children from unsafe situations
- To introduce and practice ways for families to reinforce safety skills at home
- To create a partnership between home and school

C. Video and Discussion

Introduce the video and distribute copies of the parent handout. Show the video to the group. Then ask selected discussion questions. If you have a large group, assign everyone to smaller discussion groups.

Be sure to emphasize that most families have their own safety rules. The *Talking About Touching* program encourages children to learn and apply these family rules together with what they learn in class.

D. Curriculum Concepts

Distribute and discuss the Scope and Sequence handout for the appropriate grade level(s).

E. Demonstration Lessons

Teach sample lessons as you would to the children. You may want to spend extra time on the skill practices, explaining both why they are included (children learn best when they practice what they

**Talking About Touching®** Grades 1–3

have just learned) and how they are done in the classroom (children role-play them). You might even invite parents to try one of the skill practices themselves. Or you could have them think of “what if” situations to use when reinforcing the lessons with their children at home.

F. Supporting Materials

Show and describe the various materials used in the classroom:

- Safety Steps poster
- *Sam’s Story* Big Book, small book, and CD
- Other books on safety available through the school

G. Guidelines for Choosing Babysitters

Distribute the Guidelines for Choosing Babysitters handout.

H. Conclusion

Thank everyone for coming. Tell them that the videos and the small book version of *Sam’s Story* can be checked out for home use.



***What Do I Say Now?* Guidelines for Use**

Video Overview

Committee for Children recognizes the critical role of family involvement in teaching children personal safety skills, especially those that will help prevent child sexual abuse. The video *What Do I Say Now? How to Help Protect Your Child from Sexual Abuse* was developed to provide parents and caregivers (1) information about sexual abuse; (2) guidelines for providing a safe and caring environment for young children; (3) practical examples of how and when to talk to children about safety and touching; and (4) guidelines for responding to a child who has disclosed abuse.

Using the Video

What Do I Say Now? can be watched by individuals or families at home, or it can be shown in a group setting with or without a facilitator.

Discussion questions are suggested inside the video jacket. Encourage individuals viewing the video at home to answer the discussion questions for themselves. If you are leading a discussion group, select several questions from those offered.

Touching Rules

What Do I Say Now? offers a variety of ways to teach touching rules. Parents or caregivers must decide how they will present the information themselves, based on their child's age and developmental level and their own family values.

The video offers ideas for helping children learn how to set boundaries—with both peers and adults—in relation to personal touching. Encourage viewers to choose wording for the rules that will work for them. For example: "If someone touches you and you don't like it, say 'No.'" "No one should touch your private body parts except to keep you clean and healthy." "No one should touch your penis (or vulva or vagina) or bottom except a doctor."

Handout

Page 49 is a reproducible handout about the video for families and caregivers. This handout reviews the basic prevention strategies covered in the video. At the bottom of the handout, there is a space to add local emergency phone numbers. Be sure to add these numbers before making copies.



What Do I Say Now?

How to Help Protect Your Child from Sexual Abuse

committee
for *children*

Establish a Safe Environment

Who is with your child?

Check references for:

- Babysitters.
- Child-care providers.

Notice the behavior of other adults around your child.

Be concerned about:

- Adults focused on child relationships more than adult relationships.
- Adults singling out certain children for attention.

Teach Personal Safety Rules

Introduce touching rules along with other safety rules.

Talk about the rules often and practice them with your child.

Agree upon family touching rules to use with other children and adults. Decide how you will teach these rules based on your child's age, developmental level, and your own family values. For example, you could say to your child:

- *If someone is touching you, and you want him or her to stop, say words that mean "No." Then he or she needs to stop. If you are touching someone and he or she says "No," you need to stop.*
- *No one should touch your private body parts except to keep you clean and healthy. No one should touch your penis, vulva, vagina, or bottom except to keep you clean and healthy. If someone does, say words that mean "No." Then get away and tell a grown-up.*
- *Do not keep secrets about touching.*

Where to Call for Help

Discuss Touching Safety

Answer your child's questions.

