



# KIDPOWER 30 SKILLS

## *Coaching Handbook*

Introductory Guide to Teaching Personal Safety Skills to Children and Teens



Irene van der Zande with Kidpower International Community

A publication of **kidpower®**  
INTERNATIONAL

## Table of Contents

<p><b>Welcome to our Kidpower International Community!</b>.....<b>3</b></p> <p><b>1 Build Confidence By Taking In Compliments</b>.....<b>4</b></p> <p><b>2 Stay Calm To Make Wiser Choices</b>.....<b>5</b></p> <p><b>3 Know About Boundaries To Stay Safe</b>.....<b>6</b></p> <p><b>4 Use 'Speak Up Power' To Help Stop Problems</b>.....<b>7</b></p> <p><b>5 Use Boundary Power: Make A Fence or A Wall</b>.....<b>8</b></p> <p><b>6 Get Help From Adults You Trust</b>.....<b>9</b></p> <p><b>7 Persist In Getting Help: Do not Give Up</b>.....<b>10</b></p> <p><b>8 Tell The Whole Story: Your Adults Cannot Read Your Mind</b>.....<b>11</b></p> <p><b>9 The Power of Saying, "No, Thanks!"</b>.....<b>12</b></p> <p><b>10 Touch is NOT Always a Choice: Know What is Or is NOT Your Choice</b>.....<b>13</b></p> <p><b>11 Touch for Fun or Affection Should Be a Choice: It is OK to Say "No"</b>.....<b>14</b></p> <p><b>12 Why Problems Should NOT Be Secrets</b>.....<b>15</b></p> <p><b>13 What To Do If Someone Gets Upset</b>.....<b>16</b></p> <p><b>14 What To Do When People Kids Love Have Problems Or Act Unsafely</b>.....<b>17</b></p> <p><b>15 The Right To Change Your Mind</b>.....<b>18</b></p> <p><b>16 Setting A Boundary If Someone Does not Listen</b>.....<b>19</b></p> <p><b>17 How To Resist A Bribe</b>.....<b>20</b></p> <p><b>18 What If Someone Misuses Power?</b>.....<b>21</b></p>	<p><b>19 Talk With Kids About The Private Areas Safety Rules</b> ..<b>22</b></p> <p><b>20 Tell An Emergency Safety Lie: Promise Not to Tell, And Tell Anyway</b>.....<b>23</b></p> <p><b>21 Tell - Even If The Person Stops</b>.....<b>24</b></p> <p><b>22 Let Kids Talk About <i>Their</i> Feelings</b>.....<b>25</b></p> <p><b>23 How And What To Yell For Safety So People Will Listen and Understand</b>.....<b>26</b></p> <p><b>24 Redirecting Unwanted Affection</b>.....<b>27</b></p> <p><b>25 Make A 'Check First' Safety Plan</b>.....<b>28</b></p> <p><b>26 Trust The Uh-Oh Feeling: Pay Attention To Your Intuition</b>.....<b>29</b></p> <p><b>27 Feeling Scared or Worried? Leave If You Can</b> ..<b>30</b></p> <p><b>28 Protect Yourself From Hurtful Words and Teasing</b>.....<b>31</b></p> <p><b>29 Be Kind To Yourself</b>.....<b>32</b></p> <p><b>30 Run To Safety To Escape Danger</b>.....<b>33</b></p> <p>Conclusion: Practice! Practice! Practice!.....<b>34</b></p> <p>Testimonials About Kidpower Skills.....<b>35</b></p> <p>Acknowledgements.....<b>36</b></p> <p>Kidpower Services for All Ages and Abilities ..<b>37</b></p> <p>Online Kidpower Resources ..<b>38</b></p> <p>Copyright and Permission To Use Information ..<b>39</b></p>
--	--

# Welcome

## to our Kidpower International Community!



**Irene van der Zande**  
Executive Director and Founder  
Kidpower Teenpower Fullpower International

By learning and teaching the personal safety lessons in this *Kidpower 30-Skills Coaching Handbook*, you will be helping to prepare the young people in your life to take charge of their safety and well-being.

Our goal is to provide children and teens of all abilities with knowledge and skills to prevent harm, such as bullying and abuse and to strengthen relationships that increase joy, build resilience, and protect mental health.

Because adult leadership is essential to child protection, this book also shows adults how to create a common understanding about safety – and how to uphold Kidpower's 'Put Safety FIRST' Founding Principle: *The safety and well-being of a child are more important than ANYONE'S embarrassment, inconvenience, or offense.*

Many families, schools, and youth groups are using these short lessons to teach their children and teens how to prevent and solve problems with people, so that they can have more fun and less trouble.

If you do not see a child regularly, that is OK! You can teach a skill to a young person whenever you have the chance. You can share skills with young people by video, text, or email – and also with other caring adults in your family, school, work, circle of friends, and neighborhood.

**HAVE FUN!** Instead of using fear to talk about danger, Kidpower makes it fun to learn to stay safe! Kids who feel safer and more confident are better prepared to make the most of their days, learn more easily, and enjoy their relationships.

Thank you for your commitment to protecting and empowering the young people in your life!

With our best wishes for joy, safety, health, and success for you and your loved ones.

#1

## Build Confidence By Taking In Compliments

Start teaching Kidpower 30 Skills by giving at least one child in your life, or their adult, a real compliment. Taking in kindness builds confidence and belief in yourself, no matter what age you are, and this is a powerful safety tool. Teach a child to take in a compliment by coaching them to put both hands on their heart and say "Thank you!"

To be truly meaningful and sincere, a compliment must be factual, contain **no** hint of criticism, be relevant to the child, and be age-appropriate. Find compliments that are about what the child *does* - act caring, be helpful, keep trying, learn, act bravely, act kindly, use their imagination, remember to do something - rather than about appearances, physical strength, or outward accomplishments.

Remember that there are many kinds of power.

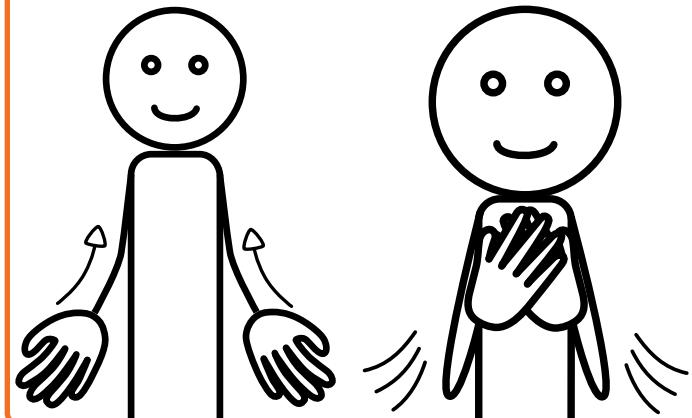
Encourage young people to give themselves compliments. If they have done something hard, encourage them to take a minute to take into their hearts and minds the good feeling of being successful - and to tell themselves, "Good job!"

Taking in compliments helps children internalize positive messages and keep them in their hearts. Kidpower's *Heart Power Safety Signal* also helps kids and adults remember to protect their hearts – and to use their hearts to be kind to others.

*"Today I shared this skill with my friend Roberto, from Italy. He regretted that he did not receive compliments when he was a child and he agreed that he does not know how to accept them. He realized how wonderful it would be for his son, Stefano, to have his father tell him that he is proud of all the kind and smart things Stefano does. Thanks to Kidpower today Stefano heard his father Roberto say REAL compliments and he replied with a smile: 'Thanks Dad!!'"*

**- Gisella, Self-Defense Expert**

Heart Power Safety Signal



Taking in kindness can build healthy self-esteem, which helps to protect kids from abuse.

## #2

## Stay Calm To Make Wiser Choices

Both kids and adults can think more clearly and make wiser choices to solve problems if they are calm and in control of their feelings and actions – and kids learn better when their adults are calm.

Practice how to use Calm Down Power to get grounded by making it a fun game. Together with a child, push the palms of your hands together, straighten your back, press your toes against your shoes or the floor, take a deep breath, and let it out slowly. Look at, or notice, something that makes you feel good. Take another slow, deep breath.

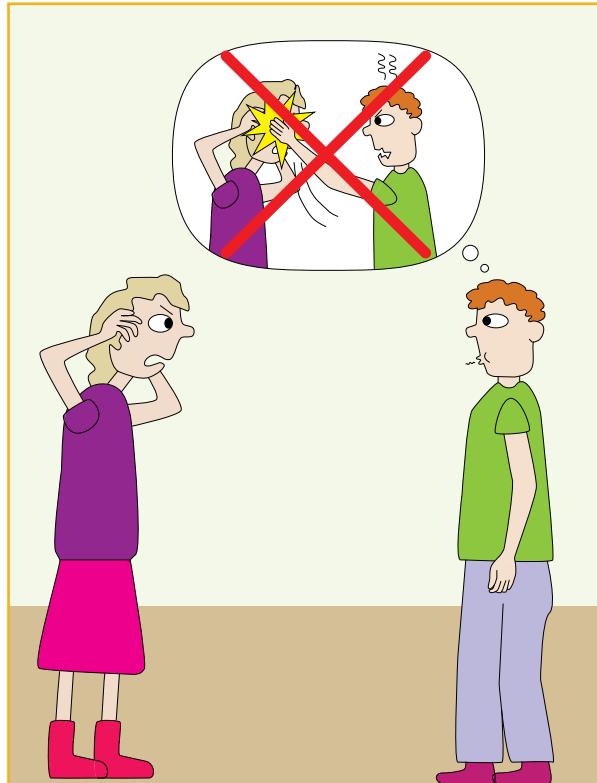
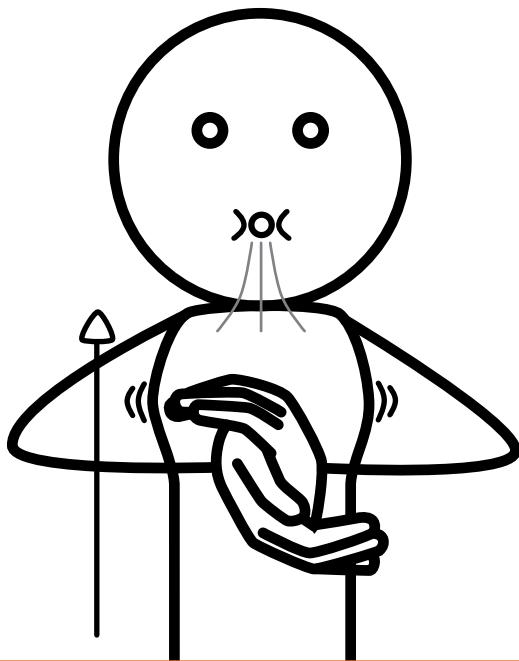
Ask the child to tell you what it means to them to feel calm – and tell them about what this feeling is like for you.

Practice again by having the child pretend to be upset and then quickly making a Safety Decision to use their Calm Down Power. For example, have them yell, "HEY!" as if they are angry. Or, "OUCH!" as if their feelings are hurt. Then, coach them to Calm Down by going through each of the steps above.



Practice Calm Down Power together.

### Calm Down Power Safety Signal



## #3

## Know About Boundaries To Stay Safe

Understanding about boundaries and consent helps everyone develop better relationships - and is essential to protecting personal safety. Boundaries are like fences or walls between people to help them set limits about what is and is not okay or safe.

Brainstorm with a child three examples of boundaries they can see or touch, such as lines on a sports field, crosswalks, walls, etc.

Now brainstorm three examples of personal boundaries they can not see but can feel inside, especially when they notice when they are crossed. For example, tell them: "You might be having fun tickling but then suddenly it is not fun anymore and you want to stop. You might be having fun joking but then someone says something that hurts your feelings. That feeling of 'Hey, that is not fun!' is a signal you feel inside of your personal boundary being crossed."

By teaching children what boundaries are and what it feels like when they are crossed, it helps them to set boundaries more effectively to stop Safety Problems. This understanding also helps to develop consent skills by recognizing and respecting the boundaries of others.



A boundary is like a fence. The fence protects other people from a yappy dog that bites people's ankles. And the fence also protects the yappy dog so that she does not get hit by a car. The fence is the boundary.



Sometimes tickling is fun for everyone.



Too much tickling can cross your boundaries.

## #4

## Use 'Speak Up Power' To Help Stop Problems

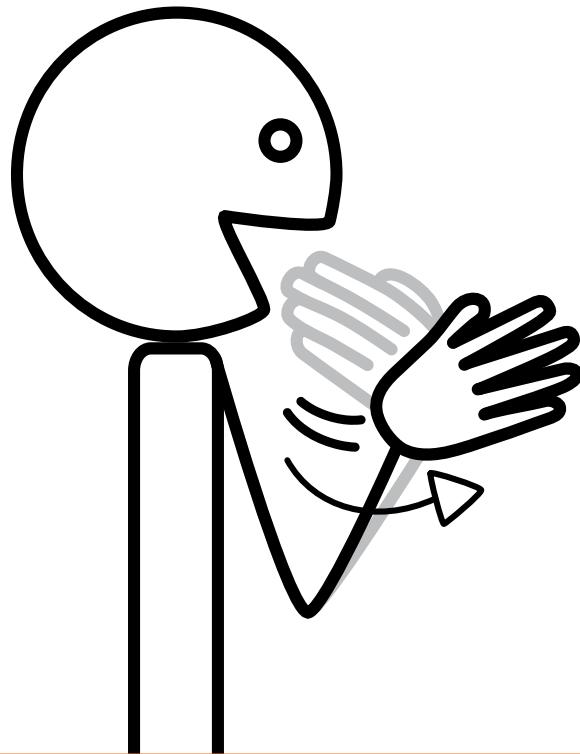
Speaking up early or right away when your boundaries are crossed, or someone starts to bother you, can stop problems sooner rather than later.

