

Family Rules for Safe Boundaries, Respect, and Privacy (Example)

This agreement is designed to keep everyone safe in this family. These are our rules for living together safely, for respecting the rights of others, and for ensuring the personal safety of everyone. Our signatures on the bottom acknowledge that we have discussed these rules, that we understand them, that we will follow them and help each other follow them.

1. No child or adult should be in a bedroom other than their own unless another adult has given permission, the door is left open, and there is a purpose to the visit that is safe and comfortable (such as help with picking out clothes or telling a bedtime story).
2. When adults talk with a child or teen in their bedroom, the door must always remain open.
3. Undressing should only occur when someone is alone in his/her bedroom or bathroom with the door closed.
4. When outside of one's own bedroom, always wear a robe or t-shirt over underclothes. Do not walk around with just underclothes or shorts without a t-shirt.
5. If the door is closed, there should only be one person in the bathroom at a time, unless help is needed with health and/or hygiene.
6. Everyone sleeps in his/her own bed at all times.
7. Children do not sleep in same bedroom with adults. Sleeping arrangements while traveling will be discussed prior to any trip.
8. There is to be no sexual contact or sexual touching between children in this family or between adults and children.
9. We do not show our private parts to others (child or adult), unless there is a medical reason.
10. We do not ask others to show their private parts to anyone.
11. We do not ask others to touch our own or someone else's private parts.
12. It is okay to touch yourself privately, behind a closed door.
13. All physical touching between family members requires consent, and cannot be touching that will confuse, scare, or make it seem like someone wants to have sex (Back rubs, foot tickling, wrestling, "horse play," etc are to be discouraged).
14. Children will not have access to or bring into the home any inappropriate sexually explicit content found in materials including books, pictures, magazines, or videogames. If you see something inappropriate, click 'Back', log off, or tell a parent.
15. Children do not access sexually explicit content on the Internet, on a mobile device, or anywhere else.
16. Everyone's body is his/her own. If anyone is touched in a sexual way or made to feel uncomfortable, he/she should and can say "no," and will tell a trusted adult (a caseworker, counselor, school teacher, coach, etc.)
17. In this family, we do not "objectify" others or ourselves – we do not treat people as sexual objects but as whole and special, and worthy of our respect and everyone's own self-respect.
18. We do not make other people uncomfortable or feel scared with offensive or threatening sexual behaviors.
19. We refrain from using offensive and obscene sexual language.
20. All family members and visitors to this home are responsible for following these rules.
21. If someone does not follow the rules, he/she will be told so, and held responsible for his/her actions.
22. All signatures below indicate everyone understands and agrees to these rules.

Signed:

_____	Date _____
_____	Date _____
_____	Date _____
_____	Date _____

Activity: **I want, I hope, I've done, I plan**

Answer the following questions:

I want my child to know the following about sexuality:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

I want my teenager to know the following about sexuality:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

I hope my child/teen will not experience:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Activity: **I want, I hope, I've done, I plan**

I help my children and teenagers know about sexuality, and I help them not experience harmful sexual experiences by:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

I plan to do the following about helping my children and teenagers know what I hope they know about sexuality, and helping them not experience the things I hope they don't experience:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____



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Stop It Now! prevents the sexual abuse of children by mobilizing adults, families and communities to take actions that protect children before they are harmed.

Age-Appropriate Sexual Behavior

It can be hard to acknowledge that all of us, even children, are sexual beings, have sexual feelings and are curious about sex and sexuality. Children's curiosity can lead to exploring their own and each other's body parts by looking and touching.

They may peek when family members are in the bathroom or changing clothes or try to listen outside the bedroom. They may look at magazines, books, videos, and on the internet.

It can be hard to tell the difference between "normal" sexual behaviors and behaviors that are signs that a child may be developing a problem. Sexual play that is more typical or expected in children will more often have the following traits:

- The sexual play is between children who have an ongoing mutually enjoyable play and/or school friendship.
- The sexual play is between children of similar size, age, and social and emotional development.
- It is lighthearted and spontaneous. The children may be giggling and having fun when you discover them.
- When adults set limits (for example, children keep their clothes on at day care), children are able to follow the rules.

Preschool age (0 to 5 years)

Common:

- Will have questions and express knowledge relating to:
 - differences in gender, private body parts,
 - hygiene and toileting,
 - pregnancy and birth.
- Will explore genitals and can experience pleasure.
- Showing and looking at private body parts.

Uncommon:

- Having knowledge of specific sexual acts or explicit sexual language.
- Engaging in adult-like sexual contact with other children.

