



AGE-APPROPRIATE CONVERSATIONS WITH CHILDREN

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INTRODUCTION

Age-appropriate conversations refer to discussions and topics that are tailored to the developmental stage and understanding of a child at a particular age. These conversations take into account the child's cognitive abilities, emotional maturity, and social awareness, ensuring that the information shared is comprehensible and relevant to their age group.

The key to age-appropriate conversations is to strike a balance between providing necessary information and ensuring that it aligns with a child's cognitive and emotional readiness. It's important to use language and examples that resonate with their experiences and promote understanding without overwhelming them. By adapting the content and approach of these conversations to suit the child's age, parents and guardians can provide the guidance and knowledge needed to promote their safety, well-being, and development.

Facilitating age-appropriate conversations with children regarding personal boundaries, consent, and safe touch is crucial for their safety and overall well-being. These discussions play a vital role in equipping children with the knowledge and skills they need to navigate their relationships, understand their rights, and protect themselves from potential harm.

To ensure these conversations are effective and meaningful, this booklet shares some guidelines to consider.

ESTABLISH A SAFE AND TRUSTING ENVIRONMENT

Creating a safe and trusting environment for children is super important! We want them to feel comfortable and at ease, so they can freely express their thoughts and ask questions without any worries. Imagine a place where they know they can come to you without feeling judged or scared, the need for this cannot be overemphasised.

So, first things first, let's focus on safety and openness. It is crucial to ensure that the learning space is free from any potential dangers or risks. We want the little ones to feel physically and emotionally safe. And hey, let's not forget about treating others with respect and kindness! Encourage everyone to communicate openly, share their ideas, and be considerate of others' feelings.

One of the keys to building trust is active listening. When a child talks to you, really listen! Give them your full attention and show genuine interest in what they have to say. Sometimes, it's not just about the words they use but also the way they express themselves. Being a good listener lets them know that their thoughts and feelings are valued and respected.

Remember, we want to create a non-judgmental atmosphere. That means no criticism or negative remarks. Instead, let's promote a growth mindset! Encourage the kids by celebrating their efforts

Establish a Safe and Trusting Environment

and achievements. When they feel supported and encouraged, they'll be more willing to share their ideas and ask questions.

Respect and empathy are super important too. Teach the children about respecting others' thoughts, feelings, and personal space. Help them understand different perspectives and why empathy is essential. Let's be role models by showing respect in our own actions and by resolving conflicts in a fair and considerate manner.

Boundaries are essential for everyone's well-being. Let's establish clear boundaries and make sure they are understood and respected. By doing so, we create a sense of structure and security, making the children feel more comfortable in the environment.

Confidentiality is a big deal too! Children need to know that their personal information and private discussions will be kept confidential, unless there's a safety concern. Assure them that you're someone they can trust and confide in whenever they have any worries or issues.

Lastly, let's not forget to celebrate the children's achievements and efforts! Positive reinforcement is a fantastic way to motivate them and build their confidence. By recognising and acknowledging their contributions, we show them that their hard work is valued and appreciated.

Establish a Safe and Trusting Environment

So, by implementing these strategies, we can create an awesome, safe, and trusting environment for the kids. They'll feel confident to express themselves, ask questions, and engage in meaningful conversations. And that's what learning and growth is all about!

USE CLEAR AND DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE

When it comes to talking to children, it's important to use words and explanations that they can easily understand. We want to make sure that the language we use is clear and appropriate for their age and level of understanding. That means we need to avoid using fancy words or complicated ideas that might confuse them.

Instead, let's keep things simple and use words that are easy for them to grasp. For example, if we're talking about animals, we can use words like "dog" or "cat" instead of using scientific names like "Canis lupus familiaris" or "Felis catus." By using familiar and concrete terms, we can make the conversation more relatable and engaging for them.

Imagine explaining something like gravity to a child. Instead of diving into complex scientific theories, we can say something like, "You know how when you throw a ball up in the air, it always comes back down? Well, that's because of gravity! It's a force that pulls things towards the ground." By using everyday examples and relatable experiences, we can help children understand abstract concepts in a way that makes sense to them.

