

# Elementary # 1: Sexual Assault

## Lesson #1: Understanding Good and Bad Touch, and How to Protect Yourself

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### Aim/Rationale

Students will learn how to recognize situations where touching is appropriate and when it is not. They will also learn about how to better protect themselves from/prevent incidents of sexual assault.

### Learning Content

#### Learning Content in Sexuality Education

- 1) *Recognize situations involving sexual assault and protecting yourself*
  - a. *Say no*
  - b. *Self defense*
  - c. *Asking adults for help*
- 2) *Become aware of feelings that could arise when faced with sexual assault*

#### Cross-Curricular Competencies

- 1) *To exercise critical judgement*
- 2) *To cooperate with others*
- 3) *To communicate appropriately*
- 4) *To solve problems*

### Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to teach young students how to know when touching is appropriate and when it is not. They will also learn strategies that will help prevent instances of sexual assault by knowing when and how to use self protection. Lastly, they will learn how to properly identify adults they can trust and reach out to when they feel unsafe.

Students at this age are most likely to be targeted for sexual assault by someone they know. Therefore, it is important to instill concepts of consent and body autonomy in children. This can give

them tools that will make it less likely they'll be targeted. It can also help them know how to act to prevent or react to instances of sexual assault

Relevant to:

- Promoting egalitarian relationships
- Preventing sexual assault
- Preventing violence
- Being aware of the sexualisation of public space

## Lesson

### Materials

1. Safe Touch/Unsafe Touch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zNTUMNKSJwk>
2. Projector and speakers to play the video
3. Markers and poster board
4. Emotion Flashcards
5. A stuffed animal
6. Safe Adults handout

### Essential Questions

- What kind of touch is appropriate?
- How can I say no to being touched?
- What can I do when I don't feel safe?
- Who can I talk to when I don't feel safe?

### Using Gender Inclusive Language

It is important to avoid terms which refer only to “male” and “female” identities when speaking with young children as this can limit their understanding of gender into binaries and can exclude children who may not identify within these identities. For example, when discussing family members or adults that they may have in their life, try not to only use terms like “mom” or “dad”. Try integrating words like, “parents” or, “guardians” to include children whose parents might not fit into “traditional” concepts of family structures.

Additionally, when discussing sensitive topics like unsafe touch, try not to use gendered examples. Instead of saying something like “if a man tries to touch you” use the gender neutral term, “person”, or even, “someone you know”. This will highlight the ways in which unsafe touch can occur in a variety of scenarios (with family, with other adults they know, etc.) instead of by strangers or men specifically.

