

Off Limits Safety Tips

from the book *Off Limits: A Parent's Guide to Keeping Kids Safe from Sexual Abuse*
available from Safer Society Press

1. Know the facts about child sexual abusers.
2. Teach children and teens a "safety-in-numbers" rule.
3. Teach young children what to do if they ever become separated from a parent or person in charge.
4. Avoid letting young children go alone into public restrooms.
5. Teach children to always "ask first."
6. Make careful choices about allowing children to be alone with an authority figure.
7. Make sure your children know that they do not have to comply with unsafe or inappropriate requests from an authority figure.
8. Grant all family members the right to privacy.
9. Allow children to choose how they demonstrate affection.
10. Take notice when someone shows lots of attention to one particular child or showers that child with gifts.
11. Actively listen to children.
12. Know the difference between healthy displays of affection and sexual types of touching.
13. Establish a "no-secrets" rule in your home.
14. Know how abusers keep children from telling.
15. Teach children the "Boss of My Body" concept.
16. Teach children body-safety rules.
17. Practice body-safety rules by playing "What if?" games.
18. Take advantage of "teachable moments" to discuss sexual development and body safety.
19. Carefully screen substitute caregivers.
20. Trust your intuition.
21. Be a questioning parent before allowing children to play or sleep at someone else's home.
22. Check in with children when they stay overnight at a friend's home.
23. Be a questioning parent of administrators at your child's school, day care, faith-based institution, and youth-serving organization.
24. Discuss children's safety practices with authority figures.
25. Be a questioning staff member in a school or youth-serving institution.
26. Install protective software on your child's computer.
27. Set cyber-safety rules for children and teens.
28. Know the warning signs of abuse.
29. Help children tell about sexual abuse.
30. Know how to respond to a child's disclosure.
31. Know how to respond to youths with sexual behavior problems.
32. Know how to report suspected sexual abuse.

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