Remember, we want to make our conversations with children fun and engaging. So let's keep the language clear, simple, and interesting for them. If they have any questions, always encourage

Use Clear and Developmentally appropriate Language

them to ask and be ready to patiently provide additional explanations using words they can understand.

Now, When it comes to teaching children about the sensitive topic of child sexual abuse, it's crucial to approach the conversation with utmost care and use appropriate language that matches their age and level of understanding. Here are some examples of clear and developmentally appropriate language to use when discussing child sexual abuse:

"Private parts": Explain to the child that certain parts of their body are private and should not be touched by others. Use terms like "genitals" or "private areas" to describe these body parts, making sure they understand the importance of keeping them safe.

"Safe touch" and "unsafe touch": Teach them the difference between safe touches, such as hugs from family members or doctors examining them with a parent present, and unsafe touches, which may involve someone touching their private parts without a valid reason. Emphasise that unsafe touches are never okay and that they should always tell a trusted adult if someone makes them feel uncomfortable.

"Secrets": Explain that there are good secrets, like planning a surprise party, and bad secrets, like

Use Clear and Developmentally appropriate Language

someone telling them not to tell anyone about touching their private parts. Encourage them to share any bad secrets with a trusted adult, assuring them that it's important to talk about such things to keep them safe.

"Good touch" and "bad touch": Teach them that good touches, like friendly hugs or high fives, make them feel happy and comfortable, while bad touches, especially on their private parts, make them feel scared, confused, or uncomfortable. Emphasise that bad touches are never their fault and that they should immediately seek help if they experience them.

"Trusted adult": Help the child identify the adults they can trust and confide in if they ever face an uncomfortable situation. These trusted adults could be parents, teachers, grandparents, or family friends. Reinforce the message that it's okay to talk to these adults about anything that worries or upsets them, including inappropriate or uncomfortable touching.

Remember, these are just examples, and it's essential to tailor your language to the child's age and level of understanding. Always encourage open dialogue, answer their questions honestly, and assure them that their safety and well-being are a top priority.

TEACH CHILDREN ABOUT PERSONAL BOUNDARIES

When it comes to keeping our kids safe, one crucial topic that deserves our attention is personal boundaries. It's essential to teach children that their body is their own and that they have the power to decide who can touch them and how. But it's not just about their boundaries; it's also about respecting others' boundaries. Let's dive into this important conversation.

Imagine a special bubble around each child, like their personal space or comfort zone. They get to decide who can enter that bubble and how close they can get. It's like their own little kingdom where they are the boss. This bubble represents their body, and it belongs to them.

Kids should know that they have the right to say "no" if someone tries to cross their boundaries. They can say "no" to unwanted touches, hugs, or any physical contact that feels uncomfortable. It's their way of taking charge and ensuring that they feel safe and respected.

To help children understand personal boundaries better, the next few pages use some practical examples:

Teaching Children about Personal Boundaries

Bath Time Boundaries:

When it's bath time, kids might want privacy and space. Encourage them to let you know if they prefer to bathe alone or if they need some help. By acknowledging their boundaries, you're showing them that their voice matters, and you respect their decisions.

Consent for Hugs and Kisses:

Sometimes, well-meaning relatives or friends may want to show affection by giving hugs or kisses. Teach your child that they have the right to decide if they want to give or receive physical affection. They can greet people with a friendly wave or a high-five if they feel more comfortable with that.

Strangers and Secret Touches:

Explain that not everyone they meet is trustworthy. Remind them never to keep secrets about touches that make them feel uncomfortable, especially from adults. If someone tries to touch them inappropriately or tells them to keep it a secret, they need to speak up and share their concerns with a trusted adult.

By teaching kids about personal boundaries, we empower them to take control of their bodies and stay safe. Encourage open conversations where they can ask questions, share experiences, and express any concerns they may have. Let them know that you're always there to listen and support them. Remember, their body, their rules.

DISCUSS CONSENT

Now, let's talk about teaching children about consent in a conversational and engaging way, specifically when it comes to child sexual abuse.

Now, imagine you're talking to a group of children.

You could say something like this:

"Hey, kids, let's have a chat about a really important topic called consent. It's all about respecting each other's boundaries and making sure everyone feels safe and comfortable."

To explain the concept of consent, you could use a simple example.