Coach children to practice looking towards your face and saying with a firm, polite voice, "Please stop." Respond by saying, "Thank you for speaking up. I will stop." (Dealing with what to do if someone does not listen is a different skill. See [Skill #16: Setting A Boundary If Someone Does not Listen.](#))

**With younger kids:** You can add to the practice by having a puppet bother them in a playful way and coaching them to say, "Please stop!" **With older kids:** Pretend you are about to tickle them when they do not want to be tickled. Coach them to say, "Please stop!" If a child sounds whiny or angry, coach the child to practice again, using a firm, calm and regular voice.

Speaking up helps people of any age to use their power to take charge of problems instead of just hoping they will go away.

### Speak Up Power Safety Signal



Mike, Mike who do you like?

Not funny!

Just wishing a friend would know what you want does not work.

Please stop making fun of my name. It hurts my feelings.

I am sorry.

Using Speak Up Power and Listening Power helps people have better friendships.

## #5

## Use Boundary Power: Make A Fence or A Wall

Sometimes words are not enough. Clear, strong, verbal, and visual boundaries are more likely to be seen and respected when someone does not listen at first.

Using one or both hands to show a "fence" physically can make a verbal boundary clearer and stronger.

Coach children to put their hands up as if they are gently pushing open a door and then to hold their hands still. Coach them to keep their hands in this "fence" position and say, "I said, 'Stop!'"

Respond to the child's clear verbal boundary and fence by saying, "I will stop."

A visual fence can be effective with just one hand, too. Some people use one hand because of how their bodies work. Sometimes people make a one-handed fence to set a boundary while they are holding something in the other hand. These are powerful fences, too!

Practice yourself making a strong, calm fence with your hands and saying, "Stop!" in a clear, calm, assertive voice.



Setting boundaries can be fun!

*"It has been revolutionary for my two sons, ages 7 and 9, to realize that they can put their hands up to protect their personal space. They are both very kind, gentle lads, and they used to let others walk all over them. I think they felt like the only option would have been punching, an idea they really did not like. But now, having spent many enjoyable hours practicing 'Stop Power' while Making a Fence with their hands, I can tell they feel more powerful and sovereign over their own space. They have learned that in most situations, they are able to protect themselves without violence."*

- John, Computer Analyst

## #6

## Get Help From Adults You Trust

Kids are safer when they have adults they trust who they believe will listen to them and help solve problems.

Parents and primary caregivers can help young people know they will listen by telling them, "No matter how busy or grumpy I am, you and your safety are more important than anything else! I always want to know if you have a Safety Problem or anything else that is worrying or bothering you."

Teachers and others can coach a child to identify adults the child could turn to for help by saying, "Who could you go to if you had a problem? Who else?"

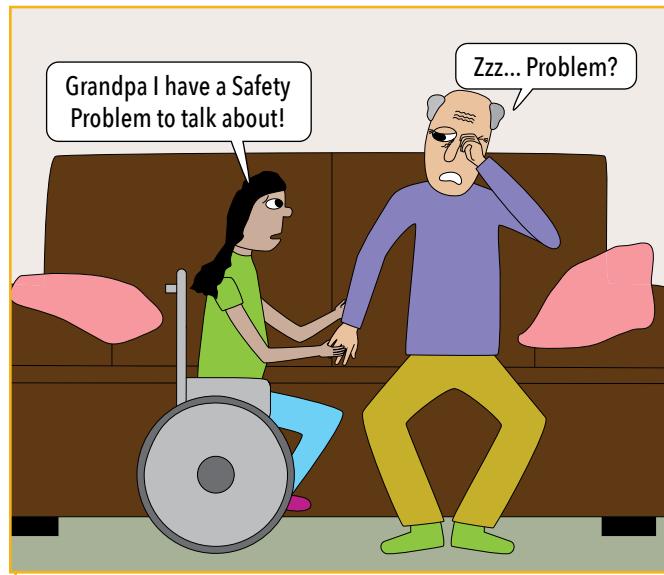
Try to make a list of at least five adults they trust, or if youths are more independent, various adults in different places they spend time in.

Coach children to say, calmly and confidently, "Excuse me, I need help," and "I have a problem. Please listen." Play the role of the responsible adult and say, "Thank you for talking to me. I will listen."

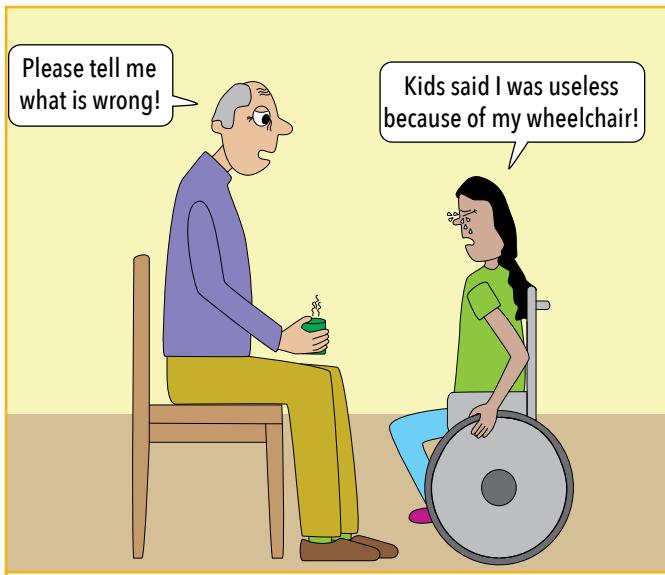
### The Kidpower Protection Promise™

**You are VERY important to me!**  
**If you have a safety problem,**  
**I want to know.**  
**Even if I seem too busy.**  
**Even if someone we care about will be upset.**  
**Even if it is embarrassing.**  
**Even if you promised not to tell.**  
**Even if you made a mistake.**  
**Please tell me, and I will do everything in my power to help you.**

Make the Kidpower Protection Promise to young people in your life. When kids can talk to adults they trust, it can help to solve Safety Problems.



Even when your grownups are tired, you can ask for help.



Most adults really want to help if they understand you have a Safety Problem.

## #7

## Persist In Getting Help: Do not Give Up

Most kids know that sometimes their adults do not listen or understand at first when they talk to them. When kids have Safety Problems, they are safer if they keep telling until an adult gives them the help they need. Teach them to interrupt and keep telling until they get the help they need.

Persisting in getting help, even if an adult is busy or distracted, is an essential safety skill.

Young people may have to ask multiple people to get someone to listen and do something to solve the problem. Maybe they try to tell a parent who is too distracted to hear them. Maybe they try to tell a teacher or support person at school about a problem and this person is busy or does not completely understand or help them. Or, maybe they need to get help in public and have to get the attention of an overwhelmed salesperson to have this person stop working and help them.

Practice as you did for [Skill #6: Get Help From Adults You Trust](#). Coach a child by saying, "In a calm and confident voice say, 'Excuse me, I need help!'

Good! Now say, 'I have a problem. Please listen.' Well done!" This time, respond by pretending to not listen and saying, "Hmmm. That is nice!" Or, "I am too busy. Come back later."

Ask the child, "Am I listening? No! So you need to get my attention. Do this by resting your hand calmly on my arm and saying in a firm and polite voice, 'Please look at me! This is about Safety.'"

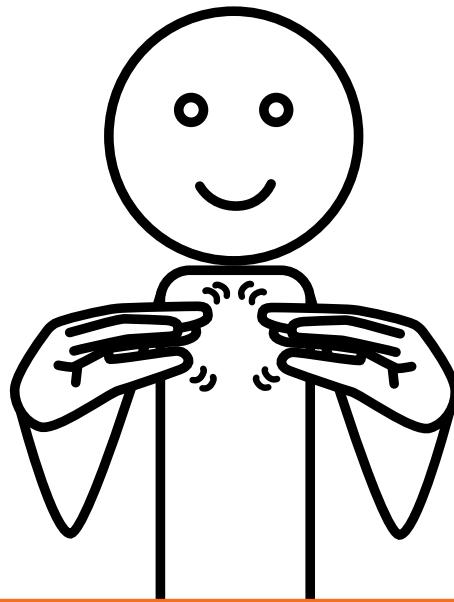
Look the child in the eye and say, "Great! Now most likely I would listen and help you. But, if for some reason I did not, maybe I was busy or having a hard day, your job would be to find someone else to tell. Who else could you tell?"

Review with the young person different people they could ask for help.

Click for articles online at Kidpower.org:

[Teaching Children Persistence to Build Their Personal Safety](#)

### Keep Telling Safety Signal



*"When I taught my 8-year-old's classroom to use a calm resting hand to get their adult's attention for Safety Problems, I did not expect my own child to use it with me. That night, she started telling me about a difficult interaction she had had at school that day. Unfortunately, I was distracted and was not truly listening to her. She got my attention by using her calm resting hand and saying in a clear and kind voice, 'Mom, this is about my Safety!' I then understood that my daughter needed my attention and help. I was able to get the whole story and provide support so she could figure out how to make her problem better instead of bigger."*

**- Frédérique, Parent Volunteer**

## #8

## Tell The Whole Story: Your Adults Cannot Read Your Mind

When kids of any age have problems, their adults might not understand unless they tell the whole story. Younger children often believe their grownups can read their minds. Older youth might be embarrassed or afraid of getting in trouble. Even adults sometimes use the Wishing Technique (wishing people would just be able to read our minds and do what we want or wishing that something is or is not actually happening) and the Hinting Technique (using hints or suggestions rather than actually saying what you want) instead of asking clearly for help.

Start the practice by saying, "No matter how good we are at guessing, we cannot read your mind. We will always want to help you if you have a problem. To make sure we understand, you will need to tell the whole story about what happened."

Make up a pretend problem the child can relate to for practice. For example, you can say, "Imagine you do not want to go to school

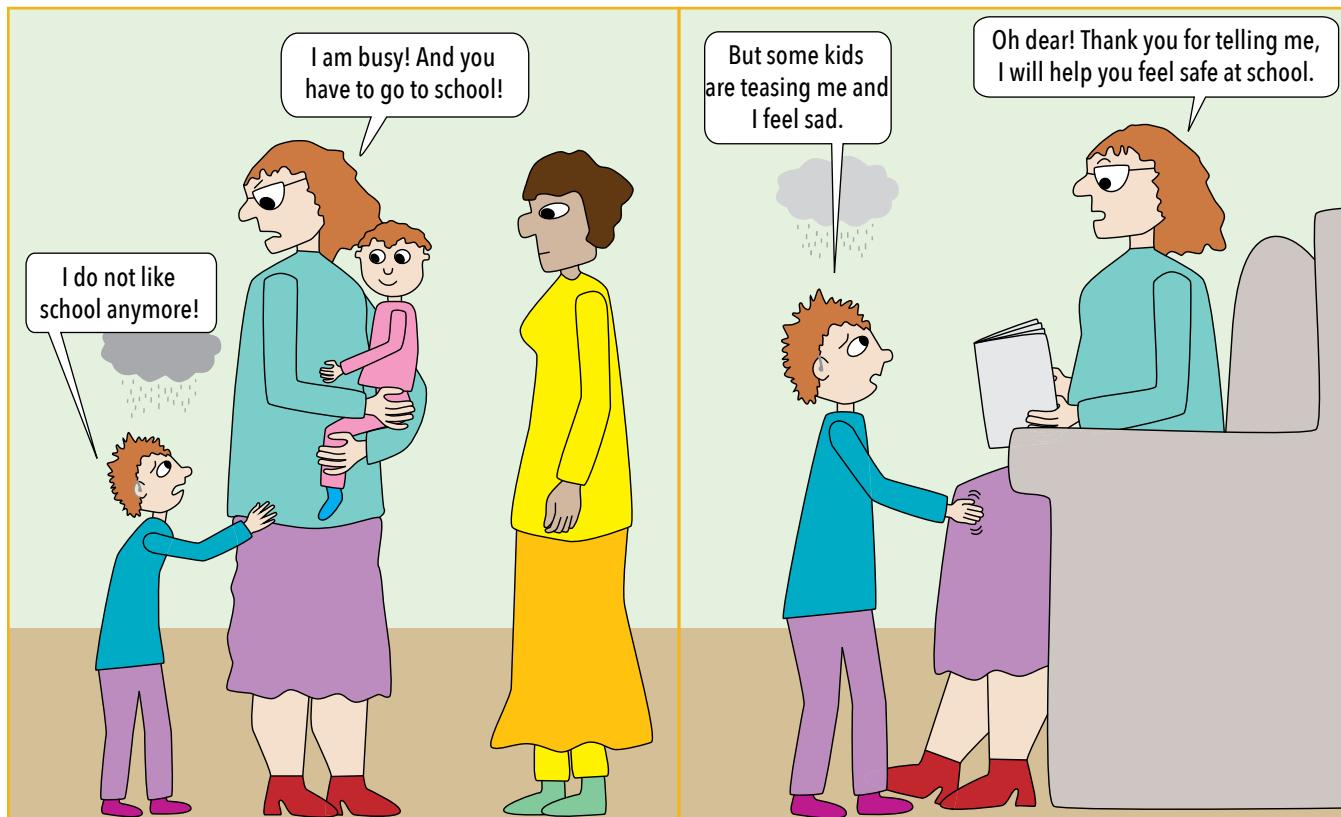
because some kids are calling you hurtful names and shoving you at recess. Suppose you told the adult in charge of the schoolyard, but the problem is getting worse. Pretend to get help from me."

Coach the child to say, "Excuse me, I need help." Answer, "Okay, what is going on?"

Coach the child to say, "I do not like school anymore."

Sigh and say, "Sorry, but you still have to go." Ask the child if this reaction sounds like the adult understands or got the whole story? Coach them to explain about the kids teasing and being hurtful, and how they asked for help at school but the problem is getting bigger, not better.

Respond by saying calmly and matter-of-factly, "Thank you so much for telling me. I am sorry I did not understand before. I want you to feel safe at school, and we will figure out what to do."



## #9

## The Power of Saying, "No, Thanks!"

Children and adults alike are often uncomfortable in setting boundaries because they do not want to hurt the feelings of someone important to them. Being prepared to say, "No, thanks!" cheerfully, clearly, and respectfully is useful in lots of situations – from turning down unwanted food from a grandma to stopping a wrestling game that is getting too rough.

