

Trust and Secrets

Touching and Other Inappropriate Behavior

Young people should never be asked to keep secrets from their parents. This includes but is not limited to secrets about touching. Make time to talk with your child about secrets. Be sure to use appropriate terminology for body parts, including genitals. Say: ***It is never your fault if an adult or another young person makes you feel afraid, worried, or confused. Please let me know about any time someone made you feel this way even if it happened a long time ago or if that person is no longer in your life. You can tell me anything.*** Explain that it's OK to tell an unsafe secret even if it means breaking a promise made not to tell.

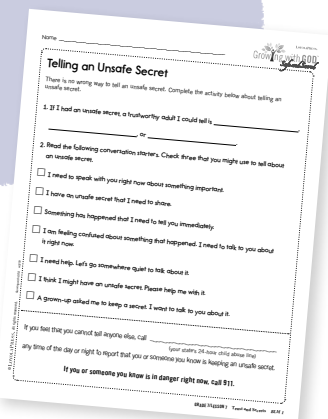


Identifying Trustworthy Adults

The best way to tell if people are trustworthy is by how they act. The job someone has, the position he or she holds, or a familial relationship does not automatically make that person trustworthy. Ask: ***Who are some people you consider trustworthy?*** Avoid identifying trustworthy people for your child as someone you might consider safe may not be in the eyes of your child.

Telling an Unsafe Secret

It is beneficial for your child to have language he or she can use to communicate with you about unsafe secrets or distressing situations. Review the completed "Telling an Unsafe Secret" handout together, sharing ideas as needed. Practice together ways your child might use these conversation starters to begin a discussion with you. Decide where to keep the completed handout. Say: ***Telling is always the right thing to do. There is nothing you could ever tell me that would stop me from loving you.***



Guided by God's Gift of Emotions

Emotions are a gift from God that can help us identify and respond to various situations. Let your child know that he or she can tell you about any situation, especially those that are frightening, confusing, or potentially unsafe. Discuss different ways to respond to such situations. Explain that it is never too late to talk about how something made us feel.

