

PARENT NEWSLETTER *Lesson #4*

RULES KEEP US SAFE! WHEN WE USE THEM, WE ARE ALL STARS!



PARENT CONNECTION

Grooming is a subtle, gradual, and escalating process of building trust with a child and his/her family. It is deliberate and purposeful. Abusers may groom children for weeks, months, or even years before any abuse takes place. It usually begins with subtle tactics, such as:

1. Testing a child's boundaries through inappropriate jokes or tickling.
2. Using play to move from appropriate touching to "accidental" inappropriate touching (This is done to desensitize a child to touch.)
3. Manipulating the child to not tell anyone, either through fear, guilt, embarrassment, bribery, or threat.
4. Confusing the child into feeling responsible for the abuse.

Always asking for permission prevents a child from falling victim to the grooming process. Your child should know to say, "Thank you, but I need to ask my grown-up buddy if it's okay." But, even if the child forgets to say these words, he/she should know to come TELL you, knowing that he/she won't get into trouble. Stressing this to your child will ensure that your child feels comfortable telling you anything.

Today's safety lesson focused on the importance of children always staying together with a buddy whenever they go anywhere.

A buddy keeps us safe in two ways:

1. There is safety in numbers, two is better than one.
2. They help us make safer choices. Remind your children that they are also a buddy, and must use the Safety Rules to protect themselves and their friends. Children should be told that even if their friends want to do something, if they know that it goes against the safety rules, they need to be that buddy that tells the others not to do it.

We also discussed the importance of children always asking the Grown-up in Charge for permission before engaging in certain behaviors. The safety rules (see box below) should be followed in all situations. Telling a child that certain individuals, such as a grandmother or a close family friend are okay for them to not follow the rule for, causes confusion as the child may decide others are okay as well.



OKAY WITH A GROWN-UP IN CHARGE BEFORE:

1. Answering the door
2. Answering the phone
3. Take anything from anybody - gift, candy, or treat
4. Going anywhere/changing locations
5. Speaking to other adults or older kids

Older children were also taught about "making a PLANN"

Permission: from the Grown Up In Charge

Location: where you will be

Activity: what you will be doing.

Names and Numbers: of the place or person you will be at or with.

If a child says, "I just have to okay it with my grown-up in charge," they are less desirable to a potential predator. Children that speak to their parents are less attractive to potential predators.