



NORTH DAKOTA **CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION GUIDE FOR CAREGIVERS**

Guidance for parents, caregivers, foster parents,
and guardians to prevent child sexual abuse.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A special thank you goes to the members of the North Dakota Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Task Force Primary Prevention Subcommittee and their respective agencies.

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The North Dakota Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Task Force is committed to supporting child sexual abuse awareness efforts and prevention strategies throughout the state. The Task Force encourages parents, foster care parents, guardians, grandparents, families, and all caregivers of children to utilize this guide.

Child sexual abuse is a hidden but substantial problem in every community, and education is key to reducing victimization in our communities.

Please contact the North Dakota Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Task Force Director with questions at lburkhardt@pcand.org.

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OVERVIEW



WHAT IS CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE?

Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) is any interaction between a child and an adult (or an older or more powerful child) in which the child is used for the sexual stimulation of the offender. Sexual abuse can include both touching and non-touching acts. Touching behaviors may include fondling, kissing, oral, anal, or vaginal sex.

Non-touching behaviors may include voyeurism (looking at a child's naked body for pleasure), exhibitionism (exposing oneself to a child), exposing a child to pornography, or indecent conversations with a child.

MYTHS & FACTS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

When it comes to CSA, the statistics are shocking. Below you will find myths and facts relating to sexual abuse.

MYTH #1: CHILDREN WHO ARE SEXUALLY ABUSED ARE MOST OFTEN ABUSED BY STRANGERS.

Fact: 91% of children are sexually abused by someone they know and trust. (*Fast Facts: Preventing Child Sexual Abuse, 2022*)

MYTH #2: CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE IS ALWAYS PERPETRATED BY ADULTS.

Fact: 70% of children who are sexually abused are abused by older or more powerful children. (*Gewirtz-Meydan & Finkelhor, 2020*). It is important to note that sibling sexual abuse (SSA) is thought to be the most common type of sexual abuse within a family. It is at least 3 times more prevalent than parent-to-child abuse and happens in communities everywhere. (*Our Story, n.d.*)

MYTH #3: CHILDREN LIE ABOUT BEING SEXUALLY ABUSED, OFTEN FOR ATTENTION.

Fact: Statistics show that only 4-8% of reports of abuse made by children are false or fabricated. Or, in other words, between 92 and 96% of reports are true. (*7 Myths about Child Sexual Abuse, 2021*)

MYTH #4: CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE DOESN'T HAPPEN IN NORTH DAKOTA.

Fact: Children everywhere are at risk of abuse; it doesn't matter what kind of neighborhood, town, or community you live in. Abusers come from a variety of different socioeconomic backgrounds, races, religious affiliations, and educational statuses.

MYTH #5: CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE IS A RARE EXPERIENCE.

Fact: One in every 10 North Dakota children will be a victim of sexual abuse by their 18th birthday; approximately 65% will be female. (*Children's Advocacy Centers of North Dakota, 2023*)



CAREGIVER GUIDE PURPOSE

Caregivers are gatekeepers to keeping children safe. This guide is a resource for caregivers to help protect the children we love from being sexually abused by providing resources, information, and tools. By educating ourselves, we can become a powerful force in making North Dakota a safer place for children.

Studies show that many caregivers don't discuss child sexual abuse with their child for various reasons. This may include feeling that their child is too young to understand, feeling unsure about how to explain CSA to their child, feeling the topic might frighten their child, feeling their child is not at risk for CSA, and many more

reasons. Regardless of the reason, it is vital that we start having these conversations with children. It is 100% the responsibility of adults to keep children safe, but children won't speak up if boundaries get crossed unless they know it's wrong and have the language to do so.

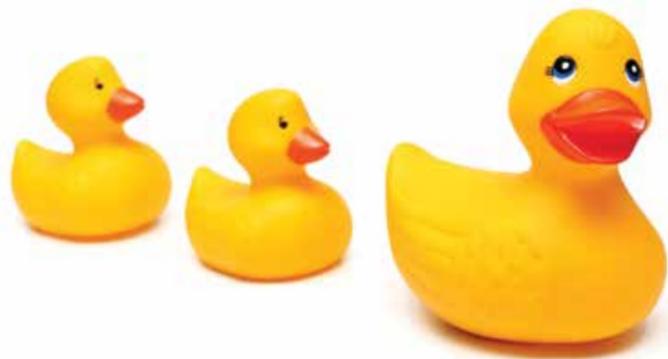
While the topic of child sexual abuse can be scary and uncomfortable, it is important to remember that there are many things you can do to help prevent abuse from happening in the first place. This guide shares resources, information, and tools to help keep children you love safe from sexual abuse.

This guide is updated annually.

TERMINOLOGY

There are a few terms we should discuss prior to you reading through the guide to ensure understanding. Within the guide, we utilize the term **abuser**. In this guide, we are referring to a person who sexually abuses a child. Throughout the guide, we will also use the phrase **your child**. We are not just referring to someone

with a biological child, but this could include a child you love and care for like your niece or nephew, grandchild, students in your classroom, child living in your home, etc. You will also see the acronym **CSA** throughout the guide and that stands for Child Sexual Abuse.



HEALTHY GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT



It is important to understand healthy childhood sexual development in children, as it plays a key role in sexual abuse prevention. Adults are not typically taught what to expect as children develop sexually, which can make it extremely challenging to tell the difference between healthy and concerning behaviors.

Sexuality is a normal part of life, even for babies and young children. Like other aspects of development, like motor skills or emotional intelligence, sexual behavior is healthy, expected, and tends to follow a typical trajectory in childhood. (McClure, 2022)

Sexual development begins the day a child is born. Children reach physical and emotional milestones as they grow — such as learning to crawl, walk, and talk. They also reach important milestones in how they feel and learn about their bodies, how they experience relationships with family members and friends, and how they become aware of who they are as a person.