School-age (6-8 years)

Common:

- Will need knowledge and have questions about
 - physical development, relationships, sexual behavior
 - menstruation and pregnancy,
 - personal values.
- Experiment with same-age and same gender children, often during games or role-playing.
- Self stimulation in private is expected to continue.



Uncommon:

- Adult-like sexual interactions,
- Having knowledge of specific sexual acts,
- Behaving sexually in a public place or through the use of phone or internet technology.

School-age (9-12 years)

Hormonal changes and external influences, such as peers, media and Internet, will increase sexual awareness, feelings and interest at the onset of puberty.

Common:

- Will need knowledge and have questions about
 - Sexual materials and information,
 - Relationships and sexual behavior,
 - Using sexual words and discussing sexual acts and personal values, particularly with peers.
- Increased experimentation with sexual behaviors and romantic relationships.
- Self stimulation in private is expected to continue.

Uncommon:

- Regularly occurring adult-like sexual behavior .
- Behaving sexually in a public place.

Adolescence (13 to 16)

Common:

- Will need information and have questions about
 - Decision making
 - Social relationships and sexual customs
 - Personal values and consequences of sexual behavior.
- Self stimulation in private is expected to continue.
- Girls will begin menstruation; boys will begin to produce sperm.
- Sexual experimentation between adolescents of the same age and gender is common.
- Voyeuristic behaviors are common in this age group.
- First sexual intercourse will occur for approximately one third of teens.

Uncommon:

- Masturbation in a public place.
- Sexual interest directed toward much younger children.

For more information and guidance about sexual behaviors in children, please visit our Online Help Center, <http://GetHelp.StopItNow.org>.

Resources on Age-Appropriate Sexual Behavior

- **Understanding Your Child's Sexual Behavior**, Toni Cavanaugh Johnson
- **Childhood Sexuality: A Guide for Parents**, Gail Ryan and Joanne Blum
- **From Diapers to Dating: A Parents Guide to Raising Sexually Healthy Children**, Debra Haffner
- **A Very Touching Book: For Little People and Big People**, Jan Hindman

Internet Safety Guidelines and Tips

10 Sample Rules for Cyber Safety

- All cell phones off and turned in at 9pm, 10pm on weekends
- All computers kept in public areas
- Follow all Parental Controls. If you see something inappropriate online, hit
- 'Back', log off, or tell a parent
- You are allowed ____ hours of online time
- Follow age requirements for social media sites
- Do not give out personal information, buy, sell, or order anything online without parent permission
- Do not meet or accept a gift from anyone you met online
- Devices cannot interfere with sleep, schoolwork or other important activities
- Only share media where everyone is appropriately dressed, and avoid sharing anything that could embarrass or get anyone in trouble
- If you are in an unsafe situation, text an adult to come get you

Tips for Parents and Caregivers to Create Cyber Safety

- Be age-appropriate: understand what will and won't work
- Monitor usage, pay attention to how your child uses media
- Check privacy settings on all social media platforms
- Watch media and play games together, use media to start conversations about sex and cyber safety
- Consider using filtering software, or partitioning your computer into separate accounts
- Teens text: text your teen!
- Stay up-to-speed on media your child uses and trends in privacy and hacking
- Teach about dangers online, strong passwords, cyberbullying, sexual harassment, being a good digital citizen, and about real legal consequences for teen online activity



Family Contract for Online Safety

Kids' Pledge

1. I will not give out personal information such as my address, telephone number, parents' work address/telephone number, or the name and location of my school without my parents' permission.
2. I will tell my parents right away if I come across any information that makes me feel uncomfortable.
3. I will never agree to get together with someone I "meet" online without first checking with my parents. If my parents agree to the meeting, I will be sure that it is in a public place and bring my mother or father along.
4. I will never send a person my picture or anything else without first checking with my parents.
5. I will not respond to any messages that are mean or in any way make me feel uncomfortable. It is not my fault if I get a message like that. If I do I will tell my parents right away so that they can contact the service provider.
6. I will talk with my parents so that we can set up rules for going online. We will decide upon the time of day that I can be online, the length of time I can be online, and appropriate areas for me to visit. I will not access other areas or break these rules without their permission.
7. I will not give out my Internet password to anyone (even my best friends) other than my parents.
8. I will check with my parents before downloading or installing software or doing anything that could possibly hurt our computer or jeopardize my family's privacy.
9. I will be a good online citizen and not do anything that hurts other people or is against the law.
10. I will help my parents understand how to have fun and learn things online and teach them things about the Internet, computers and other technology.

I agree to the above terms

I will help my child follow this agreement and will allow reasonable use of the Internet as long as these rules and other family rules are followed.

Child Sign Here

Parent Sign Here



Teen Pledge for Being Smart Online

1. I will be respectful to myself and others. I won't bully and won't tolerate bullying by others.
2. I will be a good online friend and be supportive of my friends and others who might be in trouble or in need of help.
3. I won't post or send pictures or other content that will embarrass me, get me into trouble or jeopardize my privacy or security.
4. I will respect other people's privacy and be courteous when posting photos or other content about them.
5. I'll be conscious of how much time I spend on the web, phone and other devices and won't let use interfere with sleep, school work and face-to-face relationships.
6. If they need my help, I'll assist my parents, teachers others in their use of technology.
7. I will respect other people's digital property and space. I won't steal, hack, break into anyone else's accounts or use other's content without permission.
8. I will protect my passwords and practice good Net security.
9. I will be thoughtful in my use of copy and paste. If I use anyone else's content or images I will quote them, give them credit and link to them if appropriate.
10. I will help create a culture of respect and tolerance at my school and among my peers.



Family Contract for Online Safety

Parents' Pledge

1. I will get to know the services and web sites my child uses. If I don't know how to use them, I'll get my child to show me how.
2. I will set reasonable rules and guidelines for computer use by my children and will discuss these rules and post them near the computer as a reminder. I'll remember to monitor their compliance with these rules, especially when it comes to the amount of time they spend on the computer.
3. I will not overreact if my child tells me about a problem he or she is having on the Internet. Instead, we'll work together to try to solve the problem and prevent it from happening again.
4. I promise not to use a computer or the Internet as an electronic babysitter.
5. I will help make the Internet a family activity and ask my child to help plan family events using the Internet.
6. I will try to get to know my child's "online friends" just as I try get to know his or her other friends.

I agree to the above

Parent(s)

I understand that my parent(s) agreed to these rules and I will help my parent(s) explore the Internet with me.

Child sign here

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Family Contract for Smartphone Use

Kids and Teens Pledge

I will not touch or look at my phone when it's dangerous to do so such as driving, riding a bike or walking.

I will be considerate of others and not use my phone to text or talk when it may disturb others or at inappropriate times or places such as in class or in theaters.

I will take care not to damage or lose my phone and will let my parents know right away if it is damaged, lost or stolen.

I will only use apps from legitimate app stores (like Apple or Android Play Store) and do a little research to make sure they're appropriate and safe to use.

I will carefully review the privacy policies of any apps I use including what information the app collects or shares.

I will only use apps that share my location with family or personal friends I know from the real-world.

I will respect my own and other people's privacy in pictures and posts that that I share.

I will only share pictures and videos where everyone is appropriately dressed and will avoid sharing any images that could embarrass me or others or get anyone in trouble.

I will treat others respectfully and kindly in what I post, what I text and how I interact socially.

I agree to the above

Child sign here

I will help my child follow this agreement and will allow reasonable use of the Internet as long as these rules and other family rules are followed.

Parent(s) sign here

Parents Pledge

I will be a good role model and never text while or use apps while driving or during other activities where phone use might be dangerous.

I will be considerate of others, including my family members by refraining from using the phone when it might disturb people around me.

I will talk with my kids and set reasonable expectations about their smartphone.

I will take whatever action is appropriate if I feel my child has misused his or her phone or broken a family rule, but I will be thoughtful about such actions and not overreact.

I agree to the above

Parent(s) sign here

Child sign here



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Talking To Children and Teens

Experience has taught us that actions by adults can be more effective than expecting kids to protect themselves from sexual abuse. Still, we know that children * also need accurate, age-appropriate information about child sexual abuse and confidence that adults they know will support them.

Clear communication is a cornerstone of effective prevention. Make sure other adults understand the expectations kids will have of them and how their cooperation will help keep kids safe.

When teaching kids about others' behavior towards them

Use concrete examples

Remember that in as many as 90% of situations where a child is sexually harmed, the child (and often their family) knows the adult, youth or child who is acting in a sexually inappropriate way. When talking with kids about child sexual abuse, use examples and situations that make that reality clear. (For example, "What if you are at a friend's house and her older brother asks you to play a game that makes you feel weird or uncomfortable or involves something like touching or taking off your clothes?" "Sometimes relatives, like grandparents or uncles or cousins, don't understand the rules and touch kids in ways they're not supposed to. If that ever happens, be sure to tell Mom or Dad or another adult you trust so that we can help that person learn the rules.")