- Take advantage of natural teaching moments.
- Give age-appropriate answers.

Be approachable. Tell your child:

- *If you ever have any questions, just ask me.*
- *It's never too late to tell.*

Read a children's book about touching safety together.

Start a conversation with your child:

- *Let's review the Touching Rule today.*
- *Before you go, let's practice what you would do if someone tried to break the Touching Rule.*

Respond to Disclosure

Remain calm.

Reassure your child by saying:

- *I'm glad you told me.*
- *It's not your fault.*
- *I am always here for you.*

Seek help for your child and yourself. Possible resources include the following:

- Law enforcement personnel
- Child Protective Services
- Crisis hotline
- Supportive friends and relatives
- Professional counselors

Remember, healing takes time.

CPS _____

Police _____

Crisis Hotline _____



Guidelines for Choosing Babysitters

You should screen anyone who supervises your child. The following are some things to consider when choosing a babysitter.

- Ask each prospective babysitter for names and phone numbers of other families for whom he or she has worked. Call the parents and find out what they think of the babysitter. Ask whether there were ever any problems.
- Let the babysitter know your family safety rules, including touching safety rules. Tell him or her that you have taught your child to tell you when any of the rules are broken, even if the child has been told to keep it a secret.
- Occasionally return home early or unexpectedly so you can see firsthand how things are going. You could also call your child sometimes while you are out.
- Ask your child whether she or he likes the babysitter. If your child does not like the babysitter, ask for more information. Do not leave your child with someone that she or he doesn't like.
- Never leave a child in the care of someone who is using drugs or alcohol. Drugs and alcohol undermine a person's judgment.

Safety Steps: Step 1

Say words that mean "No."