As caregivers, it's important to learn about typical sexual development in children. This provides an opportunity to understand what normal development is and what may be cause for concern. It's important for caregivers to develop positive and open communication around topics of sexuality. This creates an environment where children know they can come to you for accurate, health-based information and guidance. Talking with young children about their bodies and sexuality paves the way for open communication as they get older. These conversations will positively influence children's comfort with their bodies and the likelihood they will come to their caregivers later with questions.

KEEPING KIDS SAFE FROM SEXUAL ABUSE

In general, children involved in healthy sexual exploration are:

- Doing so consensually and voluntarily
- Of similar size and age
- More exploratory than explicitly sexual in nature
- Not aggressive, forceful, or hurtful to self or others
- Acting unplanned, infrequent, spontaneous
- Easily diverted when caregivers tell them to stop or explains that privacy is necessary

In Appendix A, you can find a chart to learn more about healthy sexual development by age of a child. When we understand what typical healthy sexual development and exploration looks like, we can more easily identify what sexual behaviors may be concerning.

Behaviors that are always concerning include:

- Sexual play with animals
- Sexual acts that reveal knowledge beyond the child's age (adult-type sexual activities)
- Sexual play with the purpose to harm others
- Use of force, threats, or bribery to try and engage others in sexual play
- Display of sexual behavior in public (older children)
- Preoccupied with sexual play at the exclusion of any other form of play
- Sexual play with much older or younger children
- Sexual behavior that is not easily diverted (unresponsive to redirection or teaching efforts)



When it comes to keeping children safe from sexual abuse, we shouldn't:

- a) trust people based solely on their authority or reputation,
- b) assume that schools, child care provider/ programs, and youth-serving organizations take comprehensive steps to protect children,
- c) treat stranger danger education as an effective sexual abuse prevention strategy (remember — 91% of children know the abuser), and
- d) avoid talking about sexual abuse with children to avoid scaring them. These strategies are ineffective at keeping children safe from sexual abuse. Below, you will find strategies you can use to help protect the children in your life from sexual abuse.

AWARENESS

One of the first steps in preventing child sexual abuse is learning the facts and building awareness — just by reading this guide, you are expanding your awareness. Knowledge is power! The greater number of adults who are aware of what child sexual abuse is and strategies to prevent it, the greater chance of keeping children safe. We know that having **accurate** knowledge is one

of the best and most fundamental ways to protect children from sexual abuse. Whether comfortable or not, we need to transform fear-based avoidance into proactive information-gathering and knowledge. (Elizabeth Jeglic, 2022)



BUILD A SAFETY NETWORK OF TRUSTED ADULTS

It's vital to have a supportive network of adults who you can have conversations with about sexual abuse, body safety rules, and all the items listed within this section of the guide. These are individuals that you are intentionally choosing and who agree to be part of this team to keep your child safe. These are your child's **trusted adults**.

Children should have 3-5 trusted adults. Let the child know they can tell that person anything. It's also important to tell your child that their trusted adults will:

1. Always honor and respect body safety rules.
2. Never ask the child to keep good or bad secrets.
3. Believe them when they say someone or something has made them feel unsafe, scared, or uncomfortable.

Conversations you might consider having with members of your safety network include:

- Share myths and facts of child sexual abuse and have open, honest conversations on the topic.

- Discuss consent and your family's body safety rules (see *Appendix C*).
 - Trusted adults encourage children to assert their boundaries and have control of their own bodies from a young age. This means talking about consent early.
 - If your child spends a large amount of time with this person at their home, you can give them a copy of the Body Safety Rules poster to hang at their home.
- Review how this person can be an informed resource for your child.
 - You might request this person to be a resource to your child about healthy relationships and having age-appropriate conversations about sexual development. This can help reduce the risk of exposure to unhealthy or unrealistic information.
- It's important to ask this person if they want to and are willing to be a trusted adult for your child and not just assume that they will. Communication is key!

BODY PARTS AND CONSENT

One important thing you can do today to start keeping the children you care for safe is to teach them the correct anatomical terms when teaching them their body parts. Teaching children the correct names for all their body parts promotes their development of a healthy and positive body image. This can also possibly help prevent child abuse from happening in the first place. In one study, researchers interviewed 91 sex offenders who were convicted of molesting children. They asked various questions about their crime, including how they selected the victims. Some reported that they were less likely to target children who knew the correct anatomical names for body parts, as they thought this may increase the risk of them getting caught. (Elizabeth Jeglic, 2022) Teaching correct anatomical names can also help a child disclose abuse if it occurs.

Children must be taught from a young age that they have a right to have boundaries around their personal space and body. Children should not be forced to give hugs or kisses. Not everyone appreciates hugs or physical contact. In the same respect that children should not yield control over their body, they should learn to use consent before touching others. (Shalon Nienow, 2023) Teaching children consent will help give a child the permission and confidence to say "NO" should someone touch them in a way that makes them uncomfortable.

SECRETS & SURPRISES

"Secret keeping" is a trick oftentimes used by abusers to keep the abuse hidden. Use the word "surprise" instead of "secret." Talk about healthy surprises, such as a surprise trip to the beach or a surprise birthday party. You can explain how surprises should be fun and everyone should know about the surprise soon — unlike a secret, which may be forever and potentially dangerous or unsafe.

Make sure your child knows they can always tell you or a trusted adult if they've been asked to keep a secret. No matter who asked them to keep a secret, it's always OK to tell you or a trusted adult, and it won't result in them getting in trouble.

SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

There are things we can do both at home and in other environments to ensure safety for children. **Require an open-door policy** both at home and when visiting other places. Doors should be open if there is more than one person in the room, and this should apply every day, even if it's just your immediate family. One-on-one time doesn't need to be in a closed bedroom or down in the basement out of view.

Remain watchful during holidays, gatherings, and parties. You should encourage children to stay in view and remind them that body safety rules apply to all people — including family. If the children are playing in a different area, check in often.

Privacy rules always apply. Remind others that children need privacy when using the bathroom or changing clothes.

Body safety check-ins. While it may seem like the safest choice to leave children with a partner, babysitter, siblings, etc., it is important to ask your children how they spent their time while you were out. It is key to make sure they feel safe when you're leaving and are treated well while you are gone. Sometimes, as caregivers, we may tune out complaints from children, but showing them that we are always there to listen to them is just as important as talking to them about body safety. Body safety check-ins should also be completed after sleepovers at a friend's house or after time away in other environments.



BODY SAFETY RULES

Teach your child body safety rules (see Appendix C for a body safety poster you can use at home). Body safety rules to consider are:

BODY AUTONOMY

- “I’m the boss of my body!” A child who knows that they are in control of their body is less likely to fall victim to sexual abuse. (Shalon Nienow, 2023)

PRIVATE PARTS ARE PRIVATE

- Remind the child that our private parts are the parts of our body covered by a bathing suit. Tell the child that no one should ever touch their private area(s) except for a doctor or nurse during a physical exam (with a primary caregiver present) or their primary caregiver if they are trying to find a cause of pain in the private area(s). Similarly, it’s important to explain to the child that no one should ever ask the child to touch their privates with any part of their body (aside from a caregiver or a doctor during an exam with a caregiver present to ensure the child is safe and healthy), including their mouth.

- When having these conversations with your child, use the same manner and attitude you would when speaking to them about a topic such as seat belt safety or bike safety.

NO SECRETS (see page 10)

- Secrecy is a hallmark of grooming behavior. (Elizabeth Jeglic, 2022)

TRUSTED ADULTS IN YOUR SAFETY NETWORK (see page 9)

- These are 3-5 people who support your body safety rules and are committed to being a part of a safety team to help keep your child safe.

Revisit your body safety rules often. You can have quick check-ins at the dinner table. If you are still bathing your child, you can talk about body safety rules at that time or even while driving the car.



GROOMING & RED FLAG BEHAVIORS



GROOMING

One common strategy for those who sexually abuse children is grooming. Grooming is manipulative behavior the abuser uses to gain access to a potential victim, coerce them to agree to the abuse, and reduce the risk of being caught.

Grooming can take place over a short or prolonged period of time (weeks, months, or years). It can occur online or in-person, and it often occurs by someone known and trusted by the child and/or family.

Grooming behaviors typically look innocent. We tend to see behaviors like horseplay, sitting on a lap, or spending a lot of time with a child only problematic after abuse has occurred. This is known as hindsight bias. (Elizabeth Jeglic, 2022)



RED FLAG BEHAVIORS

Identification of red flag behaviors can help in the prevention and detection of child sexual abuse. Be careful about making accusations because, as mentioned above, sometimes innocent actions can seem like grooming ... with that being said, **it's always important to trust what you feel.** If you have concerns about a specific individual and their behavior around your child, it's important to ensure your child is not left alone with that person.

HERE ARE SOME POTENTIAL RED FLAG BEHAVIORS TO PAY ATTENTION TO:

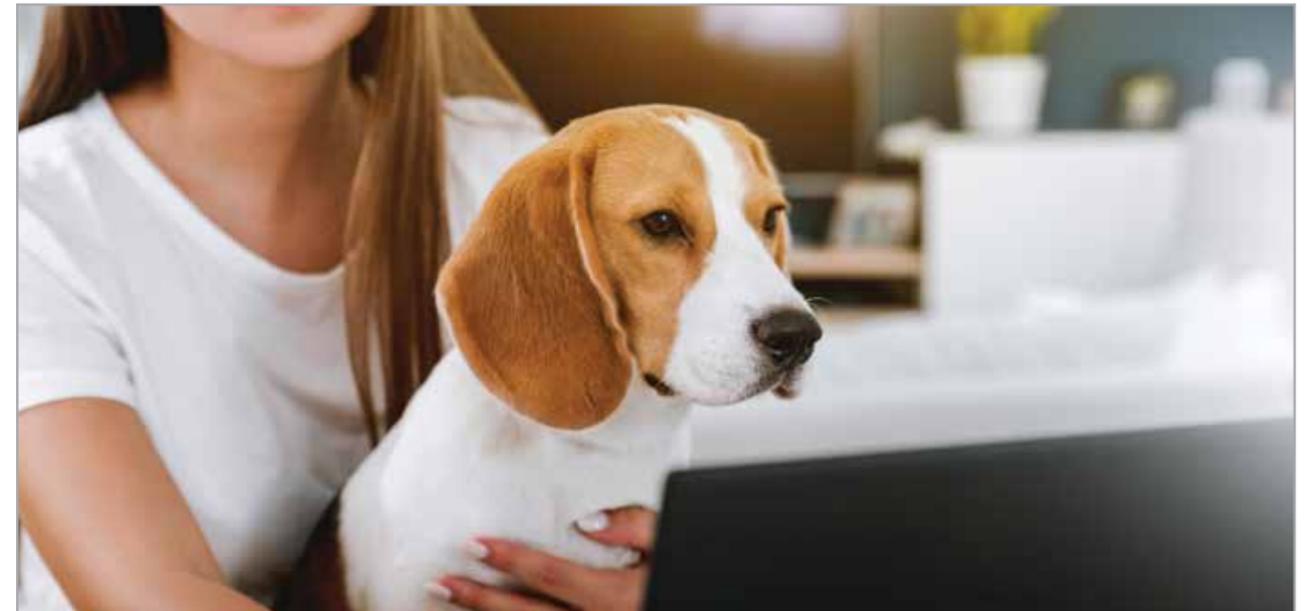
- **A person who seeks to have 1:1 time with your child or special outings.**
 - This may serve as an opportunity to get your child alone & isolated. "Can he come with me to the store?" "I can pick her up from school to help you out."
- **A person who is overly interested in your child and gives the child extra attention.**
 - This is a way for an abuser to make your child feel special or unique. Abusers will sometimes seek out children who they know are yearning for attention and will try to fill an emotional gap the child may have. (Elizabeth Jeglic, 2022)
- **A person who buys gifts or special treats for your child for no apparent reason.**
 - Abusers may provide your child with toys, money, or treats. This strategy is a tool that abusers may use to draw your child in and helps establish the relationship as special.
- **A person who is very touchy with your child, and it may occur in front of trusted adults.**
 - Abusers will test the limits by starting to introduce touch into the relationship. They might put their arm around the child or ask for a hug to see how the child reacts. They may do this in front of other adults. If the caregiver does not intervene or object, it can confuse the child on what type of touch is appropriate. (Grooming and Red Flag Behaviors, n.d.)