For instance, you could say,

"You know how you like it when someone asks if they can borrow your toy before taking it? Well, the same idea applies to our bodies. Before touching someone, it's essential to ask for permission first. And guess what? Others should do the same with you."

Now, to make it more relatable, you might give an example specific to child sexual abuse.

You could say,

"Imagine your favourite uncle or aunt wants to give you a hug, but you don't feel comfortable with it. It's okay to say 'no' and let them know that you don't want to be hugged. Your body is your own, and you have the right to decide who can touch it."

Discuss Consent

To reinforce the message, you can emphasise that even trusted adults should respect a child's boundaries. You could say, "Sometimes, grown-ups we love and trust may want to show affection through touch. But remember, if you ever feel uncomfortable with any form of touch, even from someone you know well, you have the right to say 'no.' Your feelings matter, and it's important to listen to them."

Encourage open communication by letting the children know that they can always talk to a trusted adult if something makes them feel uncomfortable or if they have any questions. Remind them that they won't get in trouble for speaking up, and that adults are there to support and protect them.

By explaining consent in a conversational and engaging manner, using relatable examples, and stressing the importance of personal boundaries, you can help children understand the concept and empower them to assert their own rights and well-being. Remember, it's crucial to create a safe space for open dialogue and ensure that children feel supported and heard.

DIFFERENTIATE SAFE AND UNSAFE TOUCH

When it comes to helping children understand the difference between safe touch and unsafe touch, it's crucial to approach the topic with care and sensitivity. Explaining this concept to children can empower them and equip them with knowledge to protect themselves.

Let's start with safe touch. Safe touch refers to physical contact that is appropriate, comforting, and comes from trusted individuals in a child's life. For example, a safe touch could be a warm hug from a family member or a gentle pat on the back from a teacher. It's important to emphasize that safe touch should always feel comfortable and respectful.

On the other hand, unsafe touch involves contact that makes a child feel uncomfortable, scared, or confused. It is important to explain that certain parts of their body are private, and no one should touch or look at those parts without a valid reason. Examples of unsafe touch may include someone touching their private parts without their permission, asking them to keep it a secret, or engaging in inappropriate actions that make them feel uneasy.

To help children grasp these concepts better, you can discuss different scenarios with them. For instance, you could ask them how they would feel if a stranger or even someone they know tried to

Differentiate Safe and Unsafe Touch

touch them in a way that made them uncomfortable. Encourage them to voice their concerns and feelings openly.

You can also talk about situations where safe touch might become unsafe touch, such as when a trusted person starts crossing boundaries or making them feel uneasy. It's essential to emphasise that children have the right to say "no" and seek help if they ever experience an unsafe touch, even if it comes from someone they know and trust.

Reassure children that they can always confide in a trusted adult, such as a parent, teacher, or another caregiver, if they ever encounter an unsafe touch. Let them know that these adults are there to protect them and will take their concerns seriously.

Remember, creating a safe and open environment for children to discuss these sensitive topics is crucial. Encourage them to ask questions and address any misconceptions they may have. By providing them with knowledge and understanding, we can empower children to protect themselves and seek help if they ever encounter a situation involving child sexual abuse.

IDENTIFYING TRUSTED ADULTS

When it comes to helping children protect themselves from potential harm, it's crucial to teach them about identifying trusted adults in their lives. These are the special people whom children can turn to when they have worries or face uncomfortable situations. The role of these trusted adults is to believe and support them, providing the help and guidance they need.

So, let's think about how we can explain this concept to children in a conversational and engaging way, using examples specific to child sexual abuse. Imagine you're having a chat with a child, let's call her Emily.

You: Hey, Emily! I want to tell you something important. You know, just like superheroes have their sidekicks, children also have special people they can count on when they need help or feel upset. These people are called "trusted adults."

Emily: Really? Who can be a trusted adult, and how can I recognise them?

You: Great questions, Emily! Trusted adults can be different for everyone, but there are some qualities they all share. First, they are people who you feel comfortable talking to, like a family member, a teacher, or maybe a coach. These are adults who make you feel safe and listen to you without judgment.

Emily: I think I understand. So, what do I do if I have a concern or feel uncomfortable about something?