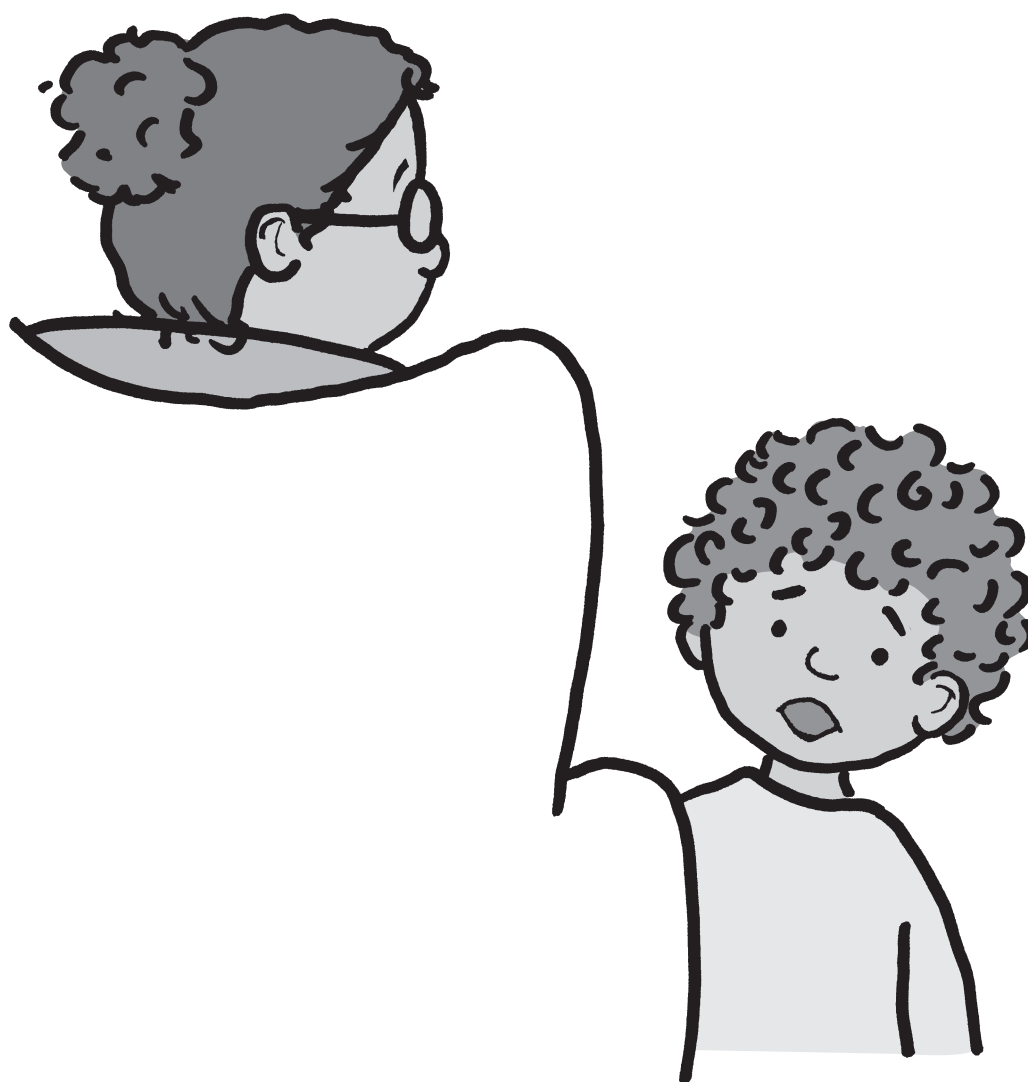
Safety Steps: Step 2

Get away.