- It may start as a more playful touch, such as wrestling or tickling, and will turn into more sexual touch (as simple as cuddling under a blanket together).
- **A person who finds out what your child likes and is interested in and then flatters the child by claiming to have the same interests.**
 - Abusers may exploit a child's natural curiosity to do this. Whether your child loves basketball or Taylor Swift, abusers sometimes become interested in and knowledgeable about whatever sparks the interest of your child.
 - Abusers may pretend to be a good friend to your child, even a "best friend."
- **A person who offers to provide free childcare/ babysitting as a favor.**
 - Consider the "why" behind the motivation of anyone who is eager to babysit for you but isn't on your go-to list, like a typical sitter. If a family friend or co-worker is offering to babysit for free, consider that a possible red flag if you don't have good reason to trust their intentions.
- **A person who goes above and beyond to be helpful to parents/caregivers. This is done in order to gain trust.**

Overall, it is important to exercise caution when you see adults giving an unusual amount of attention to a child or touching them unnecessarily, even in a playful manner. While we know that not every kind neighbor or doting family friend is a child abuser, we should be alert to the possibility.

After abuse occurs, it is common for abusers to utilize "maintenance behaviors," such as telling the child not to tell anyone, encouraging secrets, giving rewards (toys, money), making the child feel like they are responsible for the abuse, or threatening the child (family rejection, abandonment, breaking up if they tell). (Elizabeth L. Jeglic, 2022)

STAYING SAFE ONLINE



We are surrounded by technology ... the internet, cell phones, text messaging, chat rooms, emails, gaming consoles, and social networks. Thinking about the children we love navigating through the digital world can be altogether frightening. Here are some online statistics:

- **70% of kids** encounter sexual or violent content online while doing research for their homework. (Bera, 2022)
- **17% of tweens** (age 8-12) received an online message with photos or words that made them feel uncomfortable, and only 7% of their parents were aware of this. (Bera, 2022)
- **75% of children** are willing to share personal information online in exchange for goods and services. (Bera, 2022)
- **42% of 10- to 17-year-olds** have seen pornography online, with 27% saying they intentionally viewed such materials. (Rebecca L. Collins, 2017)

- An examination of 15- to 18-year-olds found **54% of boys** and **17% of girls** admitted to intentional viewing of pornography. (Rebecca L. Collins, 2017)
- The average age of first pornography exposure is between **11 and 12 years old.** (Amanda L. Glordano, 2022)

There are many benefits of easy access to technology; however, there are risks. Below, you will learn how to reduce your child's risk while being online and what you can do to protect them.

ONLINE SAFETY SUGGESTIONS:

- Discuss internet safety and utilize an online safety pledge (Appendix E) with children before they engage in online activity. It's important to have conversations about when a child or teen can utilize their device and how much time they are allowed to spend on it.
 - It's important to ask questions that tell you more about what they plan to do while online, including what their plans are while online, who they will be engaging with, and reminding them of the internet safety pledge.

- Always supervise children's use of the internet. This includes periodically checking their profiles and posts on social media platforms. Keep electronic devices in open, common areas of the home and set time limits for their use.
- Review games, apps, and social media sites prior to allowing children and teens to access them. A great resource to use for this is: <https://www.common sense media.org>.
- Adjust privacy settings and use parental controls for apps, online games, and social media platforms. Parental controls, such as website blocking, become less effective as children grow older and are easy for kids to remove or edit. Parental controls can give us a false sense of security, and we cannot solely rely on those controls to ensure child/teen safety. Parental controls are not a substitute for honest and meaningful conversations.
- Talk to your child about pornography.
 - You can say something like, *"On the internet, you may see things you do not understand, like pictures or videos of people without clothes on, doing things you haven't seen before. If you come across any of these pictures or videos, come tell me and we can talk about it."* It's essential to provide education about pornography and the differences between pornography and healthy, consensual sexual activity. Without these open, non-judgmental conversations, children and teens will turn to other sources as their "teachers," which may or may not be helpful and may even be dangerous. For support in having these conversations, see Appendix D.