Children are safer when they understand that we each belong to ourselves, and when they know how to politely and firmly refuse behavior from others that does not feel safe to them.

Explain to children, "You belong to you, and I belong to me. Your body belongs to you, and so do your feelings and your thoughts. We each belong to ourselves. Knowing how to say 'No, thanks!' in a clear, calm, and respectful way helps you to take care of your body and feelings and can help you to build safe, strong relationships. Let's practice."

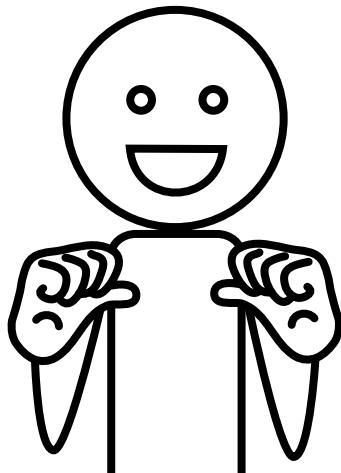
Say, "Imagine that I want to wrestle and you do not." Coach the child, "Look at me with a calm face, make your hands into a fence, or shake your head and hand, and say clearly, 'No, thanks.'" Respond cheerfully with, "Okay!"



Say, "Now imagine you want to wrestle and I do not." Make your fence with your hands, or use the "No, Thank You" Power Safety Signal and say, calmly and confidently, "No, thanks." Coach the child to respond cheerfully, "Okay."

Practicing accepting a boundary by saying, "Okay," helps children learn Listening Power. Part of developing consent skills is respecting other people's boundaries and listening to them.

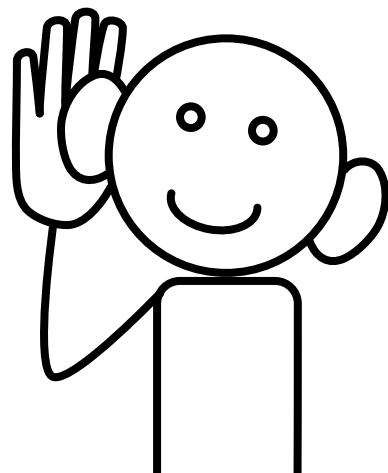
### We Each Belong to Ourselves Safety Signal



### "No, Thank You!" Power Safety Signal



### Listening Power Safety Signal



## #10

## Touch is NOT Always a Choice: Know What is Or is NOT Your Choice

Young people are safest when they understand what is and is not their choice in different situations – and that any kind of touch or problem is never a secret.

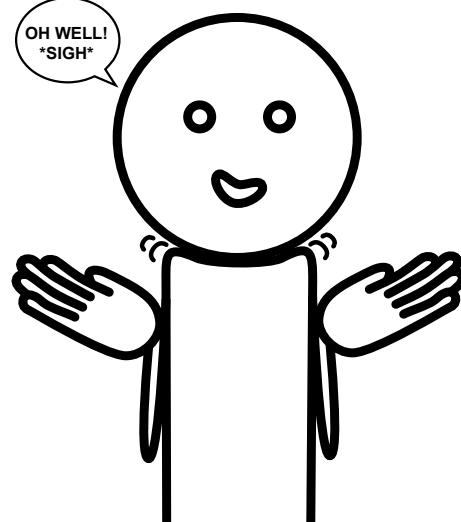
If we tell children that their bodies belong to them so they can decide whether or not they are touched, we are giving them a message that is confusing and not always true. For children, touch for health or safety such as holding hands to cross the street, getting strapped into a car seat, or going to the doctor is often not their choice.

The reality for all of us is that, although we each belong to ourselves, some things are **not** always our choice. For kids, touch for health and safety is often not a choice.

Brainstorm with a child: When is something your choice? Playing tag is your choice. Hitting someone just because you are mad is not your choice. Say, "Imagine I am a dentist cleaning your teeth. Is that touch a choice? No, because it is about health and safety."

Practice by saying, "Pretend I am your dentist." Put your hand on the child's shoulder and ask, "Is this type of touch a choice?" Nod and say, "Yes. It is about showing affection." Say, "Imagine you did not want me to have my hand on your shoulder." Say, "Gently and firmly remove my hand. Good! Now say, 'Please stop.'" As the "dentist" say, "Okay. Thank you for telling me you did not like that."

### Some Things are Not a Choice Safety Signal

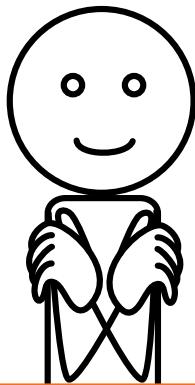


Being quiet in class if the teacher asks you to or getting your teeth checked by a dentist are both things that are NOT a young person's choice!

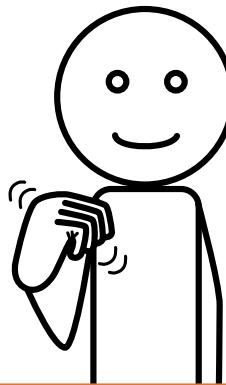
#11

## Touch for Fun or Affection Should Be a Choice: It is OK to Say “No”

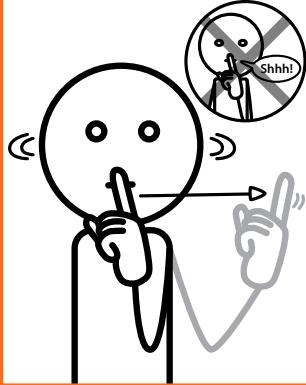
### Kidpower Consent and Boundary Safety Rules Checklist



Safe  
Safety Signal



Allowed  
Safety Signal



Not a secret  
Safety Signal



OK with each person  
Safety Signal

Young people are safer if they know when touch is their choice and when it is not. Because they do not want to upset family or friends, kids often endure unwanted hugs, kisses, tickling, cheek-pinching, play, or roughhousing. This is why the *Kidpower Consent and Boundary Safety Rules Checklist* is so helpful.

Using the Safety Signals gestures to help the child remember, say, “Any kind of touch or play should be **safe** [hug yourself], **allowed** by the adults in charge [make your hand into a nodding head] and **not** a secret so others can know [put your hands in the air]. Any touch or play for fun or affection, which means showing you like someone, should also be **OK** with each person [put two thumbs up].”

Here is an easy role play to help children understand. Pretend to tickle (or play tag, roughhouse, thumb wrestle, or another game that involves touch) together. Pretend – do not really touch – so you can keep focusing on the skill.

Ask, “If we both like this, is it okay?” Wait for a “yes” response and agree, “Yes, because we both like it.”

Say, “But, let’s say you wanted to stop.” Coach and say, “Step back, make a fence, and say, ‘Please stop.’” Ask, “Should I keep doing this if you want me to stop?” Wait for a “no” response. “Correct!” Pretend again and ask, “Would it be safe for us to do this in the middle of the street?” Wait for a “no” response and say, “That is right. That is not safe.”

Say, “Touch for fun also needs to be allowed by the adults in charge. What if we wanted to do this during a class. Would that be allowed?” Wait for a “no” response and say, “You are right. It would not be allowed by the teacher, who is the adult in charge.”

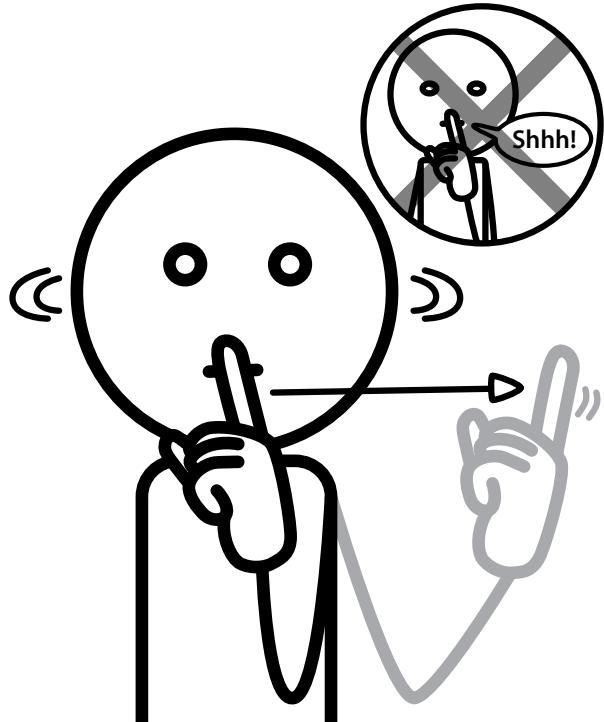
Ask, “What if I wanted to keep this a secret from your adults? Would that be safe?” Wait for or coach a “no” response. Then add, “No, because touch or games, even for fun, should NOT have to be a secret.”

Click for articles online at [Kidpower.org](http://Kidpower.org):  
[Why Affection and Teasing Should Be a Child's Choice](#)  
[Touch and Consent in Healthy Relationships](#)

#12

## Why Problems Should NOT Be Secrets

### Problems Should Not Be Secrets Safety Signal



Young people are safer when they understand that problems should not be secrets, even if someone they care about will be upset or embarrassed that they told.

They are safer when they can talk to adults about problems, no matter how big, small, silly, or serious those problems might seem. They need to know what to say if someone asks them not to tell.

Practice preparing a young person to not keep secrets. Say, "Problems should not be secrets." Coach the child to say this aloud, too.

Say, "If you already kept a problem a secret, you can still tell an adult. It is never too late to tell about a problem. Talking about problems is the way we get help to be safe."

Say, "Let's practice. Suppose I am your friend. Pretend I say, 'I have a big problem. I am going to tell you about it, but you have to promise not to tell anyone.'"

Say, "Respond calmly by saying, 'Problems should not be secrets.'"

With younger kids, you could add having them practice saying, "Let's get help."

With older kids, you can add letting them practice saying, "I want to be a good friend, but keeping problems a secret is dangerous. That can make problems worse. Let's talk about how you can get help from adults who will listen."

Uncle, this is about my safety!

OK! Tell me what happened.



## #13

## What To Do If Someone Gets Upset

Emotional pressure is a big reason why young people often have a hard time stopping unsafe behavior. When we set a boundary, the other person might get upset. Kids often worry that, "They will not like me anymore."

Fear of losing a friend or approval can lead to risky activities and other problems. You can teach a child how to navigate this challenge by empowering them with simple techniques and phrases that allow them to take control of such situations.

Kidpower's Founding Principle is that:

***The safety and well-being of a child are more important than anyone's embarrassment, inconvenience, or offense!***

Explain to the child, "Pretend you have said 'Stop' to something someone is trying to do with you that should be your choice, such as giving a hug or playing a game. Suppose this person is someone you care about, and they get hurt

feelings or mad because you said to stop. You can say, 'Sorry and stop,' or 'I do not want to hurt your feelings, and I want you to stop.'"

Say, "Let's practice. Pretend I said, 'That hurts my feelings.' You can say, 'I do not want to hurt your feelings, and please stop.'"

Practice with other examples, such as:

You: "You are being rude!"

Kid: "I do not mean to be rude, and please stop."

You: "I thought you were happy to see me."

Kid: "I am happy to see you, and stop."

You: "You are being unfair."

Kid: "I do not mean to be unfair, and stop."

You: "You are being difficult."

Kid: "Sorry, and stop."

Remind the child that, even if the person stops, it is still important to tell an adult they trust about what happened.



Teach kids that they can care about somebody else's feelings and still set a boundary.

#14

## What To Do When People Kids Love Have Problems Or Act Unsafely

Even though most of the time kids are abused by someone they know, it is upsetting to tell them, "By the way, the person most likely to harm you is someone you love and trust."

Instead, teach all kids not to keep problems a secret and how to get help.

Here is an emotionally safe way to explain to kids about adults with problems.

As soon as a child can understand, explain to them, "Sometimes the people important to kids have problems. And sometimes their problems are so big that they do things that hurt kids or are unsafe. If this happens to you or to a kid you know, remember that this is **not** the kid's fault. It does not mean anyone is bad, but it **does** mean that everyone has problems and needs help. The way to get help is to find an adult you trust and keep telling until someone understands and does something to help."

Coach the child to say, "When someone I care about does something unsafe, it is **not** my fault and we **do** need help."

Tell a young child five different people, one for each finger of their hand, who they might go to for help.

Help an older child think of at least five different people they might go to for help.

Ask, "What if I was gone on a trip? Who else? What if this person did not understand. Who else?"

Pretend to be a busy adult. Coach the child to interrupt you and say, "Excuse me. I have a Safety Problem. Someone I care about has problems and is not being safe and we need help." Respond by saying, "Thank you for interrupting me. I will help you."

Remind kids that, "It is NEVER too late to tell!"



Practicing interrupting a busy adult (in this case, being on the phone) prepares kids to ask for help.



Explain to children that, "Sometimes the people kids care about can have problems."

#15

## The Right To Change Your Mind



Often kids and adults get stuck when someone says, "But you said this was okay!" Or even, "But you liked this before."

Adults and kids of any age need to know that they have the right to change their minds about touch and things that are supposed to be for fun or for showing affection (which means showing someone you like them), even when it is somebody they know like a family member, friend, or teacher. This kind of touch should be a choice. You can practice setting boundaries in a simple way, that is respectful and effective.

