

# TALKING TO YOUR KIDS

*Stewards of Children*® is Darkness to Light training program that teaches adults how to prevent, recognize, and react responsibly to child sexual abuse through the *5 Steps to Protecting Our Children*™. Below is an excerpt from Step 3, "Talk About It," with information on how to talk to your children about their bodies, sex, and boundaries. Take *Stewards of Children* for in-depth training and discussion on the *5 Steps* and to learn other ways to talk to your children.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❑ Talk with children when they are young and use proper names for body parts.</li><li>❑ Use real-life conversation starters.</li><li>❑ Tell children what sexual abuse is, and when age-appropriate, about sex.</li><li>❑ Tell children it is your job to protect them from sexual abuse.</li><li>❑ Tell children what parts of the body others should not touch. Use examples with situations and people in their lives. Include that touching boundaries are for everyone – even parents, family members, older youth, cousins, babysitters, and friends.</li><li>❑ Demonstrate good touching boundaries yourself.</li><li>❑ Teach children that they have the right to tell anyone "NO" to unwanted or uncomfortable touch. Never force children to give affection.</li><li>❑ Explain what kind of touch is okay by an adult who is helping them – like using the restroom, dressing, or when visiting a doctor.</li><li>❑ Help children determine who their trusted adults are at school and in other settings.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❑ Tell children it is not okay for others to use sexual words with them, or to act in a sexual way.</li><li>❑ Teach children to keep a distance from people who make them feel uncomfortable.</li><li>❑ Tell children that if they have questions about someone's behavior, the best thing they can do is ask you about it.</li><li>❑ Explain that secrets can be harmful. If someone asks them to keep a secret, they should tell you about it.</li><li>❑ Teach children not to give out email addresses, home addresses, phone numbers, or other personal information while using the Internet or handheld devices.</li><li>❑ Ask children about their online experiences and learn about the sites and services they use.</li><li>❑ Tell children to trust gut feelings.</li><li>❑ Review safety and touching boundaries anytime a child is in a new situation.</li><li>❑ Speak and listen calmly. It's important that the child feel safe and loved in all of these discussions.</li></ul> |
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"I tell my daughters, 'Surprises make people happy. We don't want to keep a secret though because secrets can make people upset or unhappy... If anyone wants you to keep a secret, tell Mommy or Daddy.'"

Tiffany Sawyer, Director of Prevention Services  
Georgia Center for Child Advocacy

