

Being Your Own Best Friend

10-11 Year Olds

Day 2 of 3

Objectives

To give children practice in resisting the common forms of coercion, including:

- like me /love me,
- special friend,
- won't be friend,
- Bribery,
- Intimidation, and
- threats.

To continue to reinforce three elements of communication and comfort with saying "no."

To continue to encourage and validate touch which is positive and healthy.

To establish and reinforce permission to tell.

To practice telling through role-play and to further develop communication skills.

Introduction for adult

The role-plays in this lesson prepare the child to recognize and resist the common emotional ploys used by offenders to get them to go along in abusive situations. Since the vast majority of abusers (85-90%) are known to the child and seeming "compliance" on the part of the child is necessary for the successful completion of the offense, straightforward refusal to participate is a powerful prevention tool.

Resisting emotional coercion and requests for secrecy are also an essential part of the prevention of abuse. Children who do not acquiesce when pressured emotionally stand a better chance of resisting abuse, because the offender wants the child's participation and often will not move ahead without some assurance that s/he will not be revealed.

"I'm going to tell" is the second step for children to extricate themselves from a difficult situation or to avoid sexual abuse. One concern of parents and teachers is whether saying "I'm going to tell" increases the risk of violence or injury to the child. It is believed that it does not. Remember that abusers known to the child are looking for a warm, nonjudgmental, affectionate relationship. They don't want or need rejection. Additionally, it's easier for them to find another child than to risk discovery by hurting a child who refuses to go along.

In all cases, children must know that it's okay to tell their parents or someone else they trust whenever they have to say, "I'm going to tell," in order to get someone to stop touching them.

Remember, role-playing is acting out each scenario so children learn the skill, not just the concept.

Introduction for children

People don't always listen when you ask them to stop what they're doing.

Let's see how good kids can be at sticking to what they feel when someone is trying to talk them into doing something they don't want to do.

Watch videotape

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M6ZOrtBGqo&list=PLSrCYUKewj4dF58wxBmPx0QayhpO6d34T&index=17>

Role-play

Those were some hard situations, but each of the kids found a way to handle what was happening. Let's try some situations and see how you do.

Remember, if you ask someone to stop what they're doing and they don't stop, then I want you to say, "I'm going to tell."

RP: What if a friend of your mom or dad comes to visit and puts his arm around you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable or that seems creepy?

When you try to move away he says, "Oh, you're my special friend. I came over just to see you." What would you say and do?

What if the person says to you, "Don't you like me? If you liked me, you'd sit here with me." What would you say and do?

We want to create an absolutely clear progression here for children.

First, they say "no." Then, they say, "I'm going to tell." Then they tell.

RP: What if you were taking gymnastics and the man who teaches the class kisses your cheeks and gets too close to your face when he tells you how you did? You feel uncomfortable and intimidated. You ask him to stop and back up a little bit so you can see him better.

But he keeps doing it. When you say, "I'm going to tell," he says, "Go ahead and tell, I don't care." What would you do? Do you think your mom or dad or teachers would care?

RP: What if your best friend's dad touches your bottom or your legs every time you get close to him. You ask him to stop, but he keeps doing it. What would you say and do?

What if when you say, "I'm going to tell," he says, "Oh, I'm sorry, I won't do it again, but please don't tell." What would you say and do?

What if he says, "Please don't tell and I'll do something special for you, okay?" Would that be all right?

What is that called? That's called bribery.

It is never okay to accept favors or goodies in exchange for touching. Tell a trusted adult immediately!

RP: What if your sitter pinches and bends your ear every time you do something she doesn't like? You tell her it hurts, but she keeps doing it.

When you say, "I'm going to tell," she says, "Go ahead and tell. No one will believe you. I'm the sitter and I'm in charge." What would you do?

What's that called?

The word for that is intimidation. She's trying to control you without admitting what she's trying to do. Does she have the right to do that?

Children need to recognize intimidation and tell a trusted adult immediately.

RP: What if someone says to you, "If you tell, I'll hurt you or someone in your family."

What's that called?

That is a threat and you should never try to handle a situation like that by yourself.

Would it be scary if someone said something like that to you?

No matter how scared you are, you need to tell and keep telling until someone helps you.

RP: What if you tell someone about what happened and they say something like, "Oh don't be silly. They were just joking."

Then what would you do? That's right! You'd tell someone else.

Review

When you say, "I'm going to tell," there are lots of ways people might try to get you to do what they want you to do.

They might try bribery saying, "Go ahead and tell, I don't care."

They might tell you that, "No one will believe you," or use intimidation and threats.

All of these are ways to try to control you. Are you going to let that happen? NO!

Is it being responsible to tell?

Is telling making a choice that is healthy and good for you? Is it responsible to tell and to get help when you can't handle something by yourself?

Does that mean it's going to be easy? Probably not, but it's important to remember that the person who is bothering you probably won't stop until you do tell someone.