

Talking with children

Body Safety and Boundaries



Child Abuse Hotline
1-800-652-1999

Project Harmony
Children's Services
402-595-1326

Common Response

For many, surprise, shock, disbelief, and denial are common responses to such abuse allegations. Especially if we are just hearing about it for the first time. Remember worry is contagious. We can either amplify or de-escalate a child's anxiety, depending on our own internal reaction. Below are some helpful strategies when talking with children about body safety and boundaries.

Strategies for beginning the conversation

1. Take Time to Deal with Your Feelings – You need to be calm and make a plan for how to talk to your child about possible abuse.
2. Chances are your child is unaware if abuse has occurred. Parents nor children typically understand grooming behavior. It is done by someone known and trusted by the family.
3. Grooming comes in the form of play or affection (“a silly game, you are special or my favorite”, etc.)
4. **Your child's reaction will depend on your response.** BE AWARE OF YOUR BODY LANGUAGE and your message to your child. Children look to their parents to figure out their own response to stressful situations.
5. When you talk to your child, remember it is more about LISTENING than TALKING and NOT REACTING.
6. Ask open-ended, general questions: Tell me about _____.
 - What kind of things would you do with him?
 - Tell me more about that
 - Did he play with you like other teachers or something different?
7. If you have any suspicion or reason to believe your child was abused, call the Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-652-1999.
8. If your child discloses any inappropriate contact, be sure to let them know you believe them and it is not their fault.
9. If you have any uncertainty about reporting or you would like additional support, please feel free to reach out to Project Harmony Children's Services at #402-595-1326.



Child Advocacy Center

11949 Q Street
402-595-1326
info@projectharmony.com
projectharmony.com

Project Harmony Is the Resource

Project Harmony is the resource for child abuse services and training in the Omaha metro area and surrounding communities. We help community members protect and support the most vulnerable – restoring courage, facilitating healing and empowering all to be someone in the life of a child.