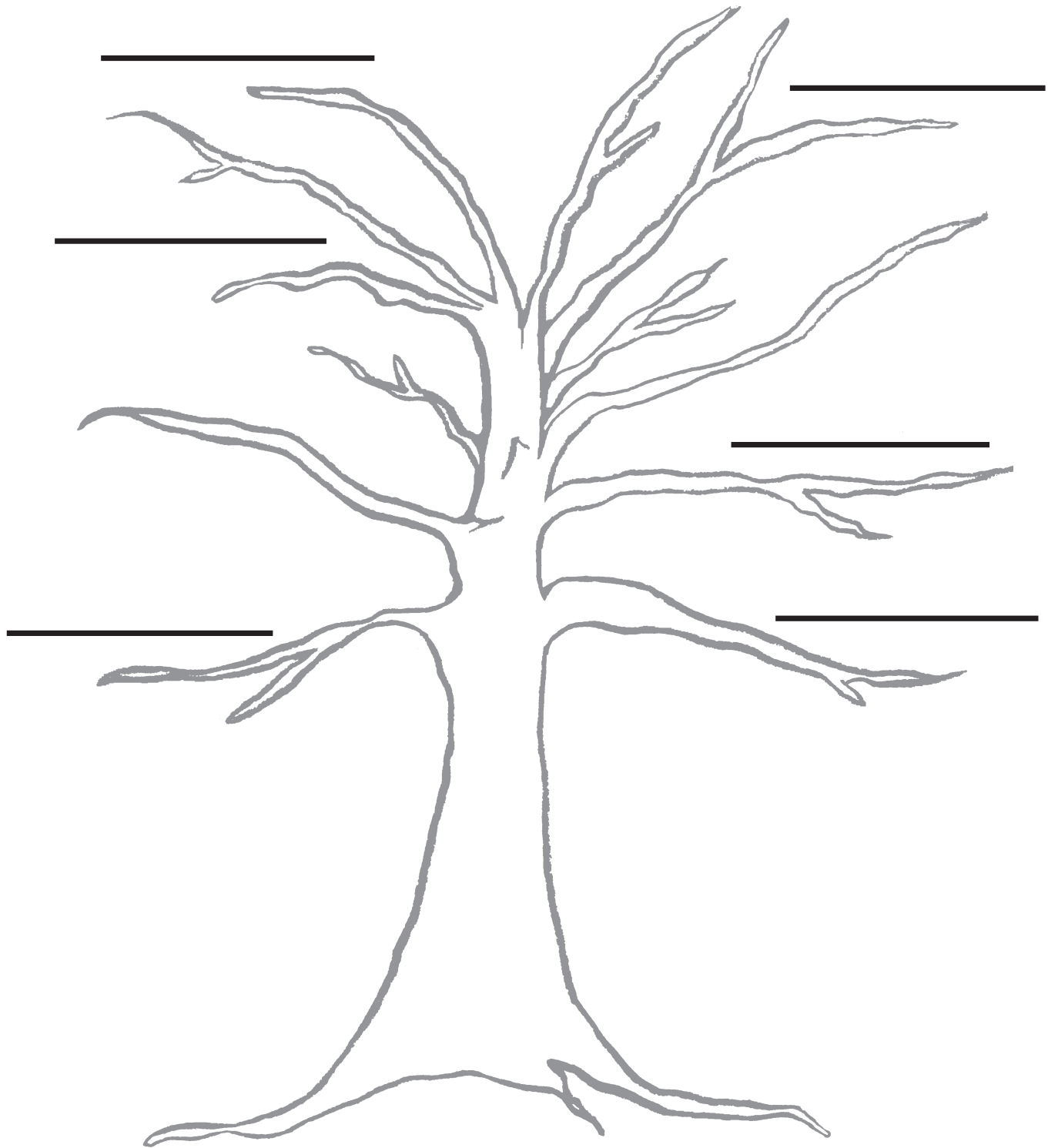


Safety Steps: Step 3

Tell a grown-up.



Support Tree



Name _____





Tips for Developing an Emergency Plan

- Hold a family meeting to decide on a place for everyone to meet if there is an emergency (for example, across the street from your apartment building, a tree nearby, a neighbor's house).
- Practice what you should do if there is a fire at home.
- Check to see that your child knows how and when to dial 911.
- Be sure that your child knows the name and phone number of someone to call in an emergency if she or he can't reach you.
- Check the battery in your smoke detector annually.
- Post emergency phone numbers near your phone.

Touching Safety

Put each kind of touch in one of the columns below. You may want to put some of them in more than one column.

handshake

slap on back

hug

pat on head

high-five

kick

hit

piggyback ride

holding hands

push

pinch

arm around shoulder

pat on back

tickle

noogies

kiss

tap on shoulder

playing with hair

Safe	Unsafe	Unwanted



Assertive Choices

- You are going to a corner store. Three young men are blocking the door. They ignore you and keep talking.
- You and your mom are separated while shopping for school clothes. A man follows you around the store as you look for your mom.
- You are riding your bike and someone in a car slowly follows you.
- Three days in a row when you get off the bus, the same man is hanging around the bus stop.
- On your way home from school, you pass a house where some teenagers hang out. They laugh loudly when you walk by.
- You are walking home from a friend's house, and the clerk from the corner store offers you a ride.
- A kid from school that you have seen bullying other kids follows you across the playground.
- You are standing in line at a pizza counter. You are next in line. An adult cuts in front of you and starts to place an order.



What Is Harassment?

Unwanted touch

Put-downs about gender

Examples

Toward girls: "Girls can't do that."

Toward boys: "You throw like a girl."

Comments about a person's body

Insulting remarks or suggestions

Obscene phone calls

Making others uncomfortable by:

- Staring at them.
- Telling them dirty jokes.
- Showing them dirty pictures.

Dealing with Harassment

Directions: Choose one of the situations below and answer the questions that follow.

Situations

- A. Several of your classmates are always picking on a boy in your class. They call him a wimp and say that he throws like a girl.
- B. A student in your class brought a magazine that has pictures of naked people in it. The student keeps showing you the pictures even though you don't want to see them.
- C. A boy who lives in your neighborhood keeps putting his arm around you and standing really close when he talks to you. It makes you feel uncomfortable.
- D. A group of girls are standing outside the boys' bathroom. Every time a boy goes in or comes out, they make fun of him.

