



Trauma
Care

Newsletter

28 February 2015

TraumaCare

Box 1807, Magaliesview, 2067

5a Franshoek Rd, Lonehill

Tel: 0715929690

Website: www.traumacare.co.za

Email: mail@traumacare.co.za

Good Touch Bad Touch

Children as young as four years old can understand the basic concepts of good touches, bad touches and confusing touches.

Surveys show that as many as 1 in 4 children have suffered some sort of sexual abuse by the time they reach 18. Statistics show that child sexual abuse crosses boundaries of race, class, culture, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality, affecting all types of communities. What can you do as a parent to help protect your child?



How do you teach your kids about good touch bad touch?

1. Give Them Ownership of Their Body

"I began telling my children at about 18 months that they own their bodies ('your body is all yours') and that no one has a right to touch them unless it's okay with them. At 2 and 3.25 now, they know that their bodies belong to them and that they can reserve certain parts as 'private.'

Even it's something like holding hands with someone or having a friend hug or kiss them, they know they have the right to say no if they don't like it."

2. Use Appropriate Language

“As soon as my kids seemed at all curious about their body parts during bath time, I taught them the correct names for their anatomy. I think it really helps them to have that knowledge in case they ever need to talk to me about anything.”

3. Keep Conversation Light and Easy

“One thing I find that helps is keeping these kinds of conversations serious but still unemotional (almost lighthearted) so that kids feel very comfortable talking about it and asking questions. And I try to let these conversations happen naturally and work them into our everyday life. Like talking about it during potty or bath time.”

4. Use the Swim Suit Rule

“In the guidance lessons in Kindergarten classes children were told that if your swimsuit covers it, it’s a private area and no one should be seeing or touching that area. Tell a grown up if someone is touching you in the wrong places because it’s a Mommy and Daddy’s job to keep you safe. It’s a simplified version but easy for younger children to understand.”

5. Explain What Safe Touch Is

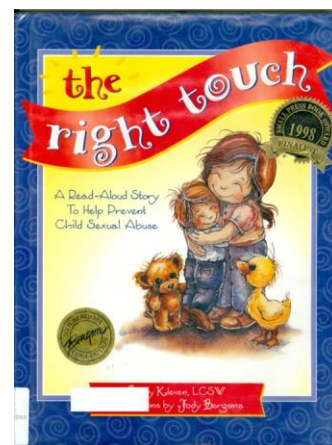
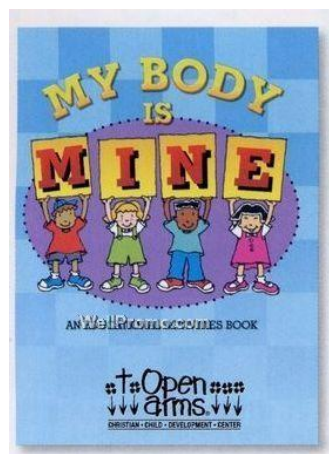
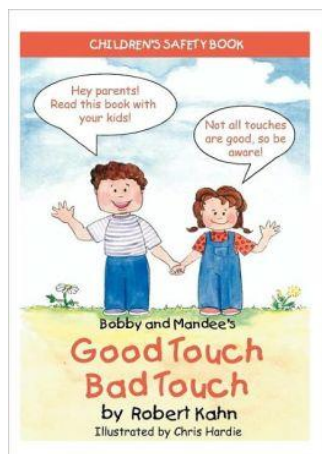
“In our discussions I have talked about how, on rare occasions, parents and doctors might have to do something they won’t like to keep them safe and give them concrete examples – like getting a shot at the doctor’s office, or being pulled out of the street. I did switch pediatricians at one point, because I felt like the one we were seeing was not taking the time to talk with my child. The one we go to now is excellent at explaining why something has to happen, even though that sometimes makes the visit take much longer.”

6. Empower Them to Say NO

“I also always stressed that if someone touched them in a way they didn’t like to tell that person to stop ... and to ALWAYS tell me about it. Keeping the lines of communication open, even with AND especially with, our private areas is of UTMOST importance!”

7. Use Books About Good Touch Bad Touch

“I found a great time to talk with my kids about it the other day when we were reading a book about the human body that showed the skeleton, organs, and body parts.”



8. Don't Force Affection

"I don't force my daughter to hug someone if she doesn't want to. I know that a hug from a loving adult isn't a bad touch, but I feel like this empowers my daughter to feel like she has control over her physical body."

9. Help Them Trust Their Feelings

"A therapist told me that kids should be taught that a touch (from anyone) that makes them feel bad or uncomfortable is a bad touch. Kids should be taught to trust their own feelings."

10. Practice or Role Play

"My kids and I practice what they should say ('No, I don't like that. STOP!') and do (tell me or a trusted adult) if they are ever asked to show or are touched in their private areas."

Children today are around more adults on a daily basis than ever before. From childcare to sports practices to dance classes, not to mention camps and after-school programs, children are meeting and interacting with many adults regularly. That's why it is so important for parents to talk with their children — as early as age 4 — about inappropriate touching. And children even younger can begin to learn about their bodies.



This newsletter has been issued by:
TraumaCare, Box 1807, Magaliesview, Gauteng, 2067
www.traumacare.co.za * mail@traumacare.co.za * Tel: 071 592 9690
Play Therapy * Counselling * Trauma Counselling
Please note that this information must not be used for diagnostic purposes. Please visit a medical professional for a correct diagnosis.