



Children's
SOCIETY
Caring for the Future



KidzLive: I Can Protect Myself
By Singapore Children's Society

About KidzLive

KidzLive teaches children to protect themselves against sexual abuse.

This programme incorporates interactive elements to teach children to respect their bodies, differentiate between good and bad touches and to tell a trusted adult if they are touched inappropriately. KidzLive was conducted in primary schools from 2000 to 2009 and has been reaching out to pre-schoolers since 2011. This booklet was given to your child because he/she has attended the programme. However, if your child had not gone through the KidzLive programme, it is still possible for you to make use of this booklet to pass on body safety messages to your child.

This booklet provides information on child sexual abuse. It also gives you an understanding of the key messages shared during the KidzLive programme. Going through these messages with your child from time to time will strengthen his/ her self-protection skills. This booklet can be downloaded from our website

www.childrensociety.org.sg

If you have any feedback for us, please contact us at

info@childrensociety.org.sg or **6273 2010**

WHAT IS CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE?

- Any sexual activity between an adult and a child. Sometimes it can happen between children.
- Inappropriate fondling, touching or kissing a child.
- Exposing a child to pornographic materials or sexual acts.
- Failure to protect a child from sexual advances.



REMEMBER:

- Both boys and girls can be victims.
- Perpetrators can be male or female. Most perpetrators are people whom the child knows, e.g. family members or family friends.
- Most sexual abuse cases happen without violence involved.
- Children rarely lie about sexual abuse incidents.
- Children can be taught to protect themselves.



Teach your child to identify his private body parts.



Note to parents: Teaching children the correct terms for their private body parts helps them develop respect for their bodies. Children will also be better able to report sexual abuse incidents.



Private body parts are areas on my body that are covered by my underwear. I do not show or allow people to touch them for no good reason. A check by the doctor or a loving hug from mummy or daddy, however, is fine.

I have to take care of my body. I also cannot see or touch other people's private body parts. No one is allowed to put their private body part into my mouth too.



Help your child to differentiate between good and bad touches.



A BAD TOUCH

When someone touches me on my private body parts, it is a **bad touch**. A bad touch makes me feel confused and scared.

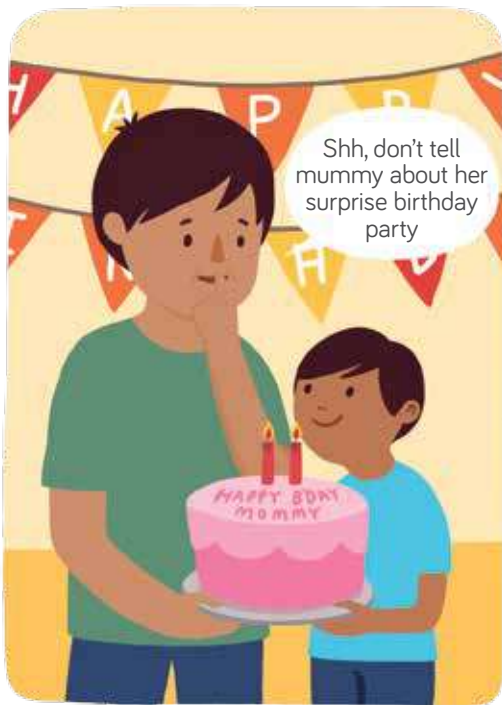
Note to parents: Help your child understand that his body belongs to him. If he feels uncomfortable when someone touches or kisses him, he should ask the person to stop. He should also tell a trusted adult if this happens.



On the other hand, a **good touch** makes me feel happy, like when my teacher pats me on my back for sharing toys.



Explain that there are good and bad secrets.



Arif,
this is a **bad** secret!
You should tell
someone about it!



Note to parents: Instead of good and bad secrets, some parents teach their children to differentiate between surprises and secrets. Surprises will eventually be known, whereas secrets are meant to be kept. These parents encourage their children to tell about any secrets that others ask them to keep.

Ask your child: Who can Arif tell his bad secret to?



Reassure your child that it is never his fault if someone touches him on his private body parts.



No, Xiaofen!
Don't listen to him!
It's **not** your fault!
Quick, tell someone
you trust!



Don't tell anybody about
this. Nobody will believe
you and they will think
that this is your fault!

Note to parents: Tell your child that even if he makes mistakes, he should not be punished by touches to his private body parts.