Identifying Trusted Adults

You: That's right, Emily! If you ever have any worries or something happens that makes you feel uncomfortable, you should talk to one of your trusted adults. Let me give you an example related to what we're talking about. Let's say you're playing on the computer, and someone you don't know starts asking you personal questions or wants to meet you in person. That's definitely a red flag, and you should talk to a trusted adult right away. They will listen to you, believe you, and help you figure out what to do to stay safe.

Emily: I understand! It's like having my own team of superheroes to protect me.

You: Exactly, Emily! You've got it! Trusted adults are like your personal superheroes who are there to support you whenever you need them. Remember, it's essential to choose adults you trust, and if you ever feel scared, worried, or uncomfortable, they'll be ready to swoop in and help you out.

Emily: I feel much better knowing I have trusted adults I can turn to. Thanks for explaining it to me!

You: You're welcome, Emily! It's always important to remember that you're not alone, and there are people who care about you and want to keep you safe. Don't hesitate to reach out to your trusted adults whenever you need them. They're here for you!

By using this conversational and engaging approach, we can help children understand the concept of trusted adults and feel empowered to seek their support when facing challenging situations, including those related to child sexual abuse.

CHOOSING A TRUSTED ADULT

So, the children now know what trusted adults are, now, let's talk about them.

As mentioned earlier, choosing trusted adults is an important step in helping children stay safe and protected, it is like assembling their own team of superheroes... Teaching them can be an interesting and engaging activity, where you guide the child in making a list of individuals they consider trusted adults. There are however a few qualities that qualifies an individual as a trusted adult, you and the child must agree that every individual on the final list possesses all the following qualities.

Qualities of a trusted adult:

- Someone they feel safe and at ease with.
- Someone they are really comfortable talking to and can share anything with.
- Someone who listens carefully to what the child has to say when they share their thoughts and concerns.
- Someone who genuinely takes their worries seriously and wants to help them.
- Someone who will keep conversations with the child private, unless they believe the child is in danger or someone might get hurt. (i.e they understand the importance of privacy and won't share information without a good reason.)
- Someone who has the child's best interest at heart.
- Someone caring supportive, and who seeks to keep the child safe.
- Someone who offers guidance and helps the child make the right choices when facing difficult situations.

Choosing a Trusted Adults

As an adult, you play a crucial role in helping children choose trusted adults who can provide support and protection, and here is how you can assist them:

Encourage Open Communication:

Create an environment that encourages children to share their feelings, experiences, and concerns openly. Let them know that it is normal to have questions and that you are there to listen and provide guidance. Encourage them to share their feelings and listen attentively without judgment.

Help identify potential candidates:

Guide children in identifying adults they already feel comfortable talking to, such as family members, teachers, coaches, or other trusted individuals in their lives. Encourage them to consider the qualities they appreciate in these adults.

Discuss trustworthiness:

Explain to children that trusted adults are people who can be relied upon. Discuss the importance of trust and how trustworthy individuals listen attentively, believe the child's experiences, and keep their conversations confidential.

Emphasise support and care:

Highlight the importance of choosing adults who genuinely care for the child's well-being. Discuss

Choosing a Trusted Adults

Encourage critical thinking:

Teach children to assess whether the adults they consider have their best interests at heart. Encourage them to think about how these adults have demonstrated care and concern in the past.

Foster multiple options:

Help children understand that they can have more than one trusted adult in their lives. Explain that different adults can provide different perspectives and types of support.

Reinforce ongoing communication:

Encourage children to maintain open lines of communication with their trusted adults. Let them know that it's okay to reach out whenever they have worries, concerns, or uncomfortable experiences.

Children can have more than one trusted adults, these individuals can provide different perspectives and support them in various ways. Their team of trusted adults is there to protect them and help them navigate any challenges that come their way.

By having open and engaging conversations with children about these points, we can help them grasp the importance of choosing trusted adults who will consistently offer support and protection.

UTILISING AGE-APPROPRIATE RESOURCES

When it comes to teaching children about personal boundaries, consent, and safe touch, it's important to make the learning process engaging and relatable. One effective way to do this is by utilising age-appropriate resources that can reinforce these important messages.

