

# *Teach your children about sexual abuse*

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It is important to teach children about safety. It is just as important to teach ourselves what we need to know in order to keep our children and communities safe. Here are some things that you and your family can do to prevent the sexual abuse of your children.

## ***Adults need to take responsibility***

- watch for signs of abuse—many children, especially young ones, are not able to protect themselves sexually
- teach your children that their “no” will be respected, whether it is in playing or tickling or hugging and kissing. If your child does not want to give his grandfather a kiss, let him shake hands
- all members of the family have rights to privacy in dressing, bathing, sleeping and other personal activities. If anyone does not respect these rights, an adult should clearly tell them the family rules
- report anything you know or suspect that is sexual abuse. Without help, the abuse will not stop

## ***Adults need to learn, teach and practice***

- practice talking to other adults about the difficult topics. Say the words out loud so that you become more comfortable with using the words, asking questions, confronting behaviours
- practice talking with both the adults and children in your life about their difficult issues to get them in the habit of talking with you. Show them that you will listen to what they say, even if the subject is embarrassing or related to something they have done wrong
- teach children the proper names of body parts. This helps them to understand their bodies and to ask questions that need to be asked or for telling about sexual abuse
- teach children the difference between OK touching and touching that is not OK—tell younger children to talk to you if anyone, family, friend or anyone else touches their private parts
- teach children that secrets about touching are not okay

Source...STOP IT NOW, MA

## *Make a plan*

- *teach your children about what to do and who to talk with if they are sexually threatened or molested by someone*
- *list for yourself who you can call for advice, information and help if you need it*

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