

# SAFETY AND AWARENESS FOR EVERY BODY



## How to Talk to Children About Body Safety?

Talking about child sexual abuse with children and peers can be difficult and feel embarrassing.

Teaching children the correct terms for their anatomy can be uncomfortable. These conversations are necessary to have with kids, at every age, to keep them safe!

### Starting at birth...

• Use the correct names for body parts: penis, vagina, breast and buttocks when bathing or diapering your infant. Ask permission even though the baby cannot understand or respond. An example, "I am going to wash your buttocks with soap, is this ok?"

### Ages 2 to 7

- Do not force children to hug others or have unwanted physical contact.
- Continually encourage kindness toward peers so they learn how to behave towards others.
- It is normal for children to start touching themselves around ages two to five. Let them know this may feel good, and is normal, but should be done alone and in private. Try not to shame your children or make them feel as if they did something bad.
- Teach privacy and say, "these are private parts and are off limits to others."
- **As children grow and learn, have this conversation several times a year:**
  - No one should ever look at or touch your private parts. This includes the penis, vagina, breast, and buttocks.
  - You should not look at (even pictures or videos) or touch other people's private parts.
  - There may be times when a doctor needs to look at your privates when at the Dr's office. A parent should always be in the room if this occurs.
  - If something or someone makes you uncomfortable, you should tell an adult. If you do not feel comfortable telling me, who is another trusted adult you could tell?
  - Please note, you may have to define what a trusted adult is, one way to do this is to ask who they think would keep them safe no matter what.
  - Should something like this ever happen to you, know you did nothing wrong. Telling is a brave thing.
  - There are times when touching is ok. This includes giving a high-five or a fist bump. These types of touches are ok if you are comfortable with it. For example, if you do not want to hug someone you do not have to. Someone should ask your permission before hugging you.

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## Age 8

- By age 8, most children have heard about sex. It is best for guardians and parents to have this conversation before kids learn about sex from peers or other influences.
- Keep the conversation simple and use scientific terminology such as “the sperm meets the egg.”
- Talk about family values, consent, and boundaries. Children need to know- they can say “no” when it comes to their body. Likewise, children need to learn to respect the boundaries of others and should not touch others without receiving permission.

## Ages 9-12

- Continue to discuss consent, boundaries, and family values.
- Set family expectations and rules regarding dating or “hanging out,” as well as alcohol and drug use.
- Role play how to get out of risky situations and make sure to include drug and alcohol use.
- When talking about sex, it is important to talk about the order things should go in, such as holding hands first, then kissing. Draw a line so children understand what sex is. As an example, children need to understand that oral sex is sex.
- Talk about risks associated with sex and include emotional risks as well as physical.
- Talk to your kids about dangers with social media, phones, gaming devices and the internet. For additional guidance on internet safety and cyber bullying, download the Internet Safety Tool Kit at [tinyurl.com/PCAKtoolkit](https://tinyurl.com/PCAKtoolkit).
- Monitor children’s use of the internet, phone usage, gaming devices and social media.

## Ages 13 and up

- Continue the guidance outlined above.
- Provide information on dangers involved with dating outside of a youth’s age range. Youth need to understand older youth may have more sexual knowledge, life experiences and expectations than peers around their own age. It is best if youth develop “dating” relationships with youth in their age group.
- Discuss dating violence. Make sure they understand no one should physically or mentally harm them in friendships or dating relationships. Provide examples and encourage youth to speak out if someone treats them (or others) in this manner.



## Additional Guidance

Children and youth should never be made to feel responsible for their own safety. This guide is one of many tools needed to ensure healthy outcomes for your kids. Visit [tinyurl.com/PCAKguidance](https://tinyurl.com/PCAKguidance) to learn more.

Whether you parent with a partner in the same household or a different household, make sure you are on the same page and providing children and youth with the same age-appropriate messages.

The goal should be to support children and families prior to abuse ever occurring as a Mandated Supporter. However, if you suspect a child is a victim of child sexual abuse, contact the child abuse reporting hotline at 1-877-KYSAFE1 or local law enforcement. In the case of an emergency contact 911.

**1-800-CHILDREN**  
A free, confidential information  
and support helpline.

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