

The "What if ..." Game

One way to help children protect themselves is to practice responses to potentially dangerous situations. That way, if necessary, children will know how to react properly and quickly. The "What if ..." game can make practicing easy and fun. Every time you play, say this to your child, in your own words:

"Your body belongs to you and you have a right to decide how and when anyone can touch you. If somebody tries to touch you in a way that doesn't feel good, or doesn't seem right, say 'NO!' It's even OK to shout and yell 'NO!' Then run away and tell somebody. If the first person doesn't believe you, keep telling people until someone does."

What if ... something was bothering you and you did not know what to do about it? Who might be able to help you?

Answer ... People you trust, such as a parent, another relative, neighbour, teacher, school nurse, police officer, clergy.

What if ... someone touched your privates and offered you a candy bar to keep it a secret?

Answer ... Say "NO!" and tell someone.

What if ... someone you know put their hand down your pants?

Answer ... Say "NO!" and tell someone. No one is allowed to touch your privates.

What if ... someone asked you to touch their privates.

Answer ... Say "NO!" and tell someone. You are not allowed to touch anyone's privates and no one should ask you to.

What if ... a stranger offered you a ride in a shiny new car?

Answer ... Never accept rides from a stranger.

What if ... you did not want to be hugged by a particular adult just now?

Answer ... Say "NO!" to that adult. You may like the person, but you may not want to be hugged at that time.

What if ... you got a "bad feeling" or felt "yukky" when a grown-up gave you a hug or a big squeeze?

Answer ... Tell the person you do not like it. You have the right to decide when you want to be hugged or touched. Trust your feelings about the way people touch you.

What if ... someone is tickling you and it starts to hurt?

Answer ... Tell them to stop. If they will not stop, call for help. If I am not home at the time, tell me about it later.

What if ... Mommy, daddy or a doctor touched the private parts of your body?

Answer ... Grown-ups do not usually need to touch children in private areas unless it is for health reasons.

What if ... the baby sitter wanted to touch you under your night clothes?

Answer ... No one has the right to put their hand under your clothes; force you to touch them; touch your body; or touch your private body parts.

What if ... your uncle (aunt) wanted you to sit on his (her) lap and you did not want to?

Answer... You can say "NO!" to your uncle/aunt if, for some reason, you do not want to do it.