Model healthy boundaries

Sometimes we unintentionally confuse kids by insisting they hug Grandma even when they don't want to, or by saying, "Do whatever the babysitter tells you to do." Help your children practice setting healthy boundaries. When children tell us they don't want to hug and kiss everyone at a family gathering, support them by helping them find another way to show respect to family members (such as shaking hands, high fives, saying goodbye). Model saying "no" and assure your children that their "no" will be respected. If others disrespect or ignore your child's limits, it's your job to explain your family rules and insist on your child's rights to set boundaries.

Talk about touch

When talking with children about touch, remember that sexual touch can be very confusing. In a strictly physical sense, sexual touch can feel good and for a victim of sexual abuse, this can create more shame and confusion about the situation. "If my body responded this way, this must mean that I liked it and wanted it to happen." Many families prefer to talk about "secret" touch or touch that makes a child uncomfortable. "It is not OK for anyone to touch you in any way that makes you feel uncomfortable—not Mom, Dad, aunts, uncles, teachers or even your friends. Your body is yours and yours alone and you always have a right to say no to someone."

*A note on terms: Stop It Now! uses the terms "child," "children" or "kids" interchangeably to mean those persons under the age of 18. The terms "children and adolescents (or teens)" may be used in instances where it is important to emphasize the differences between children age 12 and under ("children") and age 13 or older ("adolescent," "teens" or "teenagers.")

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Explain about tricks

Some people who sexually abuse children use tricks or bribes to keep kids from telling. The abusive person might promise a gift or allow a forbidden privilege; or they might tell the child that it is their fault or that no one will believe them, or that if the child tells anyone they will hurt their family or pet, etc. Explain these tricks to your children and reassure them that you can handle the situation, even if they didn't object to the sexual interaction at the time. "As your parent, aunt, guardian, I will always be here to keep you safe and will always believe you and love you." "If someone touches you in an uncomfortable way it is never your fault." "They just tell you that to trick you."

Involve other adults

Children need to know that there are other adults in whom they can confide. Sometimes children are afraid that they will "get in trouble" if they tell their parents about something that happened. This fear can be reinforced by the person who is harming them. Help your children to realize that there are other adults who can help them if they don't want to talk to Mom or Dad or if Mom or Dad is doing something that concerns them. Ask "If you don't feel comfortable talking to me about something, who else can you talk to?" or "What if something happens at school, church, the park, who could you talk to?"

Be approachable

By initiating conversations about healthy sexual boundaries, by answering questions accurately and respectfully, by handling disclosures calmly and reassuringly, you send the message that you are someone your child (or other children you care about) can talk to even when something has already happened.

When teaching kids about their behavior towards others

Don't miss a real prevention opportunity

In more than 30 percent of child sexual abuse cases, a child is sexually harmed by someone under 18 years old, frequently by another child or adolescent who may not fully understand the impact of their actions. Most parents talk with their children about how to keep themselves safe from others who may sexually harm them. We also need to talk to our children about why it is so important for them not to harm others. "Just like it is not OK for you to hit and hurt other people, it is not OK for you to use tricks or force to touch other people in a way that makes them uncomfortable."

Learn about child development

Children are born as healthy sexual beings. Just as they are curious about bugs, airplanes and animals, they will be curious about their bodies and other people's bodies. As parents, it is very helpful to be knowledgeable about healthy sexual development so we are able to tell the difference between expected behaviors and behaviors that may be cause for concern.

Clarify the rules

When you find your child exploring his or her own body or playing "doctor" with another child, calmly acknowledge what you've seen and set clear expectations. "It looks like you and Janie are comparing your bodies. Now get dressed. And remember, even though it feels good to take our clothes off, we keep our clothes on when we're playing." If a child continues behaviors after you've set clear limits, you may want to talk with a professional. To find information, guidance and resources, visit our Online Help Center, <http://GetHelp.StopItNow.org> or for help in finding a professional, see our Resources for Specialized Therapy, http://www.stopitnow.org/resources_treatment.



