Personal Safety

5 Topics for Discussion with 4- to 7-year-olds

Safe Grown-up

Help children name grown-ups in their life who they can go to for help and support. Encourage your child to think of examples of grown-ups in their life from different locations (at school, at home, at daycare, etc.). Explain to your child that it's a grown-up's job to keep kids safe.

Questions to discuss:

- **Q:** How does (name their safe grown-ups) help you at school?
- **A:** Example: my teacher helps me wash my hands at school.
- Q: What grown-up do you go to when you are: happy, sad, mad, scared?
- A: Mom, dad, grandma, etc.

Body Parts

It is important for children to know the correct terms for their body parts, from head to toe and including private areas. This is especially important if a child needs to disclose sexual abuse. Explain to your child that their private parts are private, and it's not okay for someone to touch their private parts or to ask them to touch someone else's private parts. Let your child know this is something to tell you so you can help them.

Activity:

Point to parts of their body (from head to toe) and ask them to name it. (hair, head, eyes, nose, mouth, chin, etc.)

Okay and Not Okay Touching

Children need to know what type of touching is okay (safe) and not okay (unsafe). Explain that any touching they are told to keep a secret isn't safe. Explain that you want to know about this so you can help. Reassure them that it is never a child's fault if this happens, and it's okay to tell their safe grown-ups. It is always okay to tell you something.

Questions to discuss:

- Q: Are secrets about touching okay?
- A: No.
- Q: Who could you tell?
- A: A safe grown-up (mom, dad, teacher, grandma, etc.)

For more information, check out protectchildren.ca/myfirstsafetybook





Read the *Teatree's Keep and Speak Secrets* or *Makoons' Keep and Speak Secrets storybook* with your child and create a safety plan discussing the following:

Keep and Speak Secrets

It is hard for children to understand the concept of secrets, so give them examples. Explain that there are two kinds of secrets – keep and speak secrets. Keep secrets are safe secrets because they eventually are told to someone, such as a secret about a birthday present. Speak secrets are unsafe secrets that kids are told never to tell, such as secrets about touching and/or video recording/pictures. These are secrets to tell you so you can help them. It is always okay to tell you something.

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Questions to discuss:

- **Q:** Who can Makoons tell about touching that is not okay?
- **A:** His mom and dad, teacher, principal, school counsellor, grandma and grandpa, etc.
- **Q:** Who could you tell about touching that is not okay?
- **A:** Mom and dad, teacher, principal, school counsellor, grandma and grandpa, etc.
- Q: Is it okay for someone to touch Teatree's private parts?
- A: No



- Q: What should Teatree do if someone touches her private parts?
- A: Teatree should tell a grown-up she can go to for help.

- **Q:** Will Makoons get in trouble if he tells a grown-up that someone touched his private parts?
- **A:** No. It is never Makoons' fault if someone touches his private parts.
- Q: Is it okay for someone to touch your private parts?
- A: No, except for mom and dad giving me a bath if I can't wash myself, or a doctor giving me an exam with mom or dad in the room.
- Q: What should you do if someone touches your private parts?
- **A:** I should tell a safe grown-up I can go to for help.
- **Q:** Will you get in trouble if you tell a safe grown-up that someone touched your private parts?
- **A:** No. It is never my fault if someone touches my private parts or has me touch theirs.

Feelings

If your child is feeling unsure or scared in a situation, being aware of how they feel can help them regulate and reach out for the support. Teach your child to identify and name the following feelings: happy, sad, mad, scared, and surprised.

Ask your child to show you with their body how they feel when they are happy, sad, mad, scared, and surprised. Ask them to guess how you are feeling when you use body language and facial expressions to show these feelings.



HAPPY



SCARED



SAD



SURPRISED



MAD