



Radio Stations : **All Community Radio Stations**
Subject : **Early Childhood Development**
Audience : **Parents, caregivers and educators**
Program Topic : **Teaching Children to Keep Themselves Safe (PROTECTION)**

Guidelines to the presenter

- Presenter – please familiarize yourself with the brief and the use the facts effectively by referring to them from time to time during the show.
- You should be seen as a peer rather than an authority.
- Offer guidance or opinion rather than telling people what to do.
- Encourage people to seek further information
- Always keep the objectives and outcomes in mind and drive these.

Topic:

Teaching children to keep themselves safe

Objectives

- Highlight the importance of talking to children about child safety
- Underline how parents can better prepare their children to keep them safe from child abuse
- Encourage parents to talk to their children about keeping themselves safe, and knowing how to recognize and respond to abuse.

Introduction

On this show, we celebrate the fact that you are the most important person in your child' life. You have the power to give your child the best possible start in life and it doesn't have to cost you a cent.

Child abuse is any action that results in harming a child. There are many different forms of child abuse including physical, sexual and emotional abuse. The one that we often forget about is neglect – that is also abuse. While it is a difficult conversation to have, it is critically important to talk to your children about the possibility of sexual abuse, so that they can be prepared to recognize and respond to it if it happens.

Questions	Facts/Information
<p>1. <i>Sexual abuse is an issue that is rife in our country. What can we do to prevent child abuse?</i></p>	<p>The most important thing is to help children protect themselves and a really important part of this is about talking to children about difficult topics (like abuse) and being open enough as parents for them to talk to us. We do in a number of ways and this should be an ongoing part of parenting well, and teaching your children to protect themselves and by talking to children about their rights and responsibilities.</p>
<p>2. <i>Could you explain what you meant about talking about children’s rights and responsibilities?</i></p>	<p>Children have rights just like adults, and this includes the right to safety from harm. Make sure that you find lots of opportunities to tell children that they have the right to say no to anyone who tries to hurt them or make them feel bad – including friends and family.</p>
<p>3. <i>How do you explain to children what it means when someone makes them feel bad?</i></p>	<p>It is important to talk to children about YES and NO feelings. Start doing this from when they are young. We get NO feelings from somebody who hurts us or makes us feel sore, sad or bad. YES feelings make us feel happy. For example you could help your child identify when they get a NO feeling (for example when someone shouts at them) or when they get a YES</p>

<p>4. <i>What should they do when someone gives them a NO feeling?</i></p> <p>5. <i>I guess an important part of teaching children to protect themselves is making sure that they talk about these things openly?</i></p> <p>6. <i>How do you teach them to protect their bodies?</i></p>	<p>feeling (when someone gives them a hug).</p> <p>It is important to teach children to say NO to someone who gives them a NO feeling and that they have the right to do this – to anyone, even grownups. You can let your child practice this by saying NO loudly and clearly. For example imagine a little boy Themba, whose aunt always gives him a big hug and a very sloppy, wet kiss when she sees him. It gives him a NO feeling. As a parent you can support him in saying “NO please don’t kiss me, I’m too big for hugs and kisses or even just I don’t really like hugs and kisses. “</p> <p>Yes a critical part of helping children protect themselves is to make sure that you talk to about abuse with them in a gentle way – you don’t want to make them scared but you do want to make them aware of the need for them to look out for their own safety. For example teach them to be careful of people they don’t know. Importantly you need to teach children to respect and know about their own bodies.</p> <p>Firstly it is important to teach children about their body parts (and the proper names for them especially the proper names for their private parts – penis and vagina). It is important to explain to them the concept of private parts – we keep them hidden under our underwear and no one can ask to touch or look at your parts if it gives you a NO feeling. Remember to role play this with children – ask them what they would do if</p>
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<p>7. <i>I remember that there was a song that when we were young to help with this?</i></p>	<p>someone touched their private parts – get them to practice saying NO!</p> <p>Yes there is. Find ways to teach this in a fun way too so that they can learn to take care of their bodies. Teaching them this song also can help get the ideas across:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">My Body’s, nobody’s body but mine You have your own body. Let me have mine My body’s mine from my head to my toes Please leave it alone when you hear me say NO!</p>
<p>8. <i>What can children do if they are getting a NO feeling or not feeling safe?</i></p>	<p>Encourage children to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say NO (if you can) • RUN away (if you can) and • TELL someone that you can trust (if you can)
<p>9. <i>I am sure that sometimes it is hard to get children to tell people what is going on?</i></p>	<p>Importantly encourage children to express their feelings and reassure them that they must tell you if someone is hurting or harming them in anyway.</p> <p>Yes this is one of the biggest problems – that is why it is so important that you build the kind of open relationship with your children, that they feel they can tell you anything without risking getting in trouble (so they are not scared of you). Importantly children love secrets and surprises, but they have to learn the difference between good secrets and bad secrets. For example, telling them that if a grown up wants to hug or kiss or touch</p>

