

# Let's Talk!

## Tips for Talking About Personal Safety and Sexual Abuse with Kids Ages 6–8

6–8

### Get Comfy and Start the Conversation

As your child gets older and spends more time away from you, it's important that they know personal safety tips to help keep them from harm. These tips can help you teach them—in a warm, comfortable way—how to recognize if a situation is safe or not and how to ask for help if they need it.

## What You Can Say

**“You should not touch or be made to touch or look at another person’s private body parts.”**

**“Underwear covers the parts of the body that are meant to be private, which means they are not for others to see or touch.”**

**“Even if someone seems nice, it’s not okay for them to ask you to keep a secret about touching.”**

**“Pay attention to different feelings in your body, like butterflies in your tummy. That might mean a situation is not okay.”**

## Review Personal Safety Tips

**“Never keep secrets about touching.”**

**“The only safe secrets are those that eventually can be shared, like birthday surprises.”**

**“Always ask first before accepting a gift or a ride from another adult.”**



HOT CHOCOLATE TALK®



## 1 Connect in Everyday Moments

Whether driving to school, reading together, or playing a game, you can start general safety conversations with your child that can get more specific. Finding opportunities to talk about personal safety can lead to covering important concepts like recognizing different kinds of touches. You might explain that wanted touches make you feel cared for and loved, while unwanted touches make you feel uncomfortable.

## 2 Create a Family Safety Plan

Help your child identify trusted adults they can call if they ever need help, and make sure they have all the correct contact information. Talk through your daily schedule and agree upon expectations.

## 3 Let Them Know Abuse Is Never Their Fault

It's very common for kids to be afraid to talk about abuse because, in many cases, they know the offender,<sup>1</sup> and they've been told to keep it a secret. When you teach your child that it's never okay to keep secrets about touching and it's never their fault if someone touches them inappropriately, they're more likely to tell.

1. Gewirtz-Meydan, A., & Finkelhor, D. (2020). Sexual abuse and assault in a large national sample of children and adolescents. *Child Maltreatment, 25*(2), 203–214. <https://www.unh.edu/ccrc/sites/default/files/media/2022-03/sexual-abuse-and-assault-in-a-large-national-sample-of-children-and-adolescents.pdf>

## IF YOU SUSPECT ABUSE OR NEED HELP

Childhelp 800-4-A-CHILD

National Sexual Violence Resource Center 877-739-3895

National Human Trafficking Hotline 888-373-7888 or text HELP to 233733

Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network 800-656-HOPE