Age of consent: special concerns for teens

Teens need information not only about child sexual abuse but also about the laws of consent in their state. As our judicial system holds more teens responsible as adults, there are significant and long-lasting results for teens who engage in illegal sexual behaviors, even with other teens who are close in age. "I know you and your girlfriend love each other but you are 19 years old and she is 15 and that makes being sexual with each other illegal. If she gets pregnant or her parents press charges, you could have to register as a sex offender for the rest of your life. It is important for both of you to wait until you are older

Resources for talking with children about child sexual abuse prevention

- Friedman, Norman. (2006) *Inoculating your children against sexual abuse: What every parent should know*. Booksurge.com
- Hindman, Jan. (1998) *A very touching book*. Baker City, OR: AlexAndria Associates.
- Wurtele, Sandy and Feather Berkower. (2010) *Off limits: A parent's guide to keeping kids safe from sexual abuse*. Brandon, VT: Safer Society Press

Communication Tips and Examples For Talking With Your Child About Sexuality

- ❖ Be **HONEST** and **APPROACHABLE**
- ❖ Teach and Modeling **CONSENT**
- ❖ Discuss **VALUES**
- ❖ Teach **RULES** and **SAFETY PLANNING**
- ❖ Engage with **MEDIA**

SOME GUIDELINES FOR TALKING ABOUT SEX

- Look for unexpected opportunities that are relaxed and non-confrontational.
- Look for non-traditional places for impromptu conversations, such as while driving or while waiting at an appointment.
- Have lots of conversations. “The Talk” happens over and over again.
- Listen more than you speak, and don’t ask too many questions or you won’t get any response!
- Try to avoid lecturing.
- If you don’t know the answer, it’s ok to say so and look up the information together.
- If you’re uncomfortable, it’s ok to share that this is a difficult topic for you to talk about.
- Here are some great **open-ended** questions to try:
 - “Where did your ideas about that come from?”
 - “How did you feel when that happened?”
 - “How do you think they felt?”
 - “Have you thought a lot about that?”
 - “When do you remember first feeling that way?”
 - “What do you mean by that? I’d love to hear an example of what you’re talking about.”
 - “Do you think that’s a personal preference, or do you think that’s true for everyone?”
 - “How do you know when something feels right or wrong?”
- Listen for when they are done with the conversation and end with a supportive comment.

Find out what they already know!

“That’s a great question. Can you tell what you already know about that?”

Buys time, helps you prepare, helps you know what the child really wants to know and helps you correct misinformation.

Sample Language

Situation/Opportunity	Supportive sample approaches and responses
Child asks any question about how a body part or function works.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Validate child's curiosity and their right to ask questions. "That's a really good question. I'm glad you asked. It's normal to be curious how bodies work."
Child/teen wants to know details about you	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I'm wondering, why is that important for you to know?" • "I'm uncomfortable giving you details about my sexual experiences, but let's continue talking generally."
After awkwardly watching a sex scene on TV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Wow, that was a pretty intense sex scene on TV just now! Do you have any questions about what we saw? I'm here now or later if something comes up." • "That couple didn't seem to know each other very well. I think it's important that two people have a relationship with each other before they have sex. What do you think?"
Youth wants to know why teenagers should wait to have sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "In my family, I was raised to think a certain way about sex, and this is what I value. What are your values, what do you believe?" • "I think that most teenagers aren't emotionally ready to have sex or be parents. I'd love to talk more about it with you and also find out what you think."
Responding to images of sexual violence in a movie or on the news	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "It is never ok for someone to force another person to have sex. Consent is always required. I'd like to talk some more with you about consent." • "That was very sad that the little girl in that movie was hurt. Children can never consent to sexual activity with anyone. It's against the law." • "Watching that made me sad and kind of anxious. How did it make you feel?"
Someone tells child to give them a hug goodbye	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Betsy, would you like to give a hand shake goodbye instead?"
Youth asks you for physical affection that does not feel appropriate or timely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Tommy, we just met and I'm glad you feel you can ask me for a hug. Since we just met, I'm more comfortable with a handshake or high five."
Discovery of a youth masturbating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I know it feels good to touch your private parts, but it needs to happen only in your bedroom or the bathroom, with the door closed and not where someone else can see and not with anyone else."

Discovery of children engaged in sexual play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I see you’re examining her the way the doctor does. But everyone has to keep their pants on when we play. If you have questions about what girls look like, let’s talk about it.” • “Can you tell me what kind of game you’re playing? When we play we have to keep our hands and private parts to ourselves.”
Discovery of a youth viewing sexually explicit content, or saved on device	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I see that you’ve been looking at some sexual material on your phone. It’s okay to be curious or enjoy looking at bodies, but we have a rule in our family about sexual material on screens.”
Concern about child’s use of media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I’ve been noticing you’re spending a lot more time on your X-Box. I’d love to see what games you’re playing. Maybe tonight we can sit down and you can show me how to play?”
When introducing new social media platform (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) to older child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I expect you to be just as respectful online as you are at school and at home. If someone else is disrespectful or says something inappropriate online, I want you to let an adult know. When you post something online, it usually stays there forever. There are tough laws about what teens can post online. I also want you to keep track of your privacy settings and make sure that what you post only goes to people you want it to.”