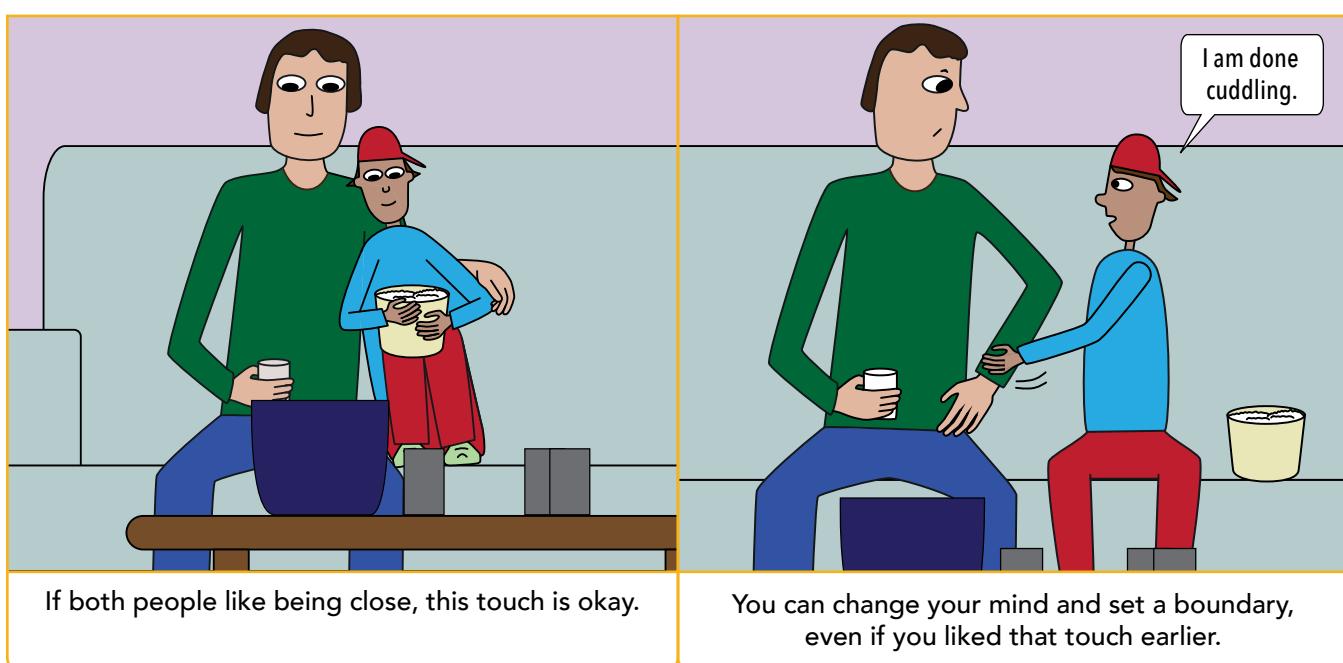
Put your hand on the child's shoulder.

Say, "Let's say you liked my hand on your shoulder and then you changed your mind. It is okay to change your mind about touch and attention for fun or affection."

Coach the child to take your hand, move it gently and firmly away and say, "Please stop touching my shoulder."

Say, "But you liked this."

Coach the child to reply, "I've changed my mind."



If both people like being close, this touch is okay.

You can change your mind and set a boundary, even if you liked that touch earlier.

## #16

## Setting A Boundary If Someone Does not Listen

Have you ever noticed that people sometimes do not listen? Most people do not like being told what to do - and often have trouble listening when a person sets a boundary about unwanted or unsafe affection or play. Especially with family members and friends who are important to them, kids might set their boundary once and then feel too uncomfortable to "push the issue" if the other person does not stop when asked. We do not have to let this happen!

Kids and teens need to know what to do if someone does not listen to their boundary at first.

Put your hand on the child's shoulder. Say, "Move my hand away, look towards my face, and say, 'Please stop.' ...Good!"

Say, "If I do not listen, you will need to tell me more strongly."

Pretend not to listen by putting your hand back on their shoulder and say, "Oh, but I like touching your shoulder!"

Coach the child to, "Stand up. Take a few steps back. Make a fence with your hands. Say, 'I said stop.'" Respond with, "Okay, I will stop."

Remind young people to tell an adult they trust about touch or anything else that makes them worried or uncomfortable, even if they set a clear boundary and the person listened.



If someone does not listen, set your boundary more strongly.

*"Now I can set boundaries with my friends without fear of losing them. We practiced a whole bunch of ways of setting boundaries. I did not think they would work at the time! We also practiced how to set boundaries, even when someone is trying to get you to break the rules. It is so helpful to be able to say, 'I really like you, and I am not willing to do that.' I ended up setting some pretty big boundaries with my best friend. And guess what? We are still good friends, and we do not get in trouble anymore."*

– Kendra, 14-year-old student

#17

## How To Resist A Bribe

If you will just be more friendly, I will let you stay up late and watch the movie.

Stop or I will tell.



Our bodies are NOT for sale!

Adults often give kids safe bribes as rewards for doing something helpful, useful, or for their own good. For example, "As soon as this mess is cleaned up, you can have an hour of free time."

An **unsafe** bribe is when someone offers to give you something to get you to do something that is unsafe or unethical. To show the power of a bribe, we sometimes tell parents or educators, "I will give you an expense-paid guilt-free trip to Hawaii for as long as you want, if you will just do something a little bit wrong." Our adult students smile and wonder, "**How** wrong?" We then point out that, for kids, a special favor or treat can be just as hard to resist as that trip!

Explain to children, "Sometimes people try to do things that are against the rules. One way people can break the Safety Rules is by offering a bribe to do something you think is not OK or against the rules. If someone offers you a bribe, say, 'Stop, or I will tell.' Let's practice!"

Say, "Suppose I said, 'I will buy you anything you want if you just roughhouse with me. Is that safe?'" Shake your head "no" and wait for a "no" response. "No, it is not, because I am trying to give you a bribe for a touch that is supposed to be your choice."

Coach the child to, "Stand up, move back and make a fence with your hands and say, 'Stop or I will tell.'"

Say, "What if I say, 'I will let you stay up as late as you want if you will just let me tickle you.'"

Coach the child to, "Stand up, move back and make a fence with your hands. Say, 'Stop or I will tell.'"

Say to an older child, "I will make sure you get to hang out with my friends if you ignore the new kid."

Coach the older child to, "Stand up, move back and make a fence with your hands. Say, 'True friends do not tell each other not to be with other friends. Stop or I will leave.'"

## #18

## What If Someone Misuses Power?

We teach young people to respect and listen to their adults, **and** to also know what to say and do if an adult or a kid tries to break the Safety Rules by misusing their power.

Say to children, "Sometimes people break the Safety Rules by using their power in a wrong way."

"For example, suppose I am your teacher [If you really are the child's teacher, say you are a coach or another grownup in charge] and I say, 'I am the teacher. I am in charge, so you **have** to do what I say, even though you know it is wrong.'"

"It is true you need to listen to the adults in your life, **and** that still does not mean they are allowed to break the Safety Rules of your school and family."

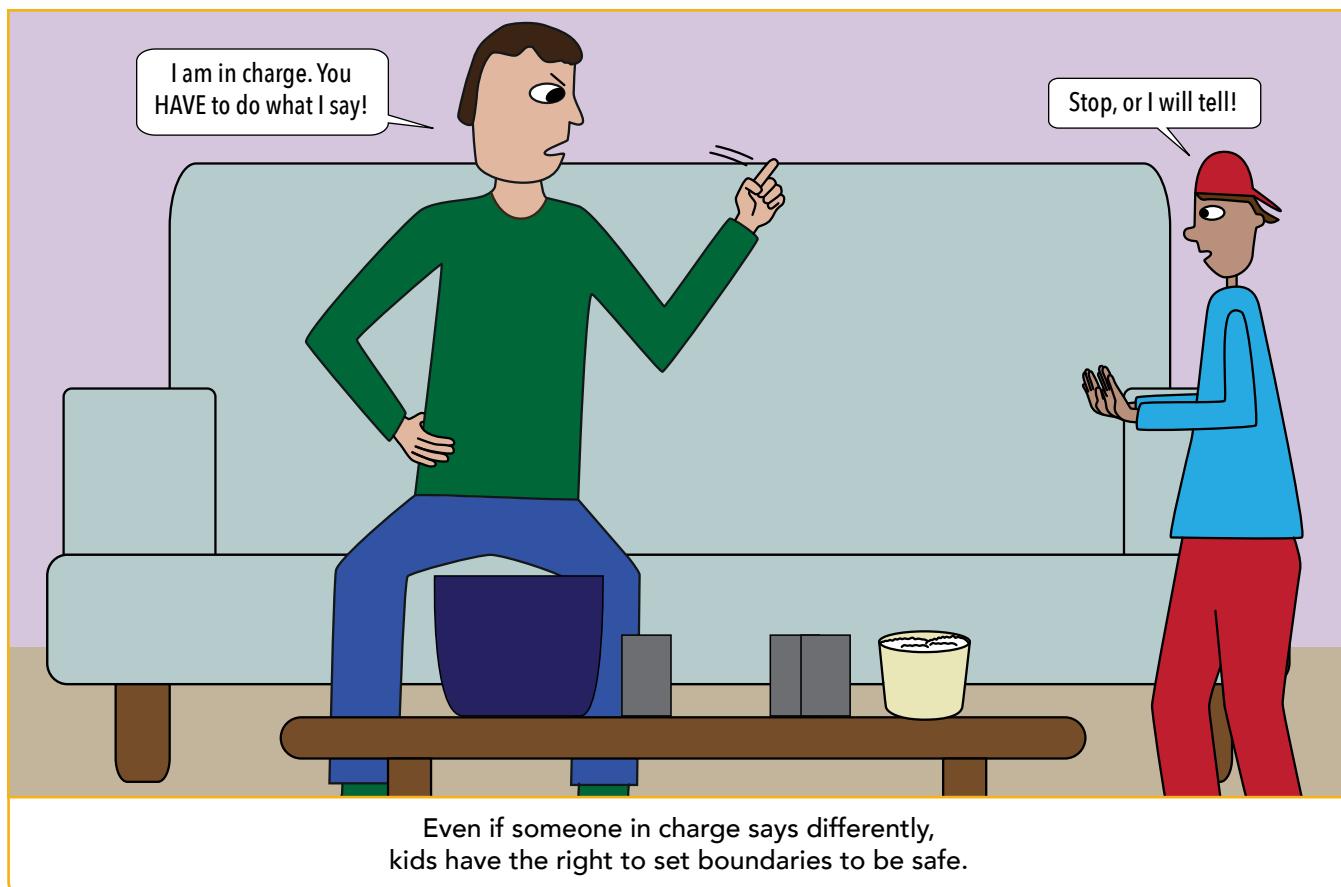
"So if I say, [Act stern] 'I am the adult, you are the kid. You **have** to obey me, even though you know it is wrong.'"

Coach the child to, "Stand up, move back, and make a fence with your hands. Say, 'Stop or I will tell.' Good! Let's practice another example."

[Act stern] Say, "I am in charge and you have to let me touch you even though it is breaking the Safety Rules!"

Coach the child to, "Stand up, move back, make a fence with your hands and say, 'Stop or I will tell.'"

Explain to the child, "Even if this person I was pretending to be stops, you still need to get help from another adult you trust. Remember that **problems or any kind of touch should not have to be a secret**. Keep telling adults you trust until you get the help you need."



#19

## Talk With Kids About The Private Areas Safety Rules

In order to recognize and stop sexual abuse, children need accurate, clear, age-appropriate Safety Rules about the private areas of their body that do not put upsetting images into their minds.

'Good touch/bad touch' explanations are confusing to kids because sexual touch might feel good to them at first.

Rules like '**Never** let anyone touch your private areas' are inaccurate because an adult might need to touch a child's private areas for health or safety.

The following explanation provides enough information that most children will understand in a way that is acceptable for most cultures and that is not too explicit.

In a calm matter-of-fact voice, explain to children, "Sometimes people break the Safety Rules about private areas. The private areas are the parts of your body that can be covered by a two-piece bathing suit."

"Sometimes a grownup has to touch your private areas for health or safety, but this should never have to be a secret."

"Otherwise, other people are not to touch your private areas nor are they to ask you to touch their private areas, or to show or take pictures or videos about people's private areas."

"Of course we will not do anything like that to practice. But we are going to practice how to set a boundary if this rule is broken."

[Stick your hand out in the air in front of you – far from the child so that you are not close to touching them] Say, "Pretend that when I put my hand out like this what I am saying or doing makes you have an uncomfortable 'uh oh' feeling like I might be **about to** break the Safety Rule about private areas. Right away, stand up, step back, and say, 'Stop or I will tell!'"

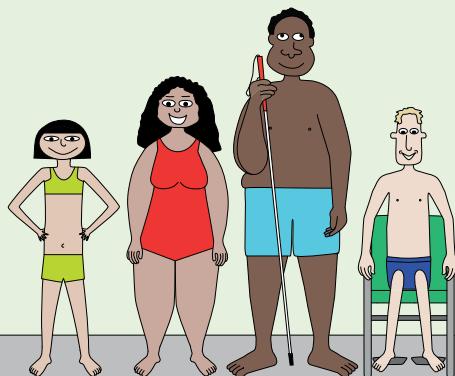
Say, "Let's start the practice seated so you can practice interrupting me by standing up."

Put your hand out in the air again and say, "Shh. Keep this touch a secret."

Coach the child to, "Interrupt me right away by standing up and moving back out of my reach... make a fence with your hands... and say, 'Stop or I will tell.'"

Say to the child, "Well done! Remember that, even if the person stops, it is important to tell an adult you trust what happened because when someone is breaking the Private Areas Safety Rules it means everyone needs help."

**Note:** As long as doing this is okay with a child's responsible adults, we recommend using the correct words for the body parts of the private areas just as we teach the correct words for other body parts.



The private parts of your body can be covered by a two-piece bathing suit.



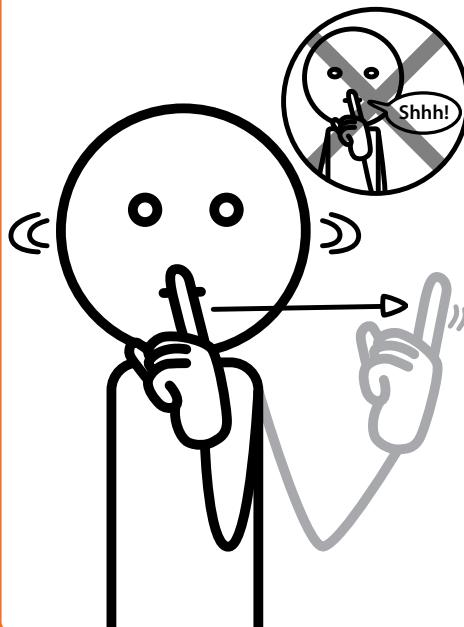
Sometimes grownups have to touch kids' private areas to help them.