- Personal information should always stay private. Tell children to avoid sharing any personal information (name, phone number, birthdate, address) or photos/videos online.
- Explain that any images/photos posted online will be permanently on the internet.
- Talk to children about body safety and boundaries, as we referenced earlier in this guide on page 9, including the importance of saying "no" to inappropriate requests (in-person or online).
- Children should know it's OK to talk to one of their trusted adults if anyone asks them to engage in sexual activity or other inappropriate behavior and that they won't be in trouble. See page 8 to review the roles of trusted adults.

AS CHILDREN GROW



As children grow, your conversations with them will likely change. If you start conversations around relationships, healthy sexuality, and body safety early — you will have built and nurtured an environment where being curious, asking questions, and having open conversations is encouraged. This will hopefully set the standard for communication as the child grows. It's important to revisit conversations often and keep communication open.

If your child is older and you're just starting these conversations now, that's OK — it's never too late to start! You can talk about all the things we've covered in this guide with tweens and teens, including consent (for self and others), safe adults, and online safety.

For tweens and teens, their bodies start to change and curiosity about sex is normal. It is best to create an environment for healthy, honest, and open discussions. This way, your child will be more likely to come to you with questions or to reveal what is happening in their lives. Our tone in these discussions is so important! Avoid overreaction, shame, and secrecy if you want to keep the communication door open.

Keeping your child safe is also about instilling a value system within them. If they learn about respectful behavior and see it modeled in their home, they will be less likely to accept sexually inappropriate behavior as normal. (Elizabeth Jeglic, 2022) If they see that their parents keep secrets from one another (e.g., don't tell dad we stopped to grab Starbucks), they learn that secrecy is okay within the family. And we know that if children believe that secrecy is OK, they will be less likely to question an abuser who encourages them to keep abuse a secret.

Online pornography is not appropriate for children, tweens, or teens and is something you absolutely need to discuss. Did you know that studies have found that teenagers who view pornography are more likely to engage in sexual harassment in adolescence and have more sexually permissive behaviors? (Elizabeth Jeglic, 2022) As we've talked about often throughout this guide ... talk with your child, tween, or teen. Have a conversation about what they might come across online and what they should do if they see it (recall our conversation on page 14). Provide education about

pornography and the differences between pornography and consensual, healthy sexual activity. Technology safeguards and rules need to be put in place so the child, tween, or teen is not accessing it. Remember, without open, safe, non-judgmental dialogues, children of all ages will turn to other sources as their “teachers,” which likely won’t be helpful.

When children grow, they are more likely to engage in overnight camps and sleepovers. Before they go, revisit body safety, consent, and trusted adults (at any age). Create a safety plan for your tween or teen to use if they ever feel unsafe or uncomfortable in a situation.

Let them know who they should voice their concerns to and also discuss strategies they can use to safely leave a potentially harmful situation. Tell them they can call or text you, no matter what the time is, and that you will help them exit the situation.

Ultimately, the best thing you can do as a caregiver is keep communicating with your child, tween, or teen. Stay engaged. Ask questions (about their in-person world and online world). Be available, open, and willing to talk. Stay curious.

AS A CAREGIVER, YOU ARE ONE OF THE MOST INFLUENTIAL ROLE MODELS IN YOUR CHILD’S LIFE AND HAVE THE ABILITY TO MAKE A GREAT IMPACT ON THEIR VALUES, BELIEFS, AND DECISIONS.

CONCLUSION



The children you love and care about are safer because of your support, guidance, and desire to learn strategies to keep them safe from sexual abuse. Don't forget to take care of yourself because supporting your own well-being is a critical practice for being able to care for your children, especially when trying to protect them from both real-world and virtual risks.

The thought of your child being sexually abused is frightening, but instead of living in fear, you can live in hope for the children you love. Prevention is possible! Take what you've learned from this guide and put it into action.



APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: SEXUAL DEVELOPMENT BY AGE

Stages of Sexual Development

BIRTH - 2 YEARS OLD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curious about their bodies. • Finds genitals and may touch/explore. • Can point to named body parts. • Shows affection towards caregivers. • No inhibitions about being naked.
3-4 YEARS OLD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aware of and curious about body differences. • May self-soothe (touch & explore genitals). • Talks about bodily functions and asks questions. • Toilet training. • Play house, doctor, or explore other forms of play with friends/siblings. • May show private parts to others and may be curious about others private parts.
5-8 YEARS OLD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curious about pregnancy and birth. • Strong same-sex friendships. • Talk about having a 'boyfriend' or 'girlfriend'. • Increased privacy is desired. • Desire to make choices about how they dress. • Compares body parts to peers. • Humor related to body parts or functions of the body.
9-12 YEARS OLD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin puberty. • Continued desire for privacy. • Sexual attraction may begin. • Peers become very important. • Mood swings. • May talk about sex with friends of the same sex. • Strongly influenced by peers. • Curiosity about their changing bodies. • Develop crushes on friends, teens, celebrities.
13-18 YEARS OLD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Express desire to be more independent. • Understands the consequences of sexual behaviors. • Become involved in 'serious' relationship. • Might engage in sexual activity. • Face peer pressure and may face decisions about drugs, sex, and alcohol. • Participate in risk taking and experimentation. • Look for ways to express self.

APPENDIX B: BODY SAFETY BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

Below you will find some developmentally appropriate books to support conversations on body safety. The North Dakota Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Task Force does not endorse any specific books.

