

Our Family Safety Guidelines

1. In our house feelings are important and may tell us what to do.
2. We always have the right and deserve to feel safe
3. Privacy is respected. I am boss of my body.
4. We always have the right to say no if we are asked to do something that we think is wrong or do not understand.
5. We do not keep bad secrets in our house, only good surprises.
6. We have a loving circle of friends who would help us if we needed help.
7. We can say NO and YES strongly when we mean it.
8. We can be persistent to get what we need.
9. We do not like bad tricks, bribes or blackmail in our house.

These guidelines are designed specifically to help to protect younger children against sexual abuse. Most such abuse is perpetrated by people whom children know within and around the family. Only 15% of abuse occurs with strangers. Abusers are more likely to look elsewhere for victims if they know your family has these rules and carries through in making sure all the children know and understand them. For this reason it is a good idea to put a copy of the rules up somewhere very visible in your house.

We can work with these rules with very young children without having to scare them inappropriately with stories of potential abuse. As children get older and are out in the world without you (including for sleepovers), they will need to be given more specific information about what sexual abuse involves and how to deal with it. See Dr Freda Briggs' Youtube talks and books for more understanding of this.

These guidelines also provide a foundation for dealing with bullying.