#20

## Tell An Emergency Safety Lie: Promise Not to Tell, And Tell Anyway



### Problems Should Not Be Secrets Safety Signal



We teach children to be honest and keep their promises. Unfortunately, sometimes kids are threatened with harm unless they "promise not to tell" that someone has broken their Safety Rules.

Tell children, "You can break an 'unsafe promise' and tell an 'Emergency Safety Lie' **if** you are doing it to be safe and are going to get help as soon as you can."

Here is how to explain and practice this skill in a way that empowers rather than scares:

Say, "Remember how we practiced saying, 'Stop or I will tell' if someone breaks the Safety Rules? Let's do it again! [Model and coach] Make a fence with your hands and say, 'Stop or I will tell.' [Kid repeats] Great!"

"But, what if someone tried to make you promise not to tell? Suppose I said, [Act grumpy] 'You better not tell. Something bad will happen if you do. Promise me you will not tell!'"

"It is important to tell the truth and keep your promises. AND you might need to tell an

Emergency Safety Lie in order to be safe. Your job is to tell an adult you trust as soon as you can. So, if someone is making you promise not to tell, this is a time when you might need to lie and break a promise in order to be safe."

"Pretend I said, [Act stern] 'You better not tell!'"

Model and coach child to, "Make your fence. Say, 'I will not tell if you stop.' Good! Now, what are you going to do as soon as you can? Say, 'TELL!'"

Model and coach, "Great! Let's try another.

Pretend I said [Act worried] 'Please do not tell. I could get in trouble.' That would be hard! You can make your fence and say, 'I will not tell if you stop.' Excellent! And when you are away from this difficult person I am pretending to be, what are you going to do? [Wait for "tell" response] That is right, tell! Well done!"

Next, you can review people who the child can tell about a Safety Problem.

## #21

## Tell – Even If The Person Stops

As **adults**, we need to know that sexual predators sometimes try to 'groom' a child by pushing against their boundaries in ways that are uncomfortable but not sexual at first. If someone does not listen to a young person's boundary or does something unsafe, this is a potential problem – and, kids are safest if they are in the habit of talking possible problems over with an adult they trust.

What **kids** need to know is that any kind of problem should not be a secret and that it is important to tell adults they trust any time someone's behavior makes them uncomfortable, even if the person stops. Here is how to help kids practice handling this situation.

Explain to children, "If someone tries to touch you in a way that is unsafe or they do not listen the first time you ask them to stop, it is important to tell an adult."

"Even if they stop, you can still talk about what happened with an adult you trust. This is especially important if someone has broken the Safety Rules about private areas, bribes, or misusing power. Remember that problems should not be secrets, even if you really like this person or they might get upset if you tell."

To practice, pick an example relevant to the young person and say, "Let's imagine I am a new music/sports/art/swim teacher who keeps touching your hands, even though you keep asking me to stop touching you, and prefer I just show you what to do. Suppose, I said, 'You HAVE to let me touch your hands. I am the teacher, and I can touch your hands if I want. It is my job.'"

Explain, "This is a misuse of power and misusing power breaks the Safety Rules. Say, 'Stop, or I will tell!'" Reply with, "Well done!"

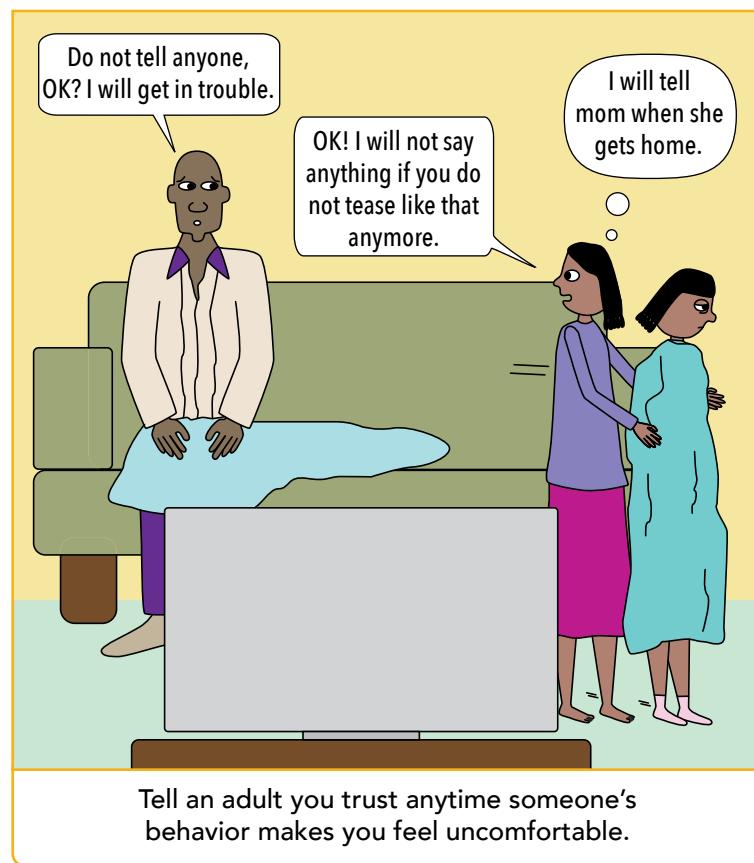
Continue the practice with, "Let's say that this teacher I am pretending to be listened to your strong boundary and stopped. That is good. You still need to tell because I broke a Safety Rule by misusing my power. Let's practice telling. Imagine I am now the adult you trust to go to and tell them your Safety Problem."

Coach the child to get your attention, look at you, and tell the whole story. ([Skills #6 Get Help From Adults You Trust](#), [#7 Persist In Getting Help: Do not Give Up](#), and [#8 Tell The Whole Story: Your Adults Cannot Read Your Mind](#))

Finish the practice by saying, "Thank you for telling me. I will help you."

For older kids and teens, your answer might be, "Thank you for telling me. Let's talk more and make a plan for what to do."

Discuss the [Kidpower Protection Promise](#) with all of the young people who are important to you. (Skill #6)



#22

## Let Kids Talk About Their Feelings

Mom put medicine on my bottom today! I did not like it.

Thank you for telling me. I am sorry you did not like it.



Touch of any kind should never ever be a secret.

Marco had to pull thorns out of my bottom. I am too sore to sit down!

Thank you for telling me. That must have hurt.



Listening with compassion helps kids to feel safe and respected.

Kids are safer when they have ongoing, open communication with their adults. The problem is that kids do not always talk with adults about uncomfortable feelings because they do not want a lecture or get into trouble, especially as they get older.

Even if something is not their choice, children need adults who will listen with respect and kindness when they talk about anything that bothers them. Instead of ignoring or minimizing kids' feelings because what they are unhappy about was necessary, adults can be supportive by using a constructive approach, such as saying simply, "Thank you for telling me. I am sorry that you had to for your health/safety."

Explain to a young person, "Remember, anything that bothers you should never have to be a secret. Even if touch is not your choice, you can say that you do not like it and tell everyone how you feel."

Here is how to practice: Say, "Let's pretend that you accidentally sat on a sticker bush, and I have to pull the stickers out of your bottom."

Note: Do not actually act this out with kids. Just mimic the gesture by putting a hand up in front of you like you have tweezers.

Coach the child to, "Say, 'This hurts. I do not like it. Please stop.'"

Say, "I am sorry it hurts, and I have to get these stickers out for your safety."

Coach the child to, "Say, 'I will tell!'"

Say, "Good! You can tell everyone what happened!"

Explain to the child, "Suppose I asked you not to tell because it would be embarrassing. If I did that, I would be making a Safety Mistake and you can say, 'Anything that bothers me should not have to be a secret.' Go ahead and say that now!" [Child repeats, "Anything that bothers me should not have to be a secret."]

Say, "Good! Let's practice!" [Act upset] "Oh, please do not tell!"

Coach the child to say, "It is against our Safety Rules to keep problems a secret." Finish with, "Well done!"

#23

## How And What To Yell For Safety So People Will Listen and Understand

Knowing not only **how** to use their voices in a loud, clear, and strong way but **what** to yell can help kids to escape from a dangerous situation.

Explain to children that, "Your Voice Power can help you to take charge of your safety. Use your Voice Power to Speak Up about what you do and do not like, to ask for what you want, and to Get Help with a Safety Problem. Your yelling Voice Power can get people to pay attention in an emergency or startle someone who is bothering you."

Model and say, "We are going to practice yelling with a strong and powerful voice. Put your hands on your belly and take a big breath of air. Now let it out. We are going to yell 'No' short and loud from deep and low in our bellies. It will sound like this! 'NO!'" [Make sure to yell as loudly as you want children to yell if they were in danger.]

"Okay, now let's do it together. Ready! Go! 'NO!' Great! Again! Ready! Go! 'NO!' Great job!"

Like lots of skills we have been practicing, developing a strong voice can take time, so continue to practice when you can. You can make it a game where adults and kids yell out in nature – maybe into the wind or the roar of the ocean.

A fun way to practice is to play the 'No Game' where you face each other and one starts with a tiny quiet "no", then the other person is a little louder, then the first person is louder still, and you keep going until you are both yelling in your loudest voices. [Remember to keep the yells short and from the belly, rather than having them turn into a scream from the throat. If you are an adult doing the 'No Game' with a child, let that child win the game once in a while, since you probably have a bigger voice.]

Coach both young people and adults to practice yelling orders that communicate a clear message in an emergency such as "STOP! LEAVE! HELP!"

When teaching children to yell, do your best to yell in a loud strong voice yourself so you can provide a powerful example. If you have trouble doing this, you can increase your own Voice

Power by practicing yelling "NO!" or "STOP!" in a short loud voice in front of a mirror or in a private place where no one can hear you.

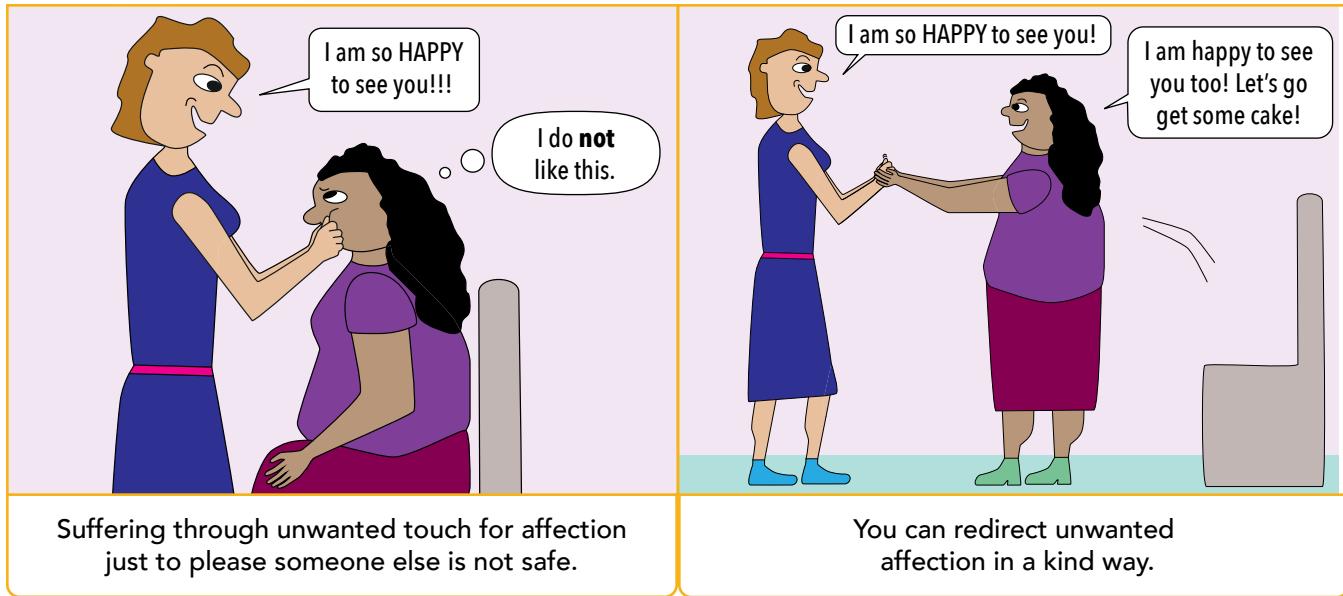
Remember that young people will learn more from what they see you do than from what you just tell them to do.



Teach kids to yell for help. Yelling from your belly makes your "NO!" sound more powerful.

## #24

## Redirecting Unwanted Affection



Sometimes caring family members or family friends love to give big hugs, cheek pinches, cheek pats, face cups, or sloppy kisses that the kids (and maybe the adults too!) hate, or used to like - but do not as they get older. Well-meaning people may be hurt, surprised, or even angry when they are told to stop showing affection or connecting in a way that they enjoy.

Explain to adults that, "True affection needs to be the choice of both people. It is not safe for kids to suffer through forms of affection or attention just to please someone else. Instead, we can find other ways of connecting that work well for both of you."

Explain to children that, "Even if you love someone, forms of affection like hugs, kisses, roughhousing, sitting on someone's lap, or cuddling should be the choice of both people and allowed by the adults in charge. If you do not like something that someone else wants to do or it is against your Safety Rules, you can use your 'No, Thank You' Power in a kind way by stepping back and saying, 'I do not feel like hugging today. Let's just fist bump or shake hands instead.'"

Do this practice with children sitting down in front of you and with you standing up. Start a few feet away from them.

Say, "Imagine that I am a kind family member or grown-up friend who loves to pinch cheeks, give huge hugs, or give sloppy kisses and who does not notice when you do not like it."