AGES 0-3

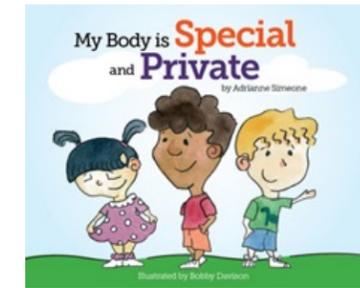
Title: A Hug
Author: Nicola Manton

This book starts teaching children consent by relating it to hugs. The book discusses the enjoyment of hugs from a variety of people in different circumstances, but also teaches children they have the power to say no to a hug that is not wanted.



Title: My Body is Special and Private
Author: Adrienne Simeone

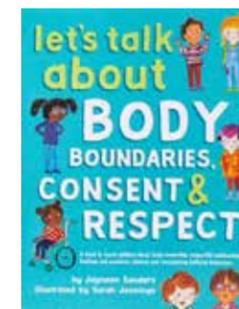
With only 10 pages, this book covers the basics of body safety for young readers to understand. This book teaches body ownership, the correct names for body parts, rules surrounding private parts, and talking to adults when rules are broken.



AGES 4-7

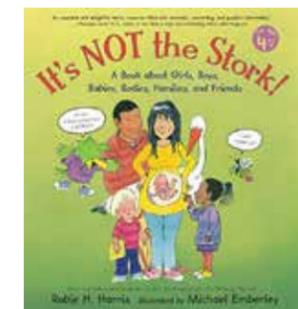
Title: Let's Talk about Body Boundaries, Consent & Respect
Author: Jayneen Sanders

This book not only talks about body ownership of each child but also respecting the personal space of others as well. It provides scenarios for discussions that caregivers can have with their child.



Title: It's Not the Stork! A Book About Girls, Boys, Babies, Bodies, Families and Friends
Author: Robie Harris

This book presents age-appropriate information about bodies and sexual development and is presented in a fun, easy-to-understand way for children.

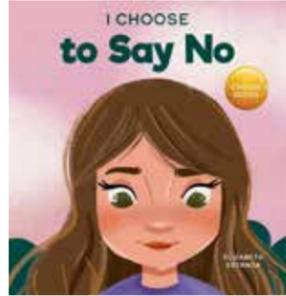


AGES 4-7 (continued from previous page)

Title: I Choose to Say No

Author: Elizabeth Estrada

The author uses rhyming and engaging illustrations to teach children about private parts, their own circle of trust, and warning signs to look out for. This book was developed with input from therapists and parents to use as another tool for social-emotional learning.

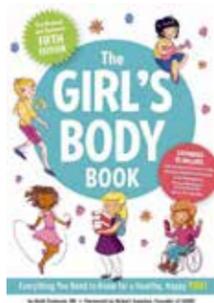


AGES 8 +

Title: The Girl's Body Book

Author: Kelli Dunham

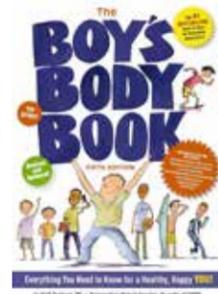
You can use this book as a guide to help preteen girls deal with puberty, body changes, personal boundaries, and more. Throughout the book there are tips that girls can use to support a happy and healthy environment.



Title: The Boy's Body Book

Author: Kelli Dunham

This book can be used to help teach young preteen boys about body changes, puberty, self-confidence and boundaries, among other topics. The concepts in this book are used to help create a healthy environment surrounding young boys as they are growing and changing.



APPENDIX C: BODY SAFETY POSTER

SUPER Kids Have Safe Bodies

FIVE BODY SAFETY RULES

I am allowed to say no to hugs, kisses or other touches if I don't want them or feel uncomfortable. I can say no to someone even if I know and like the person. My body is my body and I have the power to make decisions that are right for me.

I have FIVE adults I can talk to about safety.

I have a safety network of at least five adults. I can talk to them about anything, including safety.

I am in charge of my own body.

I never keep secrets about safety.

No one should ask me to keep a secret, especially about safety. Touches are never a secret.

It is okay to keep surprises, like a birthday present, because everyone will find out about it eventually.

My private parts are not to be shared with others.

My private parts belong to me. No one else should ask to look at or touch my private parts. No one should ask me to look at or to touch their private parts either. If someone does, I will tell an adult right away.

Sometimes, doctors or parents/guardians might need to look at or touch my private parts to keep me safe. Even though it might be uncomfortable, they are there to help me stay clean and healthy. I can always talk to a trusted adult if I have questions about touches.

I will talk to one of my five adults if I feel unsafe.

It is important to talk to one of my five adults if someone or something makes me feel unsafe. If the adult I tell doesn't help me, I will tell a different adult.



APPENDIX D: CONVERSATION CARDS

Below you will find some conversation starter cards. Read the scenario to your child and allow them time to process and respond. This is not a time to shame them or make them feel bad if they don't answer it how you think they should. These are meant to be teachable moments for you to educate your child on how to stay safe in various situations that may arise.

