

Consent, Safety & Respect

messages to kids ages four to eight

- **“Consent” means to give permission.** This word is a really good one to learn from a young age. Relate it to the importance of respecting personal space, like asking before hugging a friend.
- **Say “No” and “Stop”** whenever you need to.
- **Always respect others’ Nos and Stops.** This is just as important as others’ respecting yours.
- **You are the boss of your body.** You define your personal boundaries. You say who goes on you and who does not.
- **Pay attention to body language.** Learning to interpret and respect non-verbal cues is key.
- **Trust your emotions.** You have a right to feel and act on what makes you uncomfortable.
- **Your mouth, breasts and genitals are private.** No one, no matter who they are, can go on your private parts without permission. Games like kissing tag are not ok because consent may not be given.
- **We will keep you safe.** Report uncomfortable touching to a trusted adult, and keep reporting until you get the help that you need.
- **We will believe you.** You will never be in trouble for reporting uncomfortable touching. It would never be your fault. The other person would get in trouble because what they’re doing is against the law.

additional messages for kids aged nine and ten

- **You have a right to body autonomy.** Others need to ask to touch you, and listen if you say “No”.
- **Abuse is never your fault** or the result of something you say or do. You haven’t done anything wrong.
- **It’s important to report abuse** to a person in a position of authority. But we would never blame or judge people who don’t report.
- **People in relationships need to give each other consent** for sexual activity. Without consent, it’s called “sexual assault”.

additional messages for kids aged eleven and twelve

- **Sexual activity requires the consent of all people involved.** Point out examples of healthy communication around consent on TV and in movies.
- **The clearest way of expressing consent is by using words.** But we also must pay attention to non-verbal cues.
- **An "enthusiastic yes"** leaves no room for uncertainty when it comes to consent. Not saying “No” doesn’t mean “Yes”.
- **Sexual consent is an ongoing conversation.** It’s fluid, not a one-time thing.
- **Consenting to one sexual activity** doesn’t indicate consent to other sexual activities. And consent can always be withdrawn.
- **Think ahead.** Being clear about our own boundaries and expressing them to others is key.
- **Sexual consent must be informed.** And of one’s own free will, without coercion.
- **Sexual consent can't be given when under the influence of substances.** Or when sleeping or unconscious.
- **It’s against the law to share photos of someone without their consent.** Good manners and respect apply in real life and online.
- **Sexual consent rules apply to all relationships.** Even married couples aren’t exempt.