Questions

Situation _____

1. What would you say to the people doing the harassing?

2. What other things could you try?

3. To whom would you go for help?

Recommended Children's Books

Many teachers find it helpful to read additional books to their students that reinforce the concepts of the lessons. Because of the specific nature of many of these books, you may have a difficult time locating some of them. You may need to have a bookstore order them for you. You could also try ordering them online or directly from the publisher.

The books range in maturity and explicitness. Find ones you're comfortable reading to your class. Please keep in mind that some of the books listed may not link directly to a lesson but will reinforce assertiveness and social skills, which are at the heart of the curriculum.

These books can either be read to the class or made available for student reading. Do not read them aloud right after a lesson, however, as this would require the children to sit still for too long.

You may want to make the books (or the list of titles) available to parents so they can read them with their children at home. You may also want to give the list to the school librarian so that she or he can pull the books and shelve them in a special place. The librarian might even suggest additional related books to add to the list.

Keep in mind that many children's books go out of print just a few years after publication. Often, out-of-print books can still be found in school and local libraries. Committee for Children hopes that these books will be available for your use.

The following books are appropriate for grades 1–3 unless otherwise indicated.

Sexual Abuse

Alice Doesn't Babysit Anymore by Kevin B McGovern. Illustrated by Cathy McGovern. Portland, OR: McGovern and Mulbacher, 1985. Tina and Tony have a babysitter who plays "secret" games with them. When a new babysitter notices the children touching each other inappropriately, she encourages them to talk about these games and get help.

A Better Safe Than Sorry Book by Sol and Judy Gordon. Illustrated by Vivien Cohen. Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1992. Continually reinforces the message of saying "No" and telling a trusted adult. Also includes a discussion of private body parts.

It's My Body by Lory Freeman. Illustrated by Carol Deach. Seattle: Parenting Press, 1983. Geared toward an early elementary audience, with examples of positive touches and inappropriate touches. Models assertive behavior in responding to inappropriate touches. Also available in Spanish: *Mio Cuerpo Es Mio*.

It's Not Your Fault by Judith Jance. Charlotte, NC: Kidsrights Press, 1985. Terry is being touched by Joe, her grandmother's new husband. Unable to talk to her family, Terry decides to tell her teacher. The best way to obtain this book is directly through the publisher.

Laurie Tells by Linda Lowery. Illustrated by John Eric Karpinski. Minneapolis: Lerner Publishing Group, 1995. Laurie tries to talk to her mom about her touching problem, but her mom doesn't believe her. Children follow Laurie as she decides whom else she can tell. This beautifully illustrated book is appropriate for third-graders.

My Body Is Private by Linda Walvoord Girard. Illustrated by Rodney Pate. Morton Grove, IL: Albert Whitman and Co., 1984. Emphasizes the importance of saying "No" when experiencing uncomfortable touches. Also explores general safety scenarios.

No More Secrets for Me by Oralee Watcher. Illustrated by Jane Aaron. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1984. Four short scenarios explore different abusive situations. In each situation, the children demonstrate assertiveness skills and find trusted adults to help them with their touching problems.

Pitterpat by Lee Carolyn Jacobson. Charlottesville, VA: Hampton Roads Publishing, 1994. Pitterpat, a rabbit, is sexually abused by a relative. After telling her mother, who assures her it was not her fault, Pitterpat begins to put the experience behind her.

Please Tell! by Jessie Ottenweller. Center City, MN: Hazelton Foundation, 1991. Written and illustrated by a nine-year-old who shares her experience of being sexually abused by her uncle. Available in Spanish: ;*Por Favor, Di!*

Something Happened and I'm Scared to Tell by Patricia Kehoe. Illustrated by Carol Deach. Seattle: Parenting Press, 1987. A girl who has been sexually abused meets a talking lion, who explains that what happened to her was not her fault and encourages her to tell someone. There is a short discussion of physical abuse and private body parts.

