

Trust and Secrets

Unsafe Secrets

Children should never be asked to keep secrets from their parents. Set aside time to talk with your child about safe and unsafe secrets, including but not limited to secrets about touching.



What Makes Someone Trustworthy?

We can tell that people are trustworthy by their behavior, not the jobs they have or the fact that they are trusted by others. Take turns with your child naming behaviors that would tend to indicate someone is trustworthy. Have your child name some trustworthy adults in his or her life. Be aware that the job someone has, the position he or she holds, or a familial relationship does not automatically make that person safe or trustworthy and make that clear to your child.

God Gives Us Emotions

Our emotions are a gift from God that can guide us in how we respond to situations. Share situations in which your emotions have guided your response. Invite your child to share his or her experiences. Let your child know that you want to hear about any experiences that cause him or her to feel worried, concerned, or afraid.

Telling an Unsafe Secret

Reinforce with your child that that he or she should not keep secrets from you, especially secrets about touching. Explain that it's OK to tell an unsafe secret even if it means breaking a promise made not to tell. Teach your child the correct names for body parts. This way he or she will have the words to clearly communicate about health issues or abuse interactions should they ever take place. Children should be made aware that certain body parts are private and should not be touched by anyone other than a parent or doctor when it's absolutely necessary for the health of the child and that when this occurs it is not a secret. Help your child read and complete the "Telling an Unsafe Secret" handout.