Act like you are about to give the child a big hug or pinch their cheeks (but do not actually do so). Walk towards them with your pinching hands stretched out towards them and say cheerfully, "Oh, I can't wait to pinch your nice soft cheeks!"

Before you get close, coach the child to, "Stand up. Reach out keeping your arms straight and strong. Take a firm hold of my wrists and push my hands together like a two-handed handshake. Turn my arms to lead my body away from you while saying in a cheerful voice, 'Oh it is so nice to see you! Let's go get something to eat!'"

Act hurt and say, "But you always love to get your cheeks pinched. What about a big hug?"

Coach the child to say, "I am bigger now. I do not like cheekpinching or hugs right now. Let's go look at the pictures from our trip (Or another example)."

Remind kids that, "If this does not work and the person still does not listen, this is a time to set powerful and respectful boundaries and say, 'I asked you to stop. Please listen.'"

## #25

## Make A 'Check First' Safety Plan

Do you always know where your kids are? Sadly, young people are most likely to be harmed by someone they know! They are much safer if their adults know where they are, who is with them, and what they are doing. It is vital that kids know what their plan is and are prepared to 'Think and Check First' **before** they change the plan.

You can introduce the Check First skill with children by simply saying, "Kids are safer if their grownups know where they are, who they are with, and what they are doing. Your job is to Check First any time your plan changes about where you are going, what you are doing, and who you are with."

Next, pick a situation relevant to the child you are practicing with. For example, "Let's imagine I am your next-door neighbor and you know me really well. Suppose you are playing in front of your home and the chair over there (or another spot or person who could be the adult in the home) is your adult inside."

"Suppose I come up and say, 'Hi! Do you want to come to my house for cookies?' You might want to get cookies, but before you go with me, you need to Check First with your adult at home."

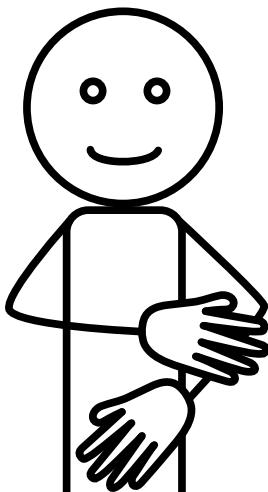
Coach the child to, "Say, 'Yes! But I have to Check First' and now walk away to go Check with your grownup. What if I say, 'Oh, you do not have to check, I already called them.' You still need to check for yourself, so say, 'I will be right back, I just need to check first', move away to your grownup [this can be a chair or a place in the room] and ask, 'Can I go to the neighbor's and have cookies?' Great job!"

Say, "Check First before you touch or taste something new, like tools or berries. Check First before you use the stove or matches or turn on the car."

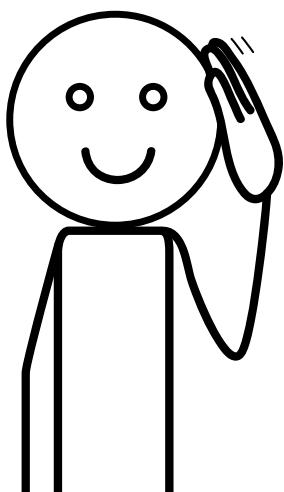
If a child is old enough to be somewhere without their responsible adult, their job is to Think First.

See Kidpower online article: [Think and Check First Before You Change Your Plan](#)

## Check First Power Safety Signal



## Think First Power Safety Signal



Before you change your plan, **Check First** with your adults. If you are on your own, **Think First**.

Hey! Come over!  
I just baked cookies!

We would love to, and  
we need to Check First  
with Mom.

Young people are safer when their adults  
know who is with them, where they are  
going, and what they are doing.

#26

## Trust The Uh-Oh Feeling: Pay Attention To Your Intuition

Sometimes called a 'gut' feeling or 'Uh-Oh' feeling, our intuition is the part of us that can warn us ahead of time if something might not be safe, or that 'something just does not feel right.' It is usually a feeling in our bodies, like a flutter in your gut or as if the hair was standing up on the back of your neck.

You can help kids be safe and strong by teaching them to notice, trust, and act on their Uh-Oh Feeling – and to leave and get help when they feel it. Here is how to help a child learn to recognize and trust their intuition.

To discuss, explain, "Our intuition can help us be safe. We also can call it the 'Uh-Oh Feeling.' It tells us, 'Pay attention, there might be a problem.' We all feel our Uh-Oh Feeling in different places. Some of us feel little hairs on the back of our neck or on our arms standing up. Some feel an uncomfortable feeling in our stomach. Some of us suddenly feel a little worried or sad. This is your body saying, 'Uh oh, something does not feel right. I need to leave or make a plan to keep myself safe.' How do you notice **your** Uh-Oh Feeling?"

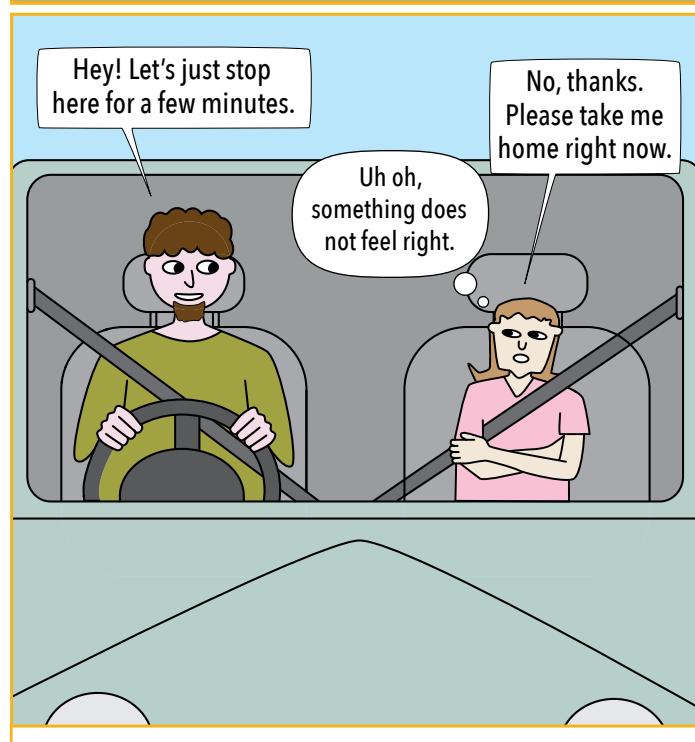
To practice acting on that feeling, say, "Pretend I am a friend. Imagine I want to show you something in my parents' room. Imagine your 'Uh-Oh Feeling' says something is not right."

Coach the child to, "Say, 'No thanks, let's stay here.'"

Say, "Great! And, if you still felt uncomfortable, what could you do?" Brainstorm some ideas (call your grownups, go get the friend's adults, etc.).

"And, no matter what happened, whenever you feel your Uh-Oh Feeling, it is important to tell an adult you trust about it later."

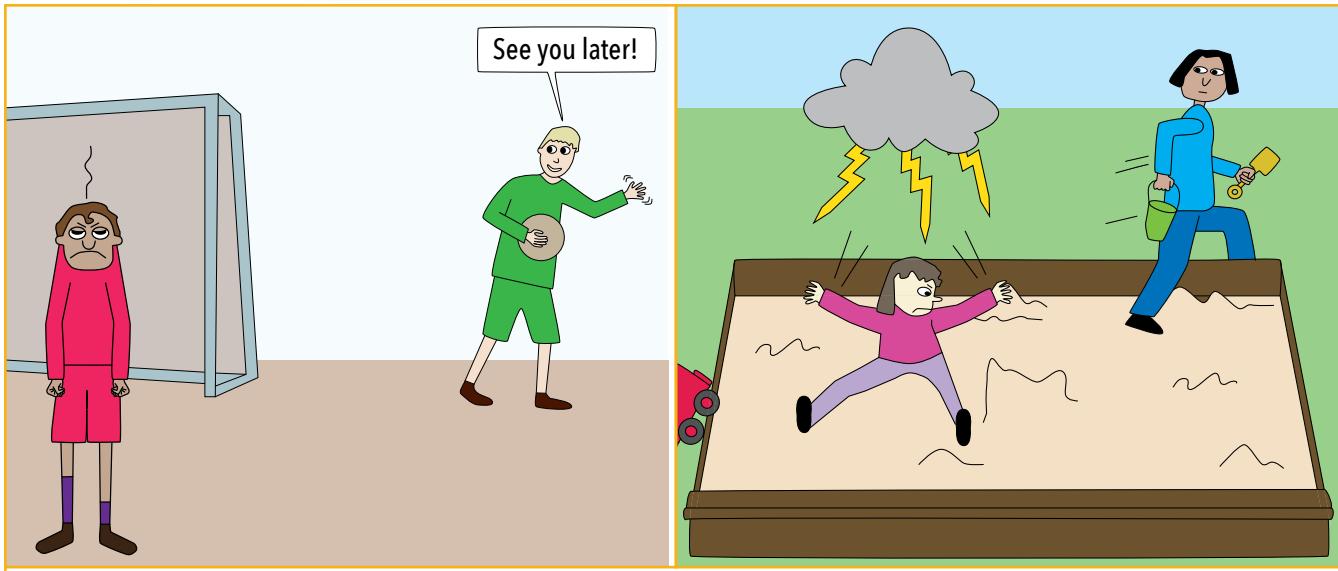
See Kidpower online article: [The "Uh-Oh" Feeling: Teaching Kids to Use Their Intuition](#)



Pay attention if something seems wrong to you.

#27

## Feeling Scared or Worried? Leave If You Can



Use your Walk Away Power if someone is acting unsafely.

Children need to know that if someone or something makes them feel scared, uncomfortable, or worried, or gives them the 'Uh Oh' Feeling, their safety plan is to move away and get help as soon as possible. We call this "Walk Away Power."

If they can't leave right away, their job is to keep looking for a time when it is safe to leave. Prepare kids to leave a difficult situation and not let worry about upsetting someone stop them. Practice what to do when there is a Safety Problem with these steps.

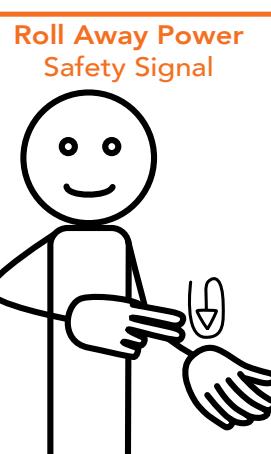
Say, "We have been learning things you can do if you have a Safety Problem. If something feels unsafe, leave if you can. If you can't leave right away, you can keep looking for a time when you can leave. You can keep using your other safety skills until you can leave."

Say, "Pretend I am someone at a party. Imagine I start doing something that makes you think I am about to do something scary. Maybe I am suggesting we do something dangerous, like play in the street or climb up on the roof. Or, maybe I am saying things that make you feel worried or uncomfortable."

Say, "When you start to feel worried or scared, use your Walk Away Power. Stand up, Walk Away, and get help! Let's practice that!"

Say, "I am going to pretend to be a difficult person." [Act upset] Say, "Hey, just let me do what I want." Coach the child to, "Stand up, walk away and calmly say, 'See you later.'"

Say, "Now imagine you go get help from an adult!"



Use Walk Away or Roll Away Power  
to move away from trouble.

#28

## Protect Yourself From Hurtful Words and Teasing

Healthy self-esteem is important to safety. Kids – and adults – who feel good about themselves and have close, positive relationships with others are less likely to become victims of abuse and bullying.

At any age, hurting words and mean teasing can stay with us for a long time, eroding our sense of self-worth and confidence. Learning to protect our emotional safety can prevent a lot of misery, as well as build healthy self-esteem.

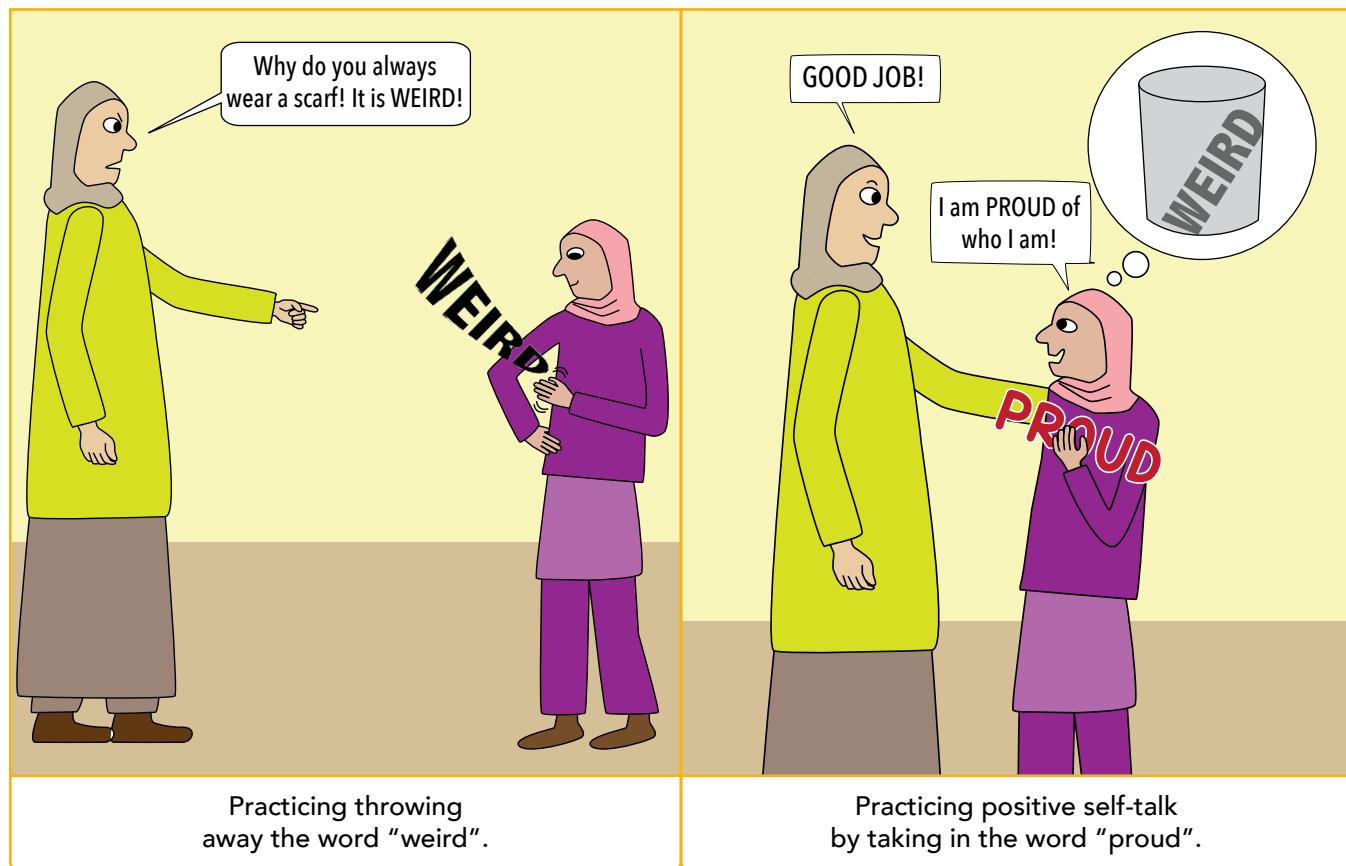
Practice doing the motions with children as you explain the technique and say, "Put one hand on your hip. The hole this makes is our Kidpower Trash Can. Use your other hand to catch the hurting words and throw them into the Trash Can." (Make a catching motion with your Mean Word Catcher and show how to throw the words into the hole made by the hand on your hip.)

