

Summary of Tips for Parents: People-Proofing Your Child

1. Teach your child the correct names for body parts.
2. Begin assault-proofing your child as soon as your child is able to play out of your sight.
3. Don't just tell your child s/he has a right say "no". Respect that right. No child should be forced to kiss, be tickled by, roughhouse with or spend time with adults s/he doesn't like.
4. Respect your child's intuitive reactions. "I don't like that piano teacher any more", may be an important signal. Listen to it.
5. Play "What If" games to help your child cope with emergencies. "What if you were alone and the cat acted sick?" "What if you lost your boots at school and it was snowing out?" "What if the babysitter asked you to touch his penis?"
6. Tell your child that no caring adult ever asks a kid to keep a secret (unless, of course, it's an easily understood one, such as a surprise birthday).
7. Describe sexual assault in terms with which you feel comfortable. Use phrases like "touching your private zone" or "asking you to touch his genitals". Give other examples-"kissing or hugging that makes you feel funny" and "asking you to take your clothes off".
8. If your child tells you about an assault, control your emotions. Go slowly-ask for more details. Say "I'm glad you told me" and "you're not to blame".

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Adapted from *Your Child's Self Esteem*, by *Dorothy Corkill Briggs*

For more information please call:

AIDS –Sexual Health InfoLine 1-800-668-2437 or (416) 392-2437

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