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## **How To Talk To Your Child About Sexual Abuse**

Unfortunately, we now live in a world where we have to start talking with our children about sexual abuse as early as three years old, and we have to be very explicit with them. Former concepts such as 'Stranger-Danger' and 'Good Touch Bad Touch' are no longer the best way to help a child. You need to use age appropriate language, of course, when speaking with any child. But, we also feel you must be very candid. You must describe where their privates are and what people could do to them.

### Unacceptable Actions

Explain to your child that the following actions are UNACCEPTABLE from ANYONE:

- Touching, fondling, caressing, rubbing and kissing in or on the vagina or penis, breast, arms, legs, thighs, etc.
- Kissing on the mouth
- Being bounced on people's laps, especially males
- Wiping, or washing the vagina or penis area is not acceptable, especially if the person is not approved by parents

### Communicating With Your Child

- Be original in your discussion. For example, if your child is going over to a friend's house and you find out the father is tossing the kids in the pool; tell your child that no one is allowed to touch his/her butt, groin, vagina or breast area.
- Tell your child to report if his/her private parts hurt in anyway while bathing and ask to show you specifically. If you suspect abuse, ask more questions.
- Any quietness, going to bed early, not wanting to go certain places with an adult – be suspicious and investigate and ask thorough questions such as "Why don't you want to go with that person?" Do not accept the answer "I just don't want to", or "...just because." Ask why and get an acceptable answer.
- Discern by thorough conversation whether the child just wants to stay home or just has separation anxiety. Be suspicious if this is a new behavior.
- Tell your child to report everything to you that he/she thinks might be inappropriate, even if it proves to be miniscule.
- Tell your child that they cannot ever keep a secret from you, even if it is daddy or mommy requesting the secret to never be told.
- Many perpetrators threaten the child if he/she tells. Train the child with this ---tell them, "If anyone ever says they will hurt you because of what they've done, don't worry because I won't let them hurt you."

- If your child is home alone or went to a sleep over, remind your child to not allow anyone to come into his/her bed. Tell your child that if someone does this, to call you immediately.
- Don't scare your child into being suspicious or afraid, but teach him/her about this subject and that your job is to protect. Encourage your child to let you do your job.
- Tell them they are good children, but there are people who do bad things and you want to protect them.