Ask your child: Did Xiaofen do anything wrong? What should Xiaofen do next?



Teach your child that he should not see other people's private body parts – not on handphones, TVs or computers.



Johnny, it's not right to look at other people's private body parts! Walk away and tell a trusted adult about it!



Note to parents: Perpetrators may expose children to pornography, to make inappropriate sexual behaviour seem normal.

Ask your child: Do you think what the Uncle did was right or wrong? What should Johnny do next?



Inform your child that familiar people may also do bad things to him.



Oh dear! Devi, this is wrong. Quick, go tell mummy and daddy about it.



Note to parents: Often, sexual abuse is committed by adults whom children are familiar with. Children need to understand that they should always seek help and tell a trusted adult if a secret makes them feel scared or upset.

Ask your child: Do you think what the Aunty did was right or wrong? Who can Devi tell?



Practice the N.O.T rules of - "Say No, Walk Out and Tell a Trusted Adult".



SAY **No**



WALK **OUT**



TELL A
TRUSTED ADULT

Note to parents: Your child may not fully understand what a 'trusted adult' means. You can help your child by naming a few people whom he can turn to when he needs help.



The following are possible signs and symptoms of sexual abuse.

PHYSICAL SIGNS

- Pain, itching, discharge, bleeding or infections in the genital or anal regions.
- Unexplained injuries on the breasts, buttocks and/or lower abdomen.
- Unexplained blood stains on the underpants.

BEHAVIOURAL SYMPTOMS

- Display of sexual knowledge beyond the child's age in artwork, stories or play.
- Regressive behaviour, e.g. sudden return to bed-wetting or soiling.
- Sudden behavioural changes, e.g. a well-mannered child becoming aggressive or a talkative child becoming withdrawn.
- Changes in eating and sleeping patterns.



Sexual development of children

Knowing the typical sexual development of your child will help you to teach information that is age-appropriate and reflects your family's values on sexuality.

CHILDREN AGED 4-6



- Aware of gender differences between males and females
- No strong sense of modesty
- Curious about their own and other people's bodies.
- Mimic dating behaviours, such as hugging or kissing

- Touch their genitals or masturbate, for pleasure or comfort, sometimes in public



Sexual development of children

- Explore private body parts with their peers through games that involve looking and touching
- Talk about private body parts and use 'naughty' or slang words
- Have limited knowledge about pregnancy and childbirth



However, certain sexualised behaviours may be **warning signs of abuse**, especially if these behaviours:

- are beyond the child's developmental stage (e.g. a pre-schooler mimicking sexual intercourse)
- are forceful or aggressive, causing fear and anxiety in other children
- are persistent and interrupt the child's daily activities
- do not decrease when told by caregivers to stop



Talk to your child about sexuality

Creating a positive and open channel of communication with your child will build the foundation for healthy relationships and sexuality. This will also equip them with protective skills that will keep them safe from sexual abuse.

HOW CAN I BEGIN?

- Teach the proper terms of private body parts and personal safety boundaries
- Give simple and accurate explanations for the body and bodily functions
 - Use teachable moments, such as when toileting, showering or taking the public transport, to impart body safety skills
 - Children often comment that mummy and daddy can see and touch their private body parts. Explain that parents or caregivers can see and touch children's private body parts only for a good reason, for example when helping them to keep their bodies clean.
 - Help your child to differentiate between good and bad touches/ right and wrong actions



Talk to your child about sexuality

- Emphasise to your child that their bodies belong to them and they have the right to say "no" to unwanted touches, including kisses and hugs



- Children are usually taught about stranger danger. But it is essential to teach your child that familiar adults can also behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- Have your child identify a few trusted adults they can turn to if they need help. Encourage them to keep telling until they get help.
- Assure your child that you and other trusted adults will be able to support and help them
- Listen and believe your child if they disclose a sexual abuse incident
- Practice the **N.O.T** rules