SEXUALITY CONCEPTS IN CONCRETE TERMS

These explanations have been developed for children, primarily ages four to seven.

PREGNANCY/CHILDBIRTH

1. Babies grow inside their mothers in a special place called the uterus. This beautiful biological process is called “pregnancy”.
2. The baby usually comes out of the mother’s body through an opening between her legs called the vagina – this is called childbirth.

CLITORIS

1. The clitoris is a special part of a girl’s body.
2. The clitoris is a very small body part between a girl’s legs and just above her vagina.
3. The function of the clitoris is to provide pleasure. Many females enjoy touching their clitoris because this can feel good and bring good feelings.

VAGINA

1. The vagina is an opening between a woman’s legs, and is a passage leading from the uterus to the outside of the body.
2. Babies come out of a mother’s stomach sometimes through the vagina.
3. During sexual intercourse between a man and a woman, the penis may go into this opening.

UTERUS

1. The uterus is the place inside a woman’s body where a baby grows before it’s born.
2. The uterus is inside the woman’s body, just below her belly button.

PENIS

1. The penis is the body part of a man or boy that hangs between his legs.
2. The penis is very sensitive and usually feels good when it is touched.
3. A boy uses his penis to urinate or “pee” and for sexual intercourse when he grows up.

ERECTION

1. Sometimes a boy’s or man’s penis gets stiff—this is called having an erection.
2. It’s something that happens to penises from time to time and it’s OK.
3. It often means the boy is having a good feeling in his penis.

SEXUAL INTERCOURSE

1. Intercourse is something people do when they’re grown up.
2. It happens when a man puts his penis inside a woman’s vagina.
3. People have intercourse for a lot of different reasons.
4. One reason is to make a baby. Another reason is to show love and share good feelings.

Our Family's Safety Plan

This agreement is designed to keep everyone safe in this family. These are our rules for living together safely, for respecting the rights of others, and for ensuring the personal safety of everyone. Our signatures on the bottom acknowledge that we have discussed these rules, that we understand them, that we will follow them and help each other follow them.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

Signed:

_____	Date _____
_____	Date _____
_____	Date _____
_____	Date _____
_____	Date _____



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HelpLine: 1.888.PREVENT

Don't Wait: Everyday Actions to Keep Kids Safe

The most effective prevention happens before a child is harmed. Kids are immediately safer when parents and caregivers take the time to learn about sexual abuse and its warning signs. Parents and caregivers who make a commitment to speak up as soon as they have a concern, instead of waiting for certain evidence of harm, play an even more crucial role in a child's safety.

Here are some things that you and your family can do to protect children from sexual abuse, right now.

Set and respect clear guidelines

- Set and respect family boundaries. All members of the family have rights to privacy in dressing, bathing, sleeping and other personal activities. If anyone does not respect these rights, an adult should clearly enforce the family rules.
- Demonstrate boundaries by showing in your own life how to say "no." Teach your children that their "no" will be respected, whether it's in playing or tickling or hugging and kissing. For instance, if your child does not want to give Grandma a kiss, let the child shake hands instead. And make sure, too, that Grandma understands why a child's ability to say 'no' is important for the safety of the child.
- Use the proper names of body parts. Just as you teach your children that a nose is a nose, they need to know what to call their genitals. This knowledge gives children the correct language for understanding their bodies, for asking questions and for telling about any behavior that could lead to sexual abuse.
- Be clear with adults and children about the difference between "okay touch" and inappropriate touch. For younger children, teach more concrete rules such as "talk with me if anyone – family, friend or anyone else – touches your private parts." Also teach kids that it is unacceptable to use manipulation or control to touch someone else's body.
- Explain the difference between a secret and a surprise. Both the adults and children in your life need to know how secrets may make kids unsafe. Surprises are joyful and generate excitement in anticipation of being revealed after a short period of time. Secrets exclude others, often because the information will create upset or anger. When keeping secrets with just one person becomes routine, children are more vulnerable to abuse.

Watch out for signs

- Watch for any inappropriate behaviors in other adults or older youth because children, especially young ones, are not as able to recognize these behaviors or to protect themselves.



- Stay on top of your children's use of technology – Internet, email, instant messaging, webcam use, peer-to-peer/social networking sites, and cell phones, including photo exchanges. The illusion of anonymity on these electronic mediums often leads to a breakdown of social rules and expectations, ones that would be assumed if the interactions were face-to-face. Whenever possible, make sure the child's interactions are visible and public. Kids, and even adults, can easily stumble into inappropriate or even dangerous situations and exchanges.