Coach the child to, "Now put your hands on your heart and replace the hurting words with 'I like myself.'" [Model putting your hand on your own heart to show taking in the kind words.]

To help the child to practice, say, "I am going to pretend to say mean things so you can practice using your Trash Can. I do not mean what I say. Is your Trash Can ready?" [Coach them to make sure they have their Trash Can in position.]

Say, "Suppose I say, 'I do not like you.' Or, 'Your shoes are ugly.' Or, 'You are a bad friend.'" (Pick an example relevant for the child that is not about their body or their abilities.)

Coach the child to, "Catch the words, throw them away, and put your hand on your heart and say, 'I like myself.'" (Or, "I like my shoes." Or, "I am a good friend.")



## #29

## Be Kind To Yourself

How often do you say mean things to yourself? Negative self-talk can make us miserable and erode our confidence.

Kids and adults can learn to turn negative self-talk into positive messages when they make mistakes, feel embarrassed, or get frustrated when learning something new or challenging.

Taking charge of one's emotional safety increases one's belief in our own power and worth. For children, this helps to protect them from harm.

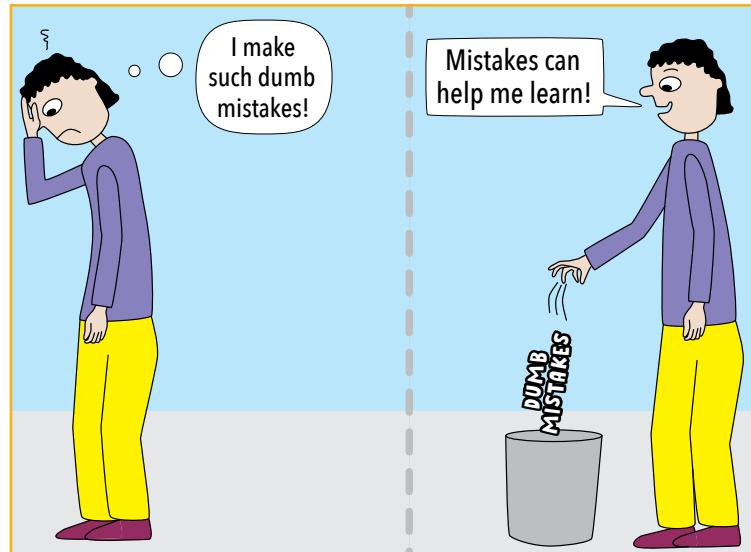
Explain, "It is not only the words that others say to us that can hurt our feelings or make us feel bad about ourselves, it is also the words we might say to ourselves. If the voice inside your head is saying something hurtful or mean, you can catch those words, throw them in the Trash Can, and say something nice to yourself."

Say, "Pretend I am a voice in your head saying, 'How could you make such a stupid mistake?'"

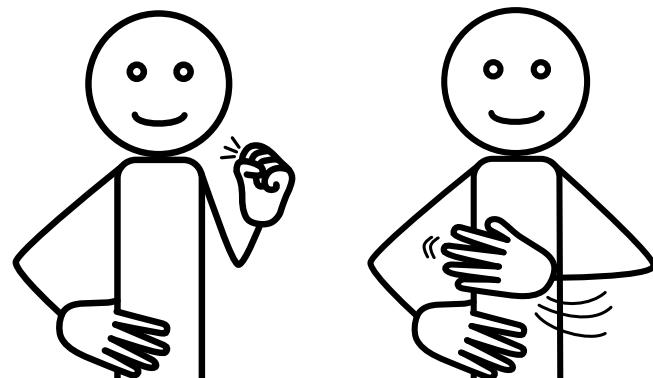
Model and coach children to, "Put your hand on your hip to make your Kidpower Trash Can. Use your other hand to catch those mean words and throw them into the trash. Now, put your hand on your heart and say, 'Mistakes are part of learning.'"

Say, "If you are learning something new, and you are feeling like it is too hard or you will never get it right, [Model and coach children] catch the words, 'Too hard' or 'I can't,' and throw them away. Put a hand on your heart and say to yourself, 'I just need to give myself more time to learn.'"

"If you find yourself saying awful things over and over and you can't stop on your own, get help from an adult you trust. You are safer when you feel good about yourself instead of bad about yourself."

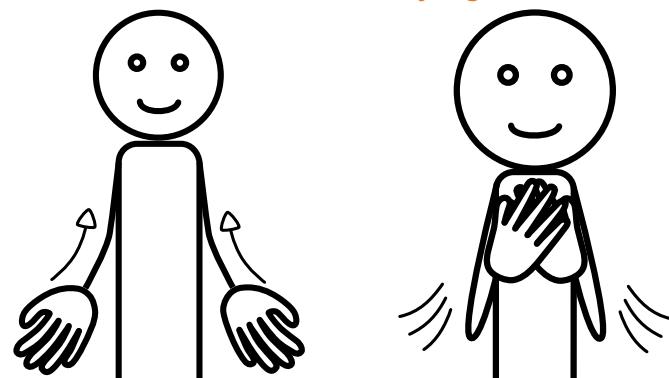


## Kidpower Trash Can Power Safety Signal



Throw away hurtful words and teasing.

## Heart Power Safety Signal



Take compliments into your heart.

## #30

## Run To Safety To Escape Danger

Empower kids to escape from someone who is threatening them! Research shows that people who intend to hurt others want privacy and control. Staying quiet and going with someone who is acting dangerously gives them more privacy and control, which is like giving oxygen and fuel to a fire - it is likely to get bigger.

Knowing how to escape from a dangerous situation by running to safety while yelling for help can protect kids from many kinds of harm. Surprisingly, without appropriate practice, even kids who run and yell all the time might freeze if they feel scared.

Here is how to make it fun for kids to practice escaping from danger. Start by reviewing how to get help everywhere kids go. Ask calmly, "Where are the places you are most likely to go? If you have a Safety Problem there, where would you get help? At the store, if you got lost or someone bothered you? At school? At home? In your neighborhood?"

Review how to get help any time there will be changes, such as a field trip or a vacation.

Next, review how to yell loudly. (Skill [#23 How And What To Yell For Safety So People Will Listen and Understand](#)) Take a breath, yell from your belly, and make it short. Practice yelling and separating all the words clearly, "NO!... STOP!... I... NEED...HELP!"

Explain, "If someone or something seems dangerous to you, your job is to get away as quickly as you can and get help. It is okay to interrupt busy adults if you

have a Safety Problem. If you feel scared, your plan is to yell and run to safety as soon as you can." Remind older kids that their safety is more important than anyone's embarrassment, inconvenience, or offense.

Say, "Let's practice! Pretend I am acting scary and the wall over there is where safety is, that means an adult who can help you."

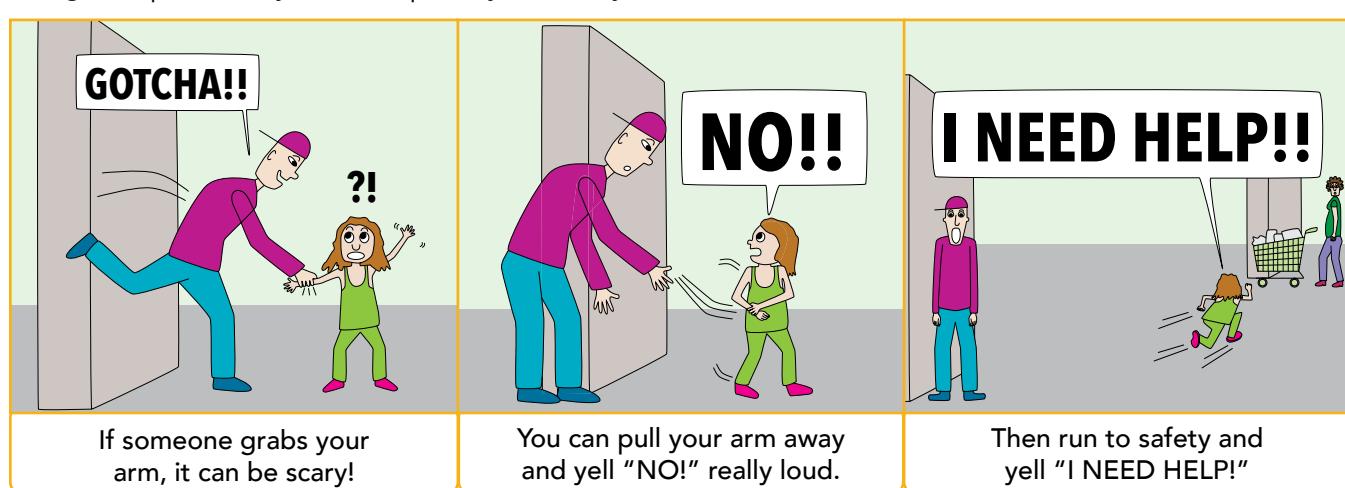
[In a playful way act a little scary and say] "I am going to GET you!" Or, "Just do what I say!"

Coach the child to, "Turn and run to safety and yell, 'STOP! I NEED HELP!'"

Say, "Good job!" Go over to the wall and say, "Now I am being the adult that is Safety." Look at the child with a big smile and say, "I will help you!"

For kids old enough to understand and use this information safely, (about age 6) make sure they learn some physical self defense so they can break away to escape someone who is trying to harm them. Studies show that one strong move – leaving, running away, shouting for help – is enough to stop most attacks.

We teach that fighting is a last resort. But, if a child is about to be hurt and cannot just leave and get help, one strong physical self defense move can make a huge difference. See Kidpower online article [How to Choose A Good Self-Defense Program](#) for information on what to look for. Even a few hours of the right kind of training can greatly increase a young person's safety and confidence.



## Conclusion: Practice! Practice! Practice!

It takes time to learn something new!

Becoming good at swimming, playing an instrument, or learning to write takes **PRACTICE**.

Patient, thoughtful teachers, coaches, and other mentors who already know these skills help their students to be successful in figuring out what to do and guide them in rehearsing until they become proficient.

Learning Kidpower 'People Safety' Skills works the same way. The more kids practice, the more prepared they will be to use these skills when they need them.

Coach children and teens to be successful in rehearsing these skills using examples that are relevant to their lives:

- Use their awareness to notice trouble sooner rather than later.
- Act aware, calm, and confident to avoid being picked on.
- Move away from trouble.
- Set powerful and respectful boundaries.
- Protect their feelings.
- Be persistent in asking for help.
- Check First and Think First before they change their plans.
- Speak up about anything that bothers them.
- Use their voices and bodies to escape from an attack.

Take advantage of teachable moments. When you see a young person looking uncomfortable about what someone else says or does that should be their choice, use this as an opportunity to practice boundary-setting. If a kid needs to do something for health or safety (like go to the doctor or dentist), review the rules about touch and how even if something is not a choice, it should still never have to be a secret. When you are out in the world, talk about when and how to Check First, Think First, and Get Help.

'People Safety' skills and safety rules are essential for online safety as well as in-person safety. Learn about our [Kidpower Online Safety Resources](#).

Remember that our adult leadership is essential for the safety and well-being of the young people in our lives. Visit our [Child Protection Resource](#) page to learn more.

We really appreciate hearing from you. Please email us at [safety@kidpower.org](mailto:safety@kidpower.org) with your questions, suggestions, or stories.

***Thank you for your commitment to the safety and well-being of the young people in your life!***

## Testimonials About Kidpower Skills

“I loved doing all the practices because I thought I had forgotten everything. But doing them helped me realize I do Kidpower every day now. I do it so much I do not even know I am doing it any more!”

~ Child participant

“It took only a couple of minutes for my four-year-old daughter to learn the Kidpower Trash Can, but she uses it all the time! I can see her on the playground using it if kids say something hurtful, and just last week, she taught it to another four-year-old friend.”

“That child’s mother came to me and said, ‘What is she teaching him, where did she learn it, and where can I go to learn more?’ My daughter even coached me to keep my own feelings safe when someone made a comment about a pair of my shorts.”

“She said, ‘Mommy, it is OK, make your trash can and throw that away!’ Then, she coached me to throw the mean words away and to say out loud, ‘I like my shorts.’”

“We are looking forward to learning and practicing more Kidpower together!”

~ Sharon Johnston, Sonoma Valley Mother’s Club Board Member

“The simple language and great teaching directions in Kidpower Books allows us to use them easily with our students with special needs of all ages and abilities. They love them and keep asking for more.”