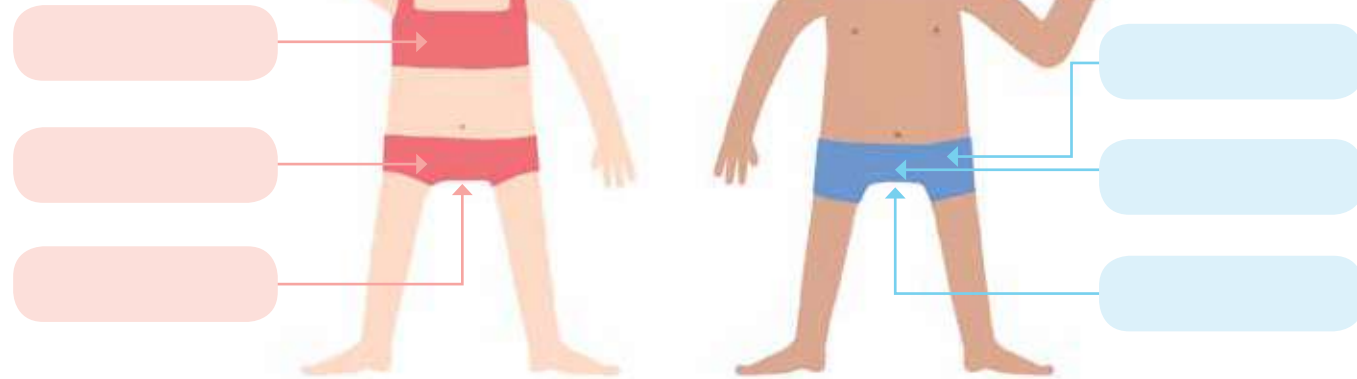


Note to parents: How you react as a parent or caregiver is important. Some parents may feel that sexuality is a taboo subject that should not be discussed, but this also means that their child may find it difficult to approach them if they have any questions or concerns.



Activity #1: Let's dress-up!

- ▶ Can you name the private body parts of the boy and girl?
- ▶ Can you help put on their clothes?



Note to parents: Point out to your child that the areas covered by the boy and girl's undergarments are called 'private body parts'. If he is unsure, you can help him match the correct terms for the private body parts of boys and girls. Remind your child that he needs to take care of his own body, and that no one should see or touch his private body parts.



Activity #2: Who can I tell?

A **Trusted Adult** is someone who cares for you and can keep you safe.

- ▶ Join the dots. What do you see?
- ▶ Who are your trusted adults? Use the stickers to paste their faces on the petals, or draw their faces here.



Note to parents: Help your child to recognise that he has more than one trusted adult. These could be people within the family, or outside the family, e.g. teachers. If your child is unable to get help from the first trusted adult he approaches, encourage him to tell another and to keep telling until he gets help.



Activity #3: What will you do?

Even when children are aware of right and wrong actions, they may not know how to react when they are caught off guard.

Use the following scenarios to guide children to apply the **N.O.T.** rules to better prepare them.

What if someone tries to peep at you when you are using the toilet?

What if an uncle you know is playing a game with you, and tells you to touch his private body parts?

What if a stranger comes up to you and shows you his private body parts?

What if an uncle you know touches your private body parts and says that he is doing it because he loves you?



Teach your child to be assertive - say "no" repeatedly in a firm and loud manner. Once he gets away, he should quickly tell a trusted adult.

Note to parents: Sexual abuse cases reported in the news are good entry points for discussing this topic with your child. Doing so will help them to be more aware of potentially unsafe situations.

If you suspect that a child has been sexually abused, call the **MSF Child Protective Service Helpline** (Ministry of Social and Family Development) at **1800-777 0000**

or lodge a report at the nearest **Police Divisional HQ, Neighbourhood Police Post or Centre** or call **999**.

You may also call the hotline numbers of the **Child Protection Specialist Centres** (CPSC) for assistance.

Heart @ Fei Yue 6819 9170
Big Love 6445 0400

Here are other relevant resources that parents and other caregivers can look up for further information. Some of the information in this booklet have also been referenced from these online sources.

Singapore

- Singapore Children's Society
April Learns to Protect Herself animation video
- Health Promotion Board
Your Role in Sexuality Education;
Keeping Your Child Safe from Sexual Abuse

Other Countries

- Alberta Health Services, Canada
Talking to Your Child About Sexuality - Parent Package
- Better Health Channel, Australia
Talking to Pre-Schoolers about Sex
- National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, United Kingdom
Sexual Abuse
- The National Child Traumatic Stress Network, United States
Caring for Kids - What Parents Need to Know about Sexual Abuse



ABOUT SINGAPORE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY

Singapore Children's Society has been helping disadvantaged children, youth and their families in Singapore since 1952. We are an independent and non-profit organisation that relies predominantly on public support for many of our programmes and public education initiatives such as KidzLive.

Produced by

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