Speak up

- Practice talking before there's a problem. Say the "difficult" or "embarrassing" words out loud so that you become more comfortable using those words, asking those questions, and confronting those behaviors. Having stress-free conversations about difficult issues with both the adults and children in your life gets everyone in the habit of talking openly and honestly. Show those people in your life that you will listen to anything they have to say, even if it's about something embarrassing or something they've done wrong.
- Speak up when you see, or are subject to, any inappropriate behaviors. Interrupt and talk with the person who is making you uncomfortable. If you feel you can't do this, find someone who is in a position to intervene. The person behaving inappropriately might need help to stop these behaviors.
- Report anything you know or suspect might be sexual abuse. If nobody speaks up, the abuse will not stop.

Support your kids

- Make it clear that you will support your children when they request privacy or say "no" to an activity or a kind of touch that makes them uncomfortable.
- Talk to your kids about who you/they trust. Give your kids permission to talk to these trustworthy adults whenever they feel scared, uncomfortable or confused about someone's behavior toward them.

Be prepared

- Create a clear and easy-to-follow Family Safety Plan (www.StopItNow.org/family_safety_plan). Make sure that as adults, you know how to challenge each other when you see any inappropriate behaviors. Create a list noting both who to talk to when you see behavior you are unsure about and who to call if you believe you need to report sexual abuse. Teach the children about what to do and who to talk with if they are sexually threatened or touched by someone.
- Make a list of people and organizations you can call for advice, information, and help. For ideas, explore the Online Help Center at <http://GetHelp.StopItNow.org>. You can be a resource to your family and friends about how to report abuse and how to get help for everyone involved. If you know that a child has been sexually abused, be sure to get help for the child quickly, so the harm can be stopped and healed.
- Understanding the tools of sexual abuse prevention builds your confidence that you have the power and knowledge to keep your kids safe. Remember, the most effective prevention involves taking action before any abuse occurs. Prevention can start in your home today. You can start it now.



Stop It Now!®

Together We Can Prevent the Sexual Abuse of Children

PREVENTION TOOLS

Have questions?

Need resources?

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Online Help Center
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Stop It Now!® prevents the sexual abuse of children by mobilizing adults, families and communities to take actions that protect children before they are harmed.

Create a Family Safety Plan

The guidelines below can help you create an environment to better protect your family from sexual abuse. By understanding what puts children at risk of sexual abuse, we can take actions to counter those risks. Together we can create a community safety net with information and assistance to protect children from being sexually abused.

Educate everyone in the family

- Make sure each family member knows what healthy sexual development in children is, and what sexual behaviors might be of concern.
- Learn to recognize warning signs that a child may have been sexually abused or that an adult, adolescent or child may be touching a child in a sexual way. Some abusive behaviors may not involve touching; for example showing pornography to a child is abusive, even if the child is not touched.
- Teach children the proper names for body parts and what to do if someone tries to touch them in a sexual way.
- Make sure young children know that no one has the right to touch their private parts (unless for medical reasons) and that they should not touch anyone else's private parts.

Start talking with your family about sexual abuse

- Adults need to take the lead by opening discussion about what is healthy sexual behavior and what is abusive sexual behavior.
- Talk more than once with all family members—children, teenagers and adults—about appropriate and inappropriate sexualized behaviors to ensure that they understand and remember the information.
- Let everyone in the family know they can ask questions during the discussion, or talk further about any of these issues in private, at a later time.

Set clear family boundaries

- Set clear family guidelines for personal privacy and behavior. Discuss them with all members of your family and model respecting these guidelines.
- Discuss these guidelines with any other adults who spend time around or supervise the children (e.g., if a child does not want to hug or kiss someone hello or goodbye, then he or she can shake hands instead).
- Let children know that if they are not comfortable being around a particular adult or older child, then you or another adult will let that person know this (e.g., tell him or her that you don't want your child to sit on his/her lap).
- As a child matures, boundaries may need to change (e.g., knock on the door before entering the room of an adolescent).

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info@StopItNow.org
HelpLine: 1.888.PREVENT



Get safe adults involved

- Identify one or more support person for each member of the family to talk to if there is a concern. Be sure that no one in your family is isolated. Research shows that having someone to talk with and confide in plays a key role in how well a child will bounce back from stressful events. Having a safe, responsible and consistent adult for a child or adolescent to turn to is critical.
- If someone is “too good to be true,” ask more questions. Even a close friend or relative may not be a safe person to trust with your child.