~ Special Education Teacher

“As a classroom teacher, I worked with Kidpower to support my students proactively. Ten years later, now as a parent and school site administrator, I continue to use Kidpower to turn our recent fear and anxiety into hope and action. Knowing how to speak to my own children about body safety in an age-appropriate way has been priceless and very grounding. Offering this resource to other parents has empowered me as an administrator to be able to take on some of the toughest questions we have around abuse with both parents and kids.”

~ Meghan Green, Academic Coordinator, Rio del Mar Elementary School

“Kidpower empowers children with a common language to build confidence and enables them to deal with situations regarding safety in the community, at school, with friends, or at home.”

~ Tamara Rajaram, MD and parent

## Acknowledgements

The Kidpower 30-Skill Coaching Handbook was created and developed through the team effort of many dedicated leaders in our Kidpower International community.

Our Kidpower California Program Director and Senior Program Leader **Erika Leonard** had the inspiration of providing a series of simple Kidpower safety lesson for 30 days and to challenge people to honor Child Abuse Prevention Month in April, 2011, by teaching or sharing a skill each day.

Senior Instructor and Training/Curriculum Consultant **Chantal Keeney**, Erika, and I all worked together to organize skills, explanations, and graphics from our wide-ranging curriculum into 30 simple lessons and provide these daily to people who signed up for our challenge, reaching over 1,000 children with these skills.

Translator **María Gisella Gámez** was the first to donate her time and expertise to translate each skill into Spanish and became so inspired that she decided to start Kidpower Argentina. She has been a powerful force in making more and more of our resources available in Spanish.

This 2022 edition has been greatly improved by editing from our Special Projects Director and Senior Program Leader **Marylaine Léger**, who also leads our Kidpower Quebec Center.

The drawings are from our *Safety Comics*, *Teaching Books*, and *Safety Signals*. They were created by Senior Program Leader and Curriculum/Training Consultant **Amanda Golert**, who has also edited and designed this edition.

This book has now been translated in several other languages thanks to the generosity of **Zeina Hobeish** (Arabic), **TuTrinh Dufreney**, Marylaine Léger, **Guylaine Martel** (French), and **Dr. Elham Khoori** (Persian).

Kidpower Teenpower Fullpower International continues to grow and thrive thanks to the commitment of countless people including each of our instructors, board members, advisors, center directors, donors, volunteers, staff, and their families, as well as all of our students, funders, and partner organizations.

I especially want to acknowledge Program Co-Founder **Timothy Dunphy**, Founding Board President **Ellen Bass**, and my own family for their tremendous support at the beginning of our organization in 1989 and all the years since.

## Kidpower Services for All Ages and Abilities

Kidpower Teenpower Fullpower International is a global nonprofit leader dedicated to providing effective and empowering child protection, positive communication, and personal safety skills for all ages and abilities. Since 1989, Kidpower has served millions of children, teenagers, and adults, including those with difficult life challenges, locally and around the world through our workshops, educational resources, and partnerships. We give our students the opportunity for successful practice of 'People Safety' skills in ways that help prepare them to develop healthy relationships, increase their confidence, take charge of their emotional and physical safety, and act safely and respectfully towards others. For more information, visit [Kidpower.org](http://Kidpower.org) or contact [safety@kidpower.org](mailto:safety@kidpower.org).

### **Workshops**

Through both online and in-person services, Kidpower has led workshops in over 60 countries spanning six continents. Our programs include: Parent/Caregiver seminars; Parent-Child workshops; training for educators and other professionals; classroom workshops; Family workshops; Teenpower self-defense workshops for teens; Collegepower for young people leaving home; Fullpower self-defense and boundary-setting workshops for adults; Seniorpower for older people; adapted programs for people with special needs; and workplace safety, communication, and team-building seminars. Our Child Protection Advocates Training Program prepares educators and other professionals, as well as parents and other caring adults, to use Kidpower's intervention, advocacy, and personal safety skills in their personal and professional lives.

### **Kidpower Online Learning Center**

Courses for teaching all ages and abilities include videos and workbooks for Teachers and Educators, Parents and Guardians, Adult Education, and Classroom Lessons.

### **Educational Resources Library**

Our extensive online Library provides over 400 free 'People Safety' resources including articles, videos, webinars, blogs, and podcasts. Free downloads of online publications like our Kidpower Safety Signals, coloring book, and handouts are available for individual use. We provide licensing for use of materials or content for charitable and educational purposes.

### **Coaching, Consulting, and Curriculum Development**

Long-distance coaching by video-conferencing, telephone, and e-mail enables us to make our services accessible worldwide. We consult with a wide range of experts, organizations, and schools on how best to adapt our program to meet unserved needs and develop new curriculum to increase the 'People Safety' knowledge for different people facing difficult life challenges.

### **Instructor Training and Center Development**

Our very comprehensive certified instructor training program prepares qualified people to teach our programs under our auspices and to establish centers and offices for organizing services in their communities under our organizational umbrella.

## Online Kidpower Resources

### Kidpower Downloadable Posters And Coloring Book

Kidpower Consent and Boundaries Posters (3 languages):  
[kidpower.org/library/consent-posters/](http://kidpower.org/library/consent-posters/)

Posters of all the Kidpower Signals  
[kidpower.org/library/kidpower-safety-signals/](http://kidpower.org/library/kidpower-safety-signals/)

Kidpower Protection Promise Posters (3 languages):  
[kidpower.org/library/kidpower-protection-promise](http://kidpower.org/library/kidpower-protection-promise)

Coloring Book for Young Children (11 languages):  
[kidpower.org/library/kidpower-coloring-book/](http://kidpower.org/library/kidpower-coloring-book/)

Kidpower Confident Kids Essential Safety Skills Posters:  
[kidpower.org/library/confident-kids/](http://kidpower.org/library/confident-kids/)

### Online Learning Center

[learn.kidpower.org](http://learn.kidpower.org)

Learn how to use and teach social-emotional safety skills that prepare people of all ages, abilities, and walks of life to prevent harm and strengthen relationships.

Courses provide videos, workbooks, and practice guides as well as opportunities for live coaching sessions.

[Safety Powers for Teaching People With Communication Disabilities](#)

[Starting Strong for Teaching Children Ages 3-7](#)

[Teenpower Safety, Independence and Healthy Relationships](#)

[Kidpower Mini Safety Lessons For Parents and Caregivers of Young Children](#)

### Kidpower Online Resource Pages

Kidpower Social-Emotional Learning School Resources:  
[kidpower.org/schools/](http://kidpower.org/schools/)

Bullying Solutions Resources:  
[kidpower.org/bullying/](http://kidpower.org/bullying/)

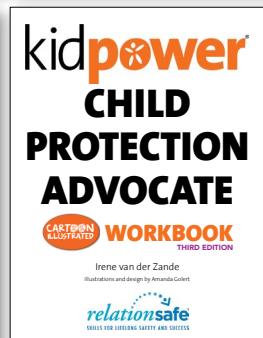
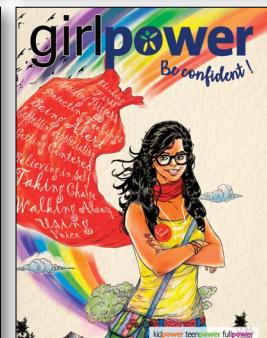
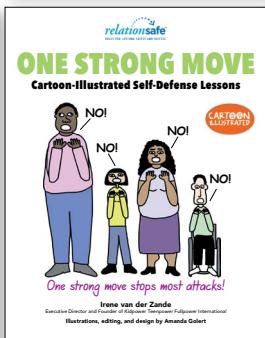
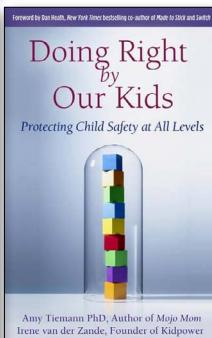
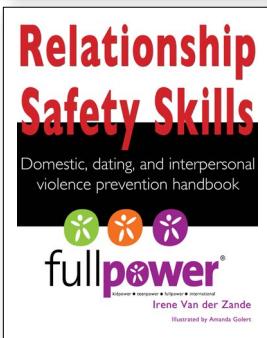
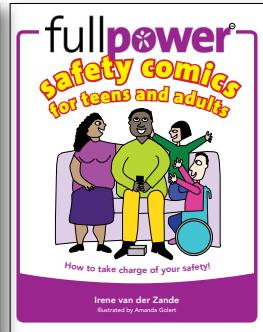
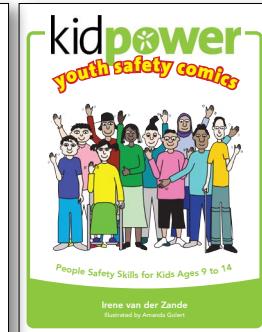
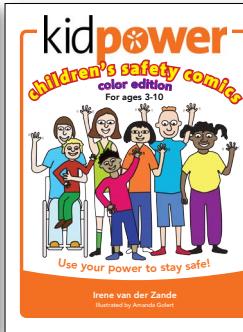
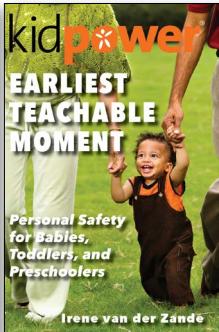
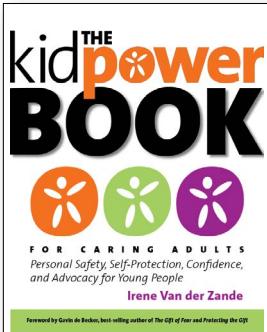
Protect Young People From Sexual Abuse:  
[kidpower.org/child-abuse-prevention/](http://kidpower.org/child-abuse-prevention/)

Kidpower Resources For People Facing Prejudice:  
[kidpower.org/prejudice/](http://kidpower.org/prejudice/)

Resources For People With Special Needs:  
[www.kidpower.org/all-abilities/](http://www.kidpower.org/all-abilities/)

Resources including books and articles in Spanish:  
[kidpower.org/espanol/](http://kidpower.org/espanol/)

### Additional Kidpower Books from Preschool Years to College Years



## Copyright and Permission To Use Information

### Copyright Information

*Kidpower 30 Skills Coaching Handbook - Introductory Guide to Teaching Personal Safety Skills to Children and Teens.* © 2022. All content in this book is copyrighted to author Irene van der Zande, Kidpower Teenpower Fullpower International founder and executive director. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form or by any electronic or mechanical means, including information and retrieval systems, without prior written permission of the author or her designated representative.

### Reproduction Information

Prior written permission must be obtained for reproducing any part of this publication in any form. However, a wealth of resources including some articles and handouts from this book are available for free on the Kidpower.org website. For information about how to obtain permission for different kinds of content use, please visit [www.kidpower.org](http://www.kidpower.org) or contact the author at [safety@kidpower.org](mailto:safety@kidpower.org).

### Use of Content for Personal Learning or for Teaching Others

With proper acknowledgment, readers are encouraged to use knowledge from the Kidpower Teenpower Fullpower programs about self-protection, confidence-building, advocacy, personal safety, positive communication, child protection, leadership, team-building, bullying prevention, child abuse prevention, positive youth development, and self-defense strategies and skills in their personal lives and professional activities.

We ask that readers tell people about Kidpower Teenpower Fullpower International when they use any examples, ideas, stories, language, and/or practices that they learned from our program, and let others know how to reach our organization.

Please note that permission to use content from our copyrighted programs verbally and in person is **not** permission to publish or duplicate any part of this content in any written or digital form in print or online, including in articles, lesson plans, research papers, newsletters, books, videos, podcasts, websites, etc. These uses require separate permission as described above.

### Restrictions

Unless people or agencies have an active agreement with Kidpower Teenpower Fullpower International, they are not authorized to represent themselves or give the appearance of representing themselves as working under our organization's auspices. This means that individuals and groups must have an active certification or agreement with our organization to be authorized to teach, promote, or organize workshops or other presentations using the Kidpower, Teenpower, Fullpower program names, workshop names, reputation, or credentials. Please visit [www.kidpower.org](http://www.kidpower.org) or e-mail [safety@kidpower.org](mailto:safety@kidpower.org) about our instructor certification, authorized provider, and center development programs.

### Liability Disclaimer

Each situation is unique, and we can make no guarantee about the safety or effectiveness of the content or techniques described in this material. We do not accept liability for any negative consequences from use of this material.



Kidpower Teenpower Fullpower International  
 Office: 831-426-4407 or (USA) 1-800-467-6997  
 E-mail: [safety@kidpower.org](mailto:safety@kidpower.org) Web page: [www.kidpower.org](http://www.kidpower.org)  
 Address: P.O. Box 1212, Santa Cruz, CA 95061, USA

# Stay connected!



Together, we can transform feelings of helplessness and despair into hope and confidence and greater safety for all. Join us.

## Learn

Adding Kidpower skills to your life is easy! Use our Kidpower Starter Kit, for people of all ages and abilities, to protect and empower yourself and your loved ones:  
[kidpower.org/starterkit](http://kidpower.org/starterkit)

## Share

Share Kidpower with three important people in your life — such as friends, family, school, community, colleagues. Get and share new articles via our newsletter:  
[kidpower.org/newsletter](http://kidpower.org/newsletter)

## Give

Commit to making your community and the world a safer place by supporting Kidpower. We truly value all gifts of money, time, and expertise. Make your gift:  
[kidpower.org/donate](http://kidpower.org/donate)



[/Kidpower.org](http://Kidpower.org)



[/learn.kidpower.org](http://learn.kidpower.org)



[/Kidpower.org](http://Kidpower.org)



[/kidpowerintl](http://kidpowerintl)



[/KidpowerIntl](http://KidpowerIntl)



[/company/Kidpower](http://company/Kidpower)



[/Kidpower\\_Intl](http://Kidpower_Intl)



[/Kidpower89](http://Kidpower89)



[safety@kidpower.org](mailto:safety@kidpower.org)