CONSIDER ASKING THESE QUESTIONS AT RANDOM AND NOT ALL AT THE SAME TIME

<p>Your body deserves love, care, and respect. Everyone else's body deserves love, care, and respect too.</p> <p>What are some ways you can show your body respect?</p> <p>What are some ways you can respect someone else's body?</p>	<p>Your friend told you that her older cousin touched her private parts. She told you that you must promise to keep it a secret.</p> <p>What would you do?</p>
<p>Someone contacted you online and told you they would hurt your _____ (brother/sister/mom/dad/dog) if you didn't send them photographs of yourself.</p> <p>What would you do?</p>	<p>You are in charge of your body, yet someone hasn't been listening when you tell them to stop tickling you or that you don't want a hug.</p> <p>What would you do?</p>
<p>Your neighbor invites you to play at his house with his new puppy. When you go there, he gives you things like money, treats, and toys but tells you they are just between you two and not to tell your caregiver.</p> <p>What would you do?</p>	<p>You are at a sleepover at your best friend's house. You two were watching videos on YouTube and came across things that made you feel uncomfortable and that you shouldn't be watching.</p> <p>What would you do?</p>
<p>Someone touched your body without your permission. The touches made you feel scared and uncomfortable. The person told you not to tell your caregiver because they'd be mad at you.</p> <p>What would you do?</p>	<p>You are playing a fun game online. The person you're playing against seems nice and asks you to turn on your video so the person can see you.</p> <p>What would you do?</p>
<p>Who are your 5 trusted adults?</p> <p>What are things you can talk with them about?</p>	<p>You have an online friend who is coming on vacation to the town you live in. Your friend asks for your full name and address so they can come to meet you.</p> <p>What would you do?</p>

APPENDIX E: INTERNET SAFETY PLEDGE




My Internet Safety Pledge

- 1 I will not share my personal information without my caregiver's permission.**
This includes my full name, address, school, birthdate, or any other personal information.
- 2 I will only communicate with people online that my caregivers give approval of.**
My caregivers will be aware of who I'm talking to and the conversations that I am having.
- 3 I will not download any apps without my caregiver's permission first.**
Passwords for apps, websites and games will be shared with my caregivers.
- 4 Think before you post.**
I understand that anything I post online will be there forever, even if I think I've deleted it. I will always think before I post.
- 5 I will talk with a caregiver if someone makes me feel unsafe or if I see something that makes me uncomfortable.**
Open communication with my caregivers about content viewed online is important.

Protect yourself when you're online!



I will follow the above guidelines when online. My caregivers have the right to add anything to this list at anytime.

Child Signature: _____

Caregiver Signature: _____

APPENDIX F: PLAYDATE AND SLEEPOVER SAFETY

Deciding when your child is ready to be on their own at someone's house and whether that environment is a safe place for your child can be a challenging decision. As caregivers, we know that it is our responsibility to make sure children are staying safe in these scenarios. If your child is going on a playdate, sleeping over at a friend's or relative's house, or away from you for any other reason, there are questions you may consider asking the caregiver your child will be with.

Our guide focuses on sexual abuse prevention; however, there are several questions you will want to ask that relate to your child's safety, including if there are firearms in the home, fire safety elements present in the home, accessibility to alcohol, if there is a swimming pool, etc.

Although it may be uncomfortable, it is important to ask safety questions to the caregivers who will be caring for your child during the sleepover or playdate.

1. WILL THE CHILDREN BE LEFT AT HOME ALONE FOR ANY PERIOD?

Some caregivers feel comfortable leaving their children at home for any length of time alone, and that may differ from what you feel comfortable with. It is best to be direct and ask the caregiver before leaving your child. You may not want your 10-year-old left alone for any amount of time, but their friend's parents may do that on a regular basis.

2. WHO ELSE WILL BE IN THE HOME?

As we've discussed in this guide, a child is more often sexually abused by someone they know very well. It is still highly important to ensure you feel completely comfortable with whichever adults are in the home before leaving your child. Is an uncle visiting that will be with the kids unsupervised for a few hours? Will an older child be home from college? Know the details to ensure your child's safety.

3. WHAT TECHNOLOGY IS ACCESSIBLE IN THE HOME, AND WHAT DOES THE CAREGIVER ALLOW THEIR CHILD TO ACCESS ONLINE?

You may greatly limit the types of movies, apps, and online games your child is allowed to view, but not all parents have the same values and rules.

4. IF YOUR CHILD IS SLEEPING OVER, YOU WILL WANT TO ASK WHAT THE PLANNED SLEEPING ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE.

Caregiver comfort varies widely. Some caregivers may allow their children to sleep in the camper parked in the driveway or a tent in the yard. It's important to ask and ensure you and your child are comfortable with the planned arrangements.

5. CAN YOUR CHILD CALL YOU AT ANY TIME AND CAN YOU TALK WITH YOUR CHILD PRIOR TO BEDTIME?

You can ask if your child may use their phone to call you. This would be a great time to let the caregiver know that you plan to call your child before bedtime to check in.

Don't forget to revisit body safety rules with your child prior to the playdate or sleepover. Tell the child they can ask to use the phone of the caregiver to call you.

If you are uncomfortable with sending your child to a playdate or sleepover, **it's OK to say no**. You can also plan an alternative activity like meeting at a park and letting the children play or plan a sleep-under (the child can go play until bedtime and you will pick them up).

APPENDIX G: CONSIDERATIONS FOR SCHOOLS, CHILD CARE PROVIDERS/PROGRAM, AND YOUTH-SERVING ORGANIZATIONS

One item to consider sharing with your school, child care provider/program, or youth-serving organization is the North Dakota Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Resource Guide. The Resource Guide was created to ensure safe policies and procedures in those types of settings. The Resource Guide can be found on www.ndstopcsa.com or if you'd like a physical copy to share with an organization, you can reach out to lburkhardt@pcand.org.

It is important that the school, child care provider/program, or youth-serving organization ensures that even temporary staff and volunteers are aware of the safety policies and the protocol for reporting any concerns and allegations. Some organizations even provide training to parents and other caregivers because they know the importance of knowledgeable adults in keeping children safe. Adult training is available in our state. To inquire about available trainings, contact: lburkhardt@pcand.org.

DOES THE SCHOOL, CHILD CARE PROVIDER/PROGRAM OR YOUTH SERVING ORGANIZATION ...

Focus on child safety?