Know your local resources and how to use them

- Learn about the agencies in your area. Know who to contact to make a report if you know or suspect that a child has been sexually abused.
- Make a list of resources you can call for advice, information and help and include the phone numbers. Start with our list of helpful resources (www.StopItNow.org/help).

Care enough to reach out for help

- If you are concerned about the sexualized behaviors in a parent, cousin, sibling or other family member, care enough to talk with them. Read our Let's Talk guidebook (www.StopItNow.org/guidebooks). If you are concerned about your own thoughts and feelings towards children, help is available (<http://GetHelp.StopItNow.org>)
- Make sure everyone knows that they can talk with you about any inappropriate behavior that may already have occurred; that you love them and will work to get them help.

Original content by Joan Tabachnick



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Keeping Adults and Children Safe on the Internet

The Internet has revolutionized the way we communicate and function in our day-to-day lives exposing us all to an unimagined volume of ideas and possibilities. We are only beginning to understand the full impact that such expanded access to images and information is having on adults and children.

Access to the online world via computers, other communication devices and networks offers an experience of anonymity which increases the chance that both children and adults will take risks and experiment with behavior they might never attempt in "real life".

We must acknowledge our responsibility to educate ourselves and our children about safely using this rapidly changing technology. By taking protective actions in advance and speaking up about questionable behavior, we can help prevent harmful use of the Internet. Below are resources to learn more about protecting those you care about and responding effectively to concerning online activity.

Prevention Resources for Families

The Internet and Children - What's the Problem? published by Stop It Now! UK and Ireland.

In addition to offering Internet safety tips for families and children, this 30-page booklet encourages people to question their own use of the Internet and new technologies and to seek advice if they are accessing sexually harmful material online. It provides the information needed to recognize the signs that someone you care about may be at-risk or need help. To download a free copy, go to <http://www.stopitnow.org.uk> and select Publications.

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children

This national child abuse prevention organization hosts a comprehensive list of resources and publications that equip parents and guardians to take informed protective steps against child sexual exploitation.

www.missingkids.com

U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigations

A Parent's Guide to Internet Safety offers straight-forward definitions, FAQ's, "what-if" scenarios, signs your child may be at risk, and suggestions about how to respond safely. www.fbi.gov/publications/pguide/pguideee.htm

Wired Kids, Inc.

Learn how to protect your privacy and security online, and how to teach responsible Internet use. Parenting Online, is a handbook available here offering guidance on what the real risks are and how to set the rules.

www.wiredkids.org



Stop Cyberbullying

Often kids are too embarrassed, ashamed or afraid to tell their parents about online bullying. This comprehensive website on cyberbullying includes valuable information for parents, youth, schools, and law enforcement. Find out how you can take action to prevent or intervene in cyberbullying.

www.stopcyberbullying.org

If You Are Concerned About Your Own or Someone Else's Behaviors Online

Croga.org - You Can Stop!

A free and anonymous, self-directed online program offers techniques to identify and cope with difficult emotions and thoughts which can lead to illegal use of the Internet. Not meant as a substitute for professional advice or treatment. www.croga.org

ChildLustRecovery.org - Recovery from Child Pornography Use

Understanding the harm of child pornographyⁱ to the user and their family, successful recovery stories, self-assessment, book lists, federal and state laws, penalties, reporting, and resources for getting help.

www.childlustrecovery.org

Cybersexualaddiction.com

If you or someone you know is using the computer for sexual activities that are causing harm or hardship to themselves or those they love, there are resources here for self-tests, books, articles, and support, www.cybersexualaddiction.com

The Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (ATSA)

A national membership of professionals who specialize in the treatment of adults and youth who are at risk to be or have been sexually abusive. Contact ATSA directly for a confidential referral. (503) 643-1023 or atsa@atsa.com

Reporting Internet Crime

The Cybertipline

An online and phone service which accepts leads regarding Internet criminal activity which are forwarded to law enforcement for review. Operated by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children in collaboration with the Federal Bureau of Investigation and other state and law enforcement agencies, the Cybertipline is nationally recognized for its up-to-date and comprehensive resources on Internet safety and Internet crime reporting. Learn about the issue, what can be reported, and how to stay safe. www.cybertipline.com or 1-800-843-5678.

The resources above are provided as a public service. Appearance on this list in no way constitutes Stop It Now!'s endorsement of an individual or organization. These resources are not a substitute for professional advice or clinical treatment. If you are concerned about an abusive situation, please seek professional assistance. If you need legal advice or counsel, please consult an attorney.

For more information and guidance, please visit our Online Help Center, <http://GetHelp.StopItNow.org>.