Imagine sitting down with your little ones, armed with a stack of colourful books or an exciting video, to explore the concept of personal boundaries. These resources can bring the topic to life in a way that captures their attention and makes it easier for them to understand.

Books specifically written for children can be a fantastic tool. Look for stories that introduce the concept of personal boundaries in a gentle and accessible manner. They may feature characters who navigate different situations and learn about consent and safe touch along the way. As you read together, take the time to discuss the story, ask questions, and encourage your child to share their thoughts and feelings.

Videos can also be a valuable resource. There are plenty of child-friendly videos available online that address personal boundaries and consent. These videos often use engaging animations or relatable scenarios to get the message across effectively. Watching together can spark meaningful

Utilising Age-Appropriate Resources

conversations and provide an opportunity for your child to ask questions or express any concerns they may have.

By incorporating these age-appropriate resources into your conversations about personal boundaries, consent, and safe touch, you're providing children with additional support and reinforcing the importance of these topics in a way that resonates with them. Remember, creating a safe and open environment for discussion is key, so encourage your child to express their thoughts and feelings as you explore these important subjects together.

BE A ROLE MODEL

Being a role model is not just about having a fancy title or being in a position of authority. It's about setting an example for others, especially children, through our actions and behaviours. When it comes to interacting with children, it becomes even more important to model respectful behaviour, active listening, and empathy.

Think about it, children are like sponges, absorbing everything around them. They observe how we talk, how we treat others, and how we handle different situations. They are constantly learning from us, whether we realise it or not. So, it's crucial that we demonstrate the kind of behaviour we want to see in them.

Respectful behaviour is the cornerstone of any healthy relationship. Show children the importance of treating others with kindness, politeness, and consideration. This means using good manners, saying "please" and "thank you," and showing appreciation for others. It also involves valuing their opinions and treating them as equals, even if they are younger or less experienced than us.

Active listening is another vital skill to model. Give children your full attention when they speak, maintaining eye contact and avoiding distractions. This shows them that their thoughts and feelings matter. Encourage them to express themselves freely and openly, and truly listen to what

Be a Role Model

they have to say. By doing so, you create a safe and trusting environment where they feel heard and understood.

Empathy is a quality that can transform relationships and build bridges of understanding. Teach children to put themselves in others' shoes and consider their perspectives and feelings. Show empathy towards them when they are upset or facing challenges, and help them develop compassion for others. By modelling empathy, we teach them the value of kindness and the importance of supporting one another.

Remember, being a role model is an ongoing process. It's about consistently embodying the values and behaviours we want to instil in the younger generation. So, whether you're a parent, a teacher, or someone who interacts with children, seize every opportunity to demonstrate respectful behaviour, active listening, and empathy. You never know how your actions today can shape the leaders and compassionate individuals of tomorrow.

PROVIDE REASSURANCE

Reassure children that they can always come to you with any questions or concerns they may have. Let them know that you are there to support and protect them, and that their safety and well-being are a top priority.

Imagine this: You're a trusted guardian, a caring adult figure in a child's life. It's crucial to create an atmosphere where children feel safe and secure, knowing they can approach you with any worries, queries, or doubts. You want them to understand that they can rely on you, that you'll always be there to lend a helping hand and protect them. After all, their safety and well-being are your utmost concern.

So, how can we make sure the little ones feel reassured? Well, it starts with fostering open lines of communication. Encourage them to express themselves freely, without any fear of judgment or consequences. Let them know that no matter how big or small their concerns might seem, you're there to listen attentively and provide the guidance they need.

You could say something like, *"Hey kiddo, I wanted to let you know that I'm always here for you. If you ever have any questions or if something is bothering you, please don't hesitate to come and talk to me. Your thoughts and feelings are important, and I want to make sure you feel safe and supported."*

Provide Reassurance

It's also crucial to emphasise their safety and well-being. Assure them that you're actively looking out for their protection. You might say, "You know what? You mean the world to me, and nothing is more important than keeping you safe. If anything ever worries you or makes you uncomfortable, remember that I'm here to help you through it. We'll figure it out together."

By using such conversational and engaging language, you're creating an environment where children feel valued and understood. They'll be more likely to approach you when they need reassurance or have questions, knowing that you genuinely care about their happiness and peace of mind.