<p><i>10. How can parents help their children to make safe decisions at different times in their lives?</i></p>	<p>you, and then calls it “our little secret, then this is a bad secret. Tell your children to tell someone they trust about this like mom, dad or a teacher.</p> <p>Playing games with children can help them think about their own safety and encourage them to come to you with their problems. Ask them questions like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What would you do ...if a stranger offered your sweets?• Where would you go for help...if you got lost?• Who would you tell...if an older child was hurting you?
<p><i>11. How can you help your children be better prepared if they need help?</i></p>	<p>Make sure your children know where they live including their name, surname, home address and telephone number but make sure that they know not to tell anyone this. Teach them also your number at work so they can get hold of you in an emergency.</p> <p>Importantly teach older children the childline toll free number 08000 55555 and display this number where children can see it – at home, at the ECD centre, school, church or clinic.</p>
<p><i>12. What should I do if a child asks for help?</i></p>	<p>If a child tells you that he or she has been abused, remember that you are there to protect the child. Remember that it took great courage for an abused child to share with an adult as they often feel guilty or blame themselves so try not to show anger, shock or embarrassment. Listen to their story and tell her that you believe her. Young children are very unlikely to lie</p>

<p><i>13. What will happen next?</i></p> <p><i>14. How as a community can we help prevent child abuse from happening?</i></p> <p><i>15. Where can we go to for help?</i></p>	<p>about sexual abuse. If the abuse has just happened, don't destroy any physical evidence (i.e. don't wash the child or burn clothes as the police will need this evidence). Take immediate steps to ensure the child's safety and explain what will happen next.</p> <p>When you suspect child abuse, it is critical that you report the child abuse at the police station. Tell the officer on duty that you want to speak to a member of the family violence and child protection unit. They are specially trained to deal with cases of child and sexual abuse, and will they will come and collect the child and their caregiver as soon as possible.</p> <p>The most important thing in a community to help prevent child abuse is to work together and try and support each other. People have to work long hours and often travel far distances to get home late, so it is important to organize safe places for children to be and play when their parents are away. It is also important for neighbours to look out for disabled children who are easily abused. Some communities get together and organize safe houses, and give children whistles to call for help if needed.</p> <p>There are a few different places that offer help if you suspect child abuse, or if a child you know has been abused. Child welfare is a big umbrella body that represents a number of organisations. You can report neglect or abuse by calling</p>
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	0861 424453. Childline runs a national helpline telephone that is available toll free 24 hours a day. You can call them on 0800 055 555.

Conclusion

Teaching children about their bodies and their rights helps protect them against child abuse. Teaching children to say NO to things that they don't like, and to listen to their own NO feelings, will help keep them safe from abuse. Taking the steps to have these difficult and uncomfortable conversations with your children about abuse can prevent abuse in the future.

Learning outcomes

After listening to this show the audience should:

- Consider talking to their children about child abuse
- Make themselves accessible to their children
- Prepare their children to keep them safe from child abuse through talking about these difficult matters
- Understand the importance of their children knowing how to recognize and respond to abuse.
- Educate children about important safety numbers such as childline, their home number and what to do in an emergency.