Does the facility have a statement confirming their commitment to protecting children and teens from sexual abuse? Do they remind employees, volunteers, and families of commitment often?

Thoroughly vet employees and volunteers?

This is the organization's opportunity to ensure they are doing everything in their power to put safe adults around your child/teen. Below are common elements of a comprehensive screening and hiring process: *Written application and cover letter, face-to-face interview, internet search of applicant (Google, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter), observation of the applicant interacting with children, reference checks (request professional and personal references), criminal history check, sex offender registry check, child abuse registry check (CAN), professional credentials, and driving record check (if the person will transport children/teens).*

Have a code of conduct?

A code of conduct is a tool to establish the appropriate types of interactions that take place at a school, child care provider/program, or youth-serving organization. This should include what is expected from anyone (employees/volunteers) in a position of responsibility to care for or supervise children. Things you may look for on a code of conduct:

- Boundaries of physical, sexual, and verbal behavior
 - Encouraged vs. prohibited behaviors and interactions
 - Appropriate, inappropriate, and harmful behaviors
- Bullying, harassment, and discrimination
- Employee-to-child ratios to remain in compliance with licensing standards
- Guidance about being alone with children
- Awareness of power differentials and abuse of power
- Technology use: communication with children using electronic devices and social media, photography of children within the organization with personal devices
- Compliance with the policies and procedures of the organization and North Dakota's child abuse reporting laws

Implement child sexual abuse prevention education programs for employees and volunteers?

Provide education to students on child sexual abuse prevention strategies?

Have increased monitoring of adult-child and child-child interactions and ensure environments are safe?

- Child sexual abuse often takes place during isolated, one-on-one situations. It's important the organization ensures that interactions with children and teens can be observed and easily interrupted.

APPENDIX H: TALKING ABOUT CONSENT AND BODY SAFETY

Caregivers should feel comfortable and confident talking with people who interact with their children about consent and body safety rules. It can be difficult to find the words to use while having these important conversations. Whether you're talking with a coach, a youth group leader, or a swim instructor, we want to help give you language to use to have these imperative conversations with anyone your child is around.

First, you can explain that you teach and practice body safety, boundaries, and consent with your child. You can also explain that you are having these conversations with all the adults in your child's life.

- 1) Share what your body safety rules are. You may even show them the poster found on page 21.
- 2) Explain that you teach your child they are in charge of their body. You can reference the content found in the Keeping Kids Safe section of this guide.
 - a. *Your child has been taught that they have a right to have boundaries around their personal space and body.*
 - b. *Your child should not be forced to give hugs or kisses.*

- 3) Explain that it is important your child is asked permission before they are touched — whether it's by a doctor, swim instructor, coach, etc. The adult should let them know what they need to do and why they need to do it.



APPENDIX I: WHAT TO DO IF A CHILD DISCLOSES ABUSE

A disclosure is when a child tells someone that he or she has been abused. It can be a very difficult and scary process for a child and the adult they disclose the information to.

Here are the biggest things to remember if a child discloses or you suspect a child is being abused:

Listen carefully and stay calm. It is important to remain calm in speaking to a child who may have been sexually abused. Be patient and focus on what you're being told by the child. Try not to express your own feelings or views and avoid appearing upset. If you appear shocked, ask too many questions, or act as if you don't believe them, it could make them stop talking and take back what they've said.

Tell them it's not their fault and reassure them that they did the right thing by telling you. Reassurance can make a big impact. Abuse is never a child's fault. It's important they hear and know this.

Explain what you'll do next. For younger children, you can tell them you are going to speak with someone who will help. And for older children/teens, explain that you are going to file a report with someone who can help.

Next, report what the child has told you as soon as possible.

A FEW THINGS NOT TO DO:

- *Don't confront the alleged abuser.*
- *Don't make promises to the child like: "I'll make sure you never have to see _____ again!"*
- *Don't interrogate the child by asking many questions.*
- *It is not your job to determine whether abuse has occurred. Your job is to simply gather the information and make the report.*
- *Don't discount what the child is telling you by saying things like, "That doesn't sound like something _____ would do!" or "Are you sure? That can't be true!" This may cause the child to recant their disclosure and feel as though they've done something wrong.*

HOW TO MAKE A REPORT IN NORTH DAKOTA:

- To make a report, call the statewide toll-free Child Abuse & Neglect Reporting Line at **1-833-958-3500**, between 8 a.m.-5 p.m. (CT)
- A team of specialized child protection intake professionals will answer the call and gather all needed facts so the local CPS workers in the human service zone can act more quickly to protect the child.
- If it's an emergency and the child is in immediate danger, **call 9-1-1.**

If you have suspicion that a child is being abused, it is important that you do your part to keep that child safe and make a report in good faith. Making a report in good faith means the person reporting believes the information he/she is providing is true to the best of his or her knowledge.

It's important to also note that intentional false reporting has consequences. Any person who **willfully** or **intentionally** makes a false report of child abuse or neglect may face legal penalties, including a Class B Misdemeanor.

APPENDIX J: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES BY TOPIC

App, Movie, Book Reviews	Common Sense Media https://www.commonsensemedia.org/
Digital Safety	THORN for Parents www.thorn.org/digital-resources-parents
Healthy Sexual Development	National Sexual Violence Resource Center https://www.nationalcac.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/HealthySexualDevelopmentOverview.pdf
Problematic Sexual Behaviors	National Center on the Sexual Behavior of Youth www.ncsby.org/content/problematic-sexual-behavior

Additional information can be found on the North Dakota Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Task Force website at www.ndstopcsa.com. To inquire about available trainings on CSA prevention, reach out to Task Force Director at: lburkhardt@pcand.org.

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