



PARENT NEWSLETTER *Lesson #5*

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



PARENT CONNECTION

We recommend you make time to discuss this important and sensitive lesson with your children. If you have not already spoken to your children about their bodies and their right to keep their bodies safe, now is the time!

It is important that children know its ok for them to say NO any time a touch of any kind makes them uncomfortable - they have control over their bodies. Children should not be forced to kiss/hug family members. Even though these are often harmless touches, forcing a child to kiss/hug people when they don't want to sends a message that they are not in control of their own bodies and that adults hold the power. (Brainstorm on a fun handshake so bubby/grandpa won't be insulted). In addition, talk with your child about the differences between safe and unsafe secrets. Keep the lines of communication open and make sure your child knows to come to you if he/she is told to keep a secret from you. Believe your child. Children who feel they can talk to their parents or caregivers about anything are much less susceptible to being victimized by a predator.

In today's lesson your child learned about Safe and Unsafe Touch, body boundaries, and the difference between Safe and Unsafe Secrets.

Your child learned how Safe Touches (such as a welcome hug, an encouraging pat on the back, cuddling with a parent) and Unsafe Touches (any touch that is confusing or hurts, e.g. tickling too hard, pinching cheeks, hitting) make him/her feel.

We explained that Safe Touches make us feel:

Loved Happy Encouraged Safe

While Unsafe Touches make us feel:

Icky Scared Confused Uncomfortable

Your child also learned that he/she has private parts - areas of the body covered by a bathing suit. NO ONE should touch, look at, or talk to your child about his/her private parts, except at certain times such as when parent/caregiver is giving child a bath or during a doctor visit. Your child was strongly encouraged to tell someone in his/her SAFETY STAR about any touch that makes him/her feel unsafe.

When speaking to your child about this topic, emphasize the fact that even if they did not say NO or STOP if someone tried to touch them, the most important thing is to TELL. Most children will have a very difficult time saying No to an adult or older child and therefore, if they are only told to not let it happen they will assume they are in the wrong and not Tell. If you emphasize that the most important thing is to TELL and you will be so proud of them, there is a better chance for the child disclosing the abuse.

Remember if God forbid a child discloses an abuse to you remain calm. Your initial reaction to a child's healing process is crucial. Tell them, "I am so glad you told me," "you did the right thing," "you are so brave," "I am so sorry this happened to you and I am so proud of you for telling." Then reach out and get the help you need.