Something Happened to Me by Phyllis E Sweet. Illustrated by Barbara Lindquist. Racine, WI: Mother Courage Press, 1985. Explores the feelings children may experience after abuse. Assures the reader that the abuse is not the child's fault.

The Trouble with Secrets by Karen Johnsen. Illustrated by Linda J. Forssell. Seattle: Parenting Press, 1986. Sometimes it's hard to know when to keep a secret and when to tell someone. This book includes examples of different types of secrets and makes a smooth transition into touching secrets, emphasizing the importance of sharing confusing secrets.

A Very Touching Book by Jan Hindman. Illustrated by Tom Novak. Ontario, OR: AlexAndria Associates, 1983. Written and illustrated by the creators of *Where Did I Come From?*, this humorous book helps children practice talking about their bodies without being embarrassed. With a strong emphasis on personal pride, it provides clear guidelines on unsafe touching and lists resources that children can utilize if they are experiencing any touching problems.

Who Is a Stranger and What Should I Do? by Linda Walvoord Girard. Illustrated by Helen Cogancherry. Morton Grove, IL: Albert Whitman and Co., 1985. Offers guidelines on specific unsafe situations and emphasizes the importance of assertive behavior.

Physical Abuse, Emotional Abuse, and Domestic Violence

Daisy: A Book About Child Abuse by E. Sandy Powell. Illustrated by Peter J. Thornton. Minneapolis: Lerner Publishing Group, 1991. Daisy's father is physically and verbally abusive, and she's often afraid to go home. Her tutor, Mrs. Cally, knows something is wrong—she helps Daisy understand that her father needs help and that Daisy needs to get help for herself.

Don't Hurt Me, Mama by Muriel Stanek. Illustrated by Helen Cogancherry. Morton Grove, IL: Albert, Whitman and Co., 1983. A recently divorced mother begins to abuse her daughter. Assertiveness skills are modeled as the little girl tells her school nurse, who encourages the mother to get counseling.

A Family That Fights by Sharon Chester Bernstein. Illustrated by Karen Ritz. Morton Grove, IL: Albert Whitman and Co., 1991. Henry's father is hurting his mother. The kids in the family are scared, angry, and ashamed. They're also confused because sometimes Dad is fun. This book emphasizes that fights are not the children's fault.

Hear My Roar by Ty Hochban. Illustrated by Vladyana Kryorka. New York: Annick Press, 1994. Father Bear has a drinking problem; he becomes angry and violent when he's drinking. Mother Bear seeks help when she realizes his violence is affecting the whole family.

Mommy and Daddy Are Fighting by Susan Paris. Illustrated by Gail Labinski. Seattle: Seal Press, 1986. Begins with a general discussion of fights, including examples of fights between siblings. Then moves into the confusion and fear that two sisters experience when they witness their father abusing their mother.

Something Is Wrong at My House by Diane Davis. Illustrated by Marina Megale. Seattle: Parenting Press, 1985. The violence between a boy's parents is provoking feelings of fear and anger in him. It's affecting his life, not just his parents'. He realizes he can take steps to alleviate his anger and participate in activities to feel better. This is an empowering book, appropriate for both younger and older children.

Squeakers by Stephen Cosgrove. Illustrated by Robin Jones. Los Angeles: Price Stern Sloan, Inc., 1985. Squeakers, a squirrel, reluctantly lets a mole pull hairs from his tail in exchange for chestnuts. Squeakers becomes withdrawn; his parents notice his changed behavior and encourage him to talk about what is bothering him.

Getting Lost

I'm Lost by Elizabeth Crary. Illustrated by Marina Megale. Seattle: Parenting Press, 1985. Amy and her dad are separated during a trip to the zoo. Other children help her “decide” what steps to take to find her dad. Best for younger students.

I Promise I'll Find You by Heather Patricia Ward. Illustrated by Sheila McGraw. Buffalo, NY: Firefly Books, Limited, 1994. This imaginative book geared toward younger children explores a number of hypothetical situations in which children become lost. It always provides the assurance that the child will be found. Great illustrations.