Remember, being there for the little ones in our lives is a special responsibility, and by providing reassurance, we can create a nurturing space where they thrive.

ADDRESS DIFFERENT SCENARIOS

Discuss various scenarios with children to help them understand different situations where personal boundaries and consent may come into play. This can include scenarios at home, school, or in other social settings. Encourage them to think critically and problem-solve potential solutions.

Scenario 1: The Unwanted Hug

Introduce a scenario that could occur in a social setting, like a family gathering. Lola doesn't like hugs, but her uncle keeps insisting on hugging her tightly. You engage the children in a discussion about how Lola can navigate this situation while still being polite. They might suggest that Lola can say, *"Thank you for wanting to hug me, but I prefer not to be hugged. Can we shake hands instead?"* This scenario emphasises the idea that consent is essential, even with close family members.

Throughout these discussions, encourage the children to think critically and problem-solve potential solutions. You can ask open-ended questions like, *"What do you think could happen if the boundaries are not respected?"* or *"How else do you think they could resolve the situation?"* This fosters their critical thinking skills and encourages empathy towards others.

Address Different Scenarios

Remember, the key is to make these scenarios relatable and engaging, so the children can grasp the importance of personal boundaries and consent in their daily lives. By discussing various scenarios, we empower children to navigate different situations while respecting their own boundaries and those of others.

EMPHASISE THE IMPORTANCE OF BODY AUTONOMY

It's crucial to highlight the significance of body autonomy, especially when it comes to educating children. We want to empower them with the knowledge that they have the right to make decisions about their own bodies. It's all about teaching them that they have the power to say "yes" or "no" to any kind of touch, and that their choices should always be respected.

You see, children deserve to understand that their bodies belong to them, and they have the authority to determine what feels comfortable or uncomfortable for them. By imparting this understanding, we are instilling in them a strong sense of ownership over their bodies and personal boundaries.

To make it more relatable and engaging for children, we can use examples and scenarios that they can easily grasp. For instance, we can ask them how they would feel if someone tried to touch their arm without their permission. We can explain that just as they wouldn't appreciate it, they should also consider how they feel when someone invades their personal space without consent. By relating it to their own experiences, we can help them internalise the importance of body autonomy.

Emphasise The Importance of Body Autonomy

It's also crucial to teach children about the different types of touches and the appropriate responses to them. For example, they should know that a doctor's examination is necessary for their health and well-being and that it's okay to allow it. However, if they ever feel uncomfortable or unsure about any touch, they should feel empowered to speak up and say "**no.**" Reinforcing this message lets them know that their feelings and choices are valid and should be respected.

Moreover, encouraging open communication is key. Children should feel comfortable talking to trusted adults, such as parents, teachers, or caregivers, about any concerns or instances where their body autonomy was violated. Creating a safe environment where they can freely express themselves helps foster trust and ensures they receive the support they need.

Ultimately, emphasising body autonomy is about equipping children with the knowledge and confidence to make decisions about their bodies. By doing so, we empower them to set boundaries, respect the boundaries of others, and develop a strong sense of self-worth and agency.

FOSTER EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

One of the key aspects of nurturing children's emotional intelligence is encouraging them to recognise and express their emotions. It's vital for children to understand that their feelings are valid and that it's perfectly alright to communicate their emotions in a healthy way. By doing so, we empower them to set boundaries and assert themselves when necessary.

You see, emotions play a significant role in our lives, and it's essential for children to develop a strong emotional foundation from an early age. When children are encouraged to acknowledge and express their feelings, they gain a deeper understanding of themselves and others. They learn that it's perfectly okay to feel sad, happy, angry, or excited, and that these emotions are a natural part of being human.

So, how can we help children foster emotional intelligence? Well, one way is by creating an open and supportive environment where they feel safe to express themselves without fear of judgment or ridicule. We can start by actively listening to their emotions and validating their experiences. For example, if a child expresses frustration over a difficult task, we can say something like, "I understand how challenging that must be for you. It's completely normal to feel frustrated in such situations."

Foster Emotional Intelligence

It's also important to teach children how to communicate their emotions effectively. We can encourage them to use words to describe how they feel, whether it's through talking or even through writing or drawing. For instance, if a child is upset about something, we can encourage them to express their feelings by saying, "Can you tell me more about why you're feeling upset?" This helps them articulate their emotions and develop a better understanding of their own internal world.