### Terms

- Inappropriate (bad) touch
- Appropriate (good) touch
- Safe adults

## Development/Teaching Methods [30 minutes]

1. To begin the lesson, play the “Safe Touch / Unsafe Touch” video for students.
2. After the video, use a stuffed animal of your choice and ask the students to point out or demonstrate what good and bad touch might be, using the stuffed animal as an example.
  - a. Have students raise their hands to share or, if nobody is sharing, provide some examples which were not highlighted in the video (examples of good touch could be holding hands, bath time, etc. and bad touch could be being hit, pushed or someone touching any part of your body without consent).
  - b. Emphasize that no touch between a child and an adult should be a secret and that if ever students feel bad or uncomfortable with any kind of touch that they are experiencing, they should make these feelings known to an adult that they feel safe with.
3. Next share the emotion flashcards either by printing out a copy for each student, or showing each flashcard to the class one by one.
  - a. For the positive flashcards (happy, excited), refer to the “safe” and “good” forms of touch exhibited in the video, and provide some examples of your own (e.g. getting a hug from a friend, holding hands with someone you like, etc.). Explain that these are common feelings associated with touch that feels good.
  - b. Move on to the negative emotions (sad, angry, frightened, worried, confused) and explain that these are some of the ways they might feel if they are experiencing “unsafe” or “bad” touch. Again, refer to the examples provided in the video as well as provide your own, be sure to emphasize that no touch should be kept a secret or make them feel any of the negative feelings listed above. If it does, they should alert a, “Safe Adult”.
4. Write “Safe Adults” on a large poster board. Explain that a safe adult is someone who students can go to when they are feeling unsafe or are being touched in a way that they do not like.
  - a. Have students make suggestions on who these people might be and write them in big bubbles connected to the central Safe Adults bubble like a mind map (examples could be parents, teachers, principals/vps, aunts, uncles, grandparents, a babysitter, etc.).
  - b. Once finished, hang the poster somewhere visible in the classroom as a reminder to students that they always have someone that they can go to.
  - c. Wrap up this activity by reminding students of the, “worried”, “frightened” and “confused” emotions that you talked about earlier. Explain how they might have these feelings about approaching a safe adult, and that not everyone on the suggested list will be their safe adult. For example, they might not feel safe telling their parents but could tell a teacher, or vice versa. Regardless, emphasize that these feelings are normal and the most important thing is to tell one of the suggested safe adults how they are feeling. Remind them that sharing their emotions is healthy and the first priority!
5. After this discussion, have students stand in a circle around you and, using a stuffed animal of your choice, have the students practice saying yes or no to touch.

- a. Encourage students to tune in to how they are feeling, referring to the various emotions discussed earlier. Maybe they are having a good day and want a hug or maybe they are feeling tired and want to be left alone, either way, emphasize that their feelings are important and both yes and no are acceptable answers.
  - b. Walk around the circle holding the stuffed animal out to each student and ask if they would like a hug from the animal. If they say yes, let the student hug the animal, if not, assure the student that that's okay and move on to the next student.
  - c. While doing this exercise, be sure to emphasize that saying no is okay! Some children may have felt pressured to hug or kiss family members, even in a lighthearted manner. This activity shows that no touch is okay without an enthusiastic yes, even if it is from someone they know and trust.
6. Finally, have students stand up, remaining in a circle. Ask students to shake and move their bodies a bit to get warmed up for the last activity. Explain that while some touch can be avoided simply by saying no, sometimes we have to be more assertive, such as in situations that make us frightened or angry. If an adult attempts to touch or hurt us, we have to be as big and loud as we can be.
    - a. Ask students to give each other some space and in a group, practice putting out a hand in front of them and saying, "NO!" loudly and assertively. This will emphasize the autonomy we have over our own bodies as well as give students confidence to stand up for themselves and make themselves heard. Repeat for a few rounds, getting louder and bigger with each NO!

### Culmination [5 minutes]

End the lesson by reminding students of the various "safe" adults that exist within your school such as counsellors, nurses, etc. If possible, have these adults come into your class to introduce themselves. This will familiarize students with their faces, making students feel safer approaching them in the future. Not all children can go to their parents when they are feeling unsafe, so reminders such as these are important.

## Performance Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Understand the difference between appropriate and inappropriate touching
- Identify the emotions that go along with different types of touch
- Communicate and assert themselves about the types of touching that make them uncomfortable
- Identify safe adults that they can confide in and trust

## Assessment Ideas

1. Using the "Safe Adult" handout, students can draw a portrait of their safe adult and fill in the blanks about why they make them feel safe, fun activities they do, etc.

## References

For more information or guidance on the activities in this lesson, refer to this video which shows the activities in action as well as provides an excellent overview on teaching consent to children, from Australian news source SBS:

<https://www.sbs.com.au/news/insight/article/2017/08/08/teaching-kids-how-see-consent-not-just-ability-say-no>

Images on emotion flashcards provided from Learn English Kids, a sector of the British Council.

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Tel 514-527-0928 Fax 514-527-0701  
2075 Plessis, Ground Level, Montréal (Québec) H2L 2Y4  
[info@accmontreal.org](mailto:info@accmontreal.org)