Assertiveness

The Bully on the Bus by Carl Bosen. Illustrated by Rebekah Stecker. Seattle: Parenting Press, 1988. When a boy experiences bullying on his school bus, he must make some decisions about how to respond. Children help him “choose” actions and behaviors to deal with the situation. There are no “wrong” choices; the reader is always brought back on track.

Elizabeth Imagined an Iceberg by Chris Raschka. New York: Orchard Books, 1994. While riding her bicycle, Elizabeth encounters Madame Uff Da. Madame Uff Da intimidates Elizabeth, especially when she picks her up against her will. Elizabeth is able to draw on her inner resources and model assertiveness skills that bring her to safety. Wonderful illustrations.

Miscellaneous

Double-Dip Feelings: A Book to Help Children Understand Emotions by Barbara S. Cain. Illustrated by Anne Patterson. Milwaukee, WI: Gareth Stevens, Inc., 1993. This simple book helps explain the confusion that accompanies having contradictory feelings at the same time.

Fire Diary by Lily Rosenblatt. Illustrated by Judith Friedman. Morton Grove, IL: Albert Whitman and Co., 1994. Written in journal form, *Fire Diary* tracks the memories of a girl whose house burned down. It describes her experience of moving in with her extended family, her fear of going back to school, and the experience of going to a therapist. Also provides fire safety guidelines.

I Like Me! by Nancy Carlson. New York: Viking Kerstrel, 1988. Pig likes to spend time by herself doing fun things. She enjoys taking care of herself. When she makes mistakes, she tries again. Pig proves that the best friend you can have is yourself.

Loving Touches by Lory Freeman. Illustrated by Carol Deach. Seattle: Parenting Press, 1985. Positive touches are just as important as food, water, and sleep. This book provides younger children examples of how to ask for and give healthy touches.

The Words Hurt by Chris Loftis. Illustrated by Catharine Gallagher. New Horizon, NJ: New Horizon Press, 1994. Greg's dad is verbally abusive; his words hurt even after he has apologized. With the support of his friends, Greg finds the strength to talk to his dad about the problem.

Adult Resources List

Parent/Caregiver

Children and Trauma: A Parent's Guide to Helping Children Heal by Cynthia Monahon. Thousand Oaks, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1997.

He Told Me Not to Tell by Jennifer Fay and King County Sexual Assault Resource Center. Spokane, WA: ACT for Kids, 1991.

How to Survive the Sexual Abuse of Your Child by Chris Larsen and Anne Zaro. Spokane, WA: ACT for Kids, 2001.

Protect Your Child from Sexual Abuse: A Parents' Guide: A Book to Teach Children How to Resist Uncomfortable Touch by Janie Hart-Rossi. Seattle: Parenting Press, 1984.

Safe Child Book by Sherryll Kerns Kraizer. New York: Fireside Books/Simon and Schuster, 1996.

Additional Resources

Child Abuse: Implications for Child Development and Psychopathology by David A. Wolf. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1999.

Child Sexual Abuse by David Finkelhor. New York: The Free Press, 1984.

Conspiracy of Silence: The Trauma of Incest by Sandra Butler. Volcano, CA: Volcano Press, 1996.

Father-Daughter Incest by Judith Herman. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000.

Preventing Child Sexual Abuse: Sharing the Responsibility by Sandy K. Wurtele and Cindy L. Miller-Perrin. Lincoln, NB: University of Nebraska Press, 1992.

Recognizing Child Abuse by Douglas Besharov. New York: The Free Press, 1990.

Sexual Exploitation by Diana Russell. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1984.

Sexually Victimized Children by David Finkelhor. New York: The Free Press, 1981.

What Children Can Tell Us by James Garbarino, Frances M. Stott, and the Faculty of the Erikson Institute. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992.

Acknowledgments

The *Talking About Touching* Development Team would like to thank the following people for their invaluable contributions to the development of the program.

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