By fostering emotional intelligence in children, we equip them with valuable life skills. They learn how to navigate their emotions, which can enhance their overall well-being and resilience. They become better at recognising their limits and asserting themselves when needed, whether it's saying no to something that makes them uncomfortable or standing up for themselves when faced with a challenging situation.

Ultimately, by empowering children to recognise and express their emotions, we help them develop into emotionally intelligent individuals who are more in tune with themselves and others. It's a journey that begins with validating their feelings, creating a safe space for open communication, and guiding them towards effective expression.

REINFORCE THE IMPORTANCE OF REPORTING

Reporting is a super important topic, especially when it comes to uncomfortable or abusive situations. It's crucial to emphasise to children that they should never blame themselves if someone crosses their boundaries. They need to know that seeking help is absolutely vital for their own safety and well-being.

Here's an example on how to have these talks —

*“Hey Kids, we need to have a little chat about something really important - **REPORTING**. You see, if you ever find yourself in an uncomfortable or abusive situation, it's crucial to speak up and let someone know. It's not your fault, not even a tiny bit, if someone violates your personal boundaries. Remember, you have the right to feel safe and respected at all times. Now, when you need help, it is always best to reach out to any of your trusted adult (if they have't chosen one yet, this is an opportunity to do so). They are there to support you and guide you through tough times.*

Now, you may wonder why reporting is so important, well, think of it this way - when you report an uncomfortable or abusive situation, you are taking a big step towards protecting yourself and ensuring your well-being. By speaking up, you are not only seeking the help you deserve, but you're also helping prevent similar situations from happening to others.

Remember, little champs, reporting is all about looking out for yourself and for others. It's a powerful tool that empowers you and gives you the support you need. So never hesitate to open up and share your concerns with a trusted adult. They'll be there to listen, guide, and help you through any tough situation you might face. Just remember, you're never alone in this journey, and there are people who genuinely care about your safety and happiness. So, be brave, be strong, and always remember the importance of reporting!”

KEEPING THE CONVERSATION GOING

It's crucial to keep the conversation flowing and maintain an ongoing dialogue with your children. As they grow and mature, their comprehension of personal boundaries, consent, and safe touch will naturally evolve. That's why it's essential to consistently check in with them, tackle any fresh queries or worries they may have, and adapt the information and guidance you provide accordingly.

Growing up is an exciting journey full of changes, and it's our responsibility as parents or guardians to ensure our children feel supported and informed along the way. By regularly discussing topics related to personal boundaries, consent, and safe touch, we can empower them with the knowledge and skills they need to navigate the world confidently.

Think of it as an ongoing conversation rather than a one-time lecture. By approaching these discussions with an open mind and a willingness to listen, you create an environment where your children feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and asking questions. It's through these conversations that you can gauge their understanding, address any misconceptions, and reinforce positive attitudes towards personal safety.

Keep The Conversation Going

Remember that each child is unique, and their readiness to absorb information may vary. So, it's important to tailor your conversations to their individual needs and developmental stage. Be sensitive to their cues and adjust the level of detail and guidance you provide accordingly. By doing so, you can ensure that your discussions remain engaging and relevant to their current circumstances.

As your children grow older, they may encounter new situations or face different challenges. Stay attuned to these changes and be proactive in addressing them. If your child brings up a new question or concern, take the opportunity to explore it together. Encourage them to express their thoughts, listen actively, and provide honest and age-appropriate answers.

Ultimately, the goal is to foster an environment of trust and open communication, where your children feel comfortable approaching you with any topic or concern. By consistently engaging in these conversations, you empower them to make informed decisions, set boundaries, and recognise the importance of consent and personal safety.

So, let's keep the conversation going, adapting and evolving as our children do. By doing so, we can equip them with the knowledge and skills they need to navigate the world with confidence and resilience.

By following these given guidelines, you can effectively navigate age-appropriate conversations with children about personal boundaries, consent, and safe touch. By equipping them with this knowledge and fostering open communication, you are helping to empower children and promote their safety, well-being, and healthy relationships.





