

Session 7

Personal safety in private places and relationships

Rationale

Children have been taught through generations to listen to their elders and to obey them. This kind of conditioning helps abusers take advantage of children as they know that children will never disobey them. People who violate Personal Safety Rules, in most cases target those children who they believe will not resist or report them. In such a scenario it is important that children are taught to express their feelings assertively even in the face of fear. The goal is not to remove fear, as fear helps children know that something is wrong, but to build the courage to act despite the fear.

Sometimes what the children fear is repercussions from the potential offender or from their parents/caregivers. Sensitive caregivers would encourage children to be assertive and say that they do not like certain things for their safety. They would not punish or blame the child or call the child rude or misbehaved! This is accomplished by building a sensitive and knowledgeable support system. When children are encouraged to develop a feelings of self confidence they will be less at risk to be abused and possibly more able to stop any violation of their personal safety rules by saying, 'No' and going away from the scene. Sexual abusers may blame the child or put the onus of the abuse on the child and make him/her feel guilty. The child may feel that it was his/her fault that the abuse took place and may not report instances of abuse thereby keeping the cycle of abuse going. To prevent this from happening it is important that children believe strongly that it was not their fault. Otherwise, when they grow older, they may experience unease or they may also experience guilt, shame and self blame. Even children who have learnt that they should report matters of abuse to their elders start feeling a huge sense of guilt if they had not reported the matter earlier. They also start blaming themselves for keeping quiet about the matter. They may also think that since the abuse took place long time ago they need not reveal it as it will not help them. Due to these factors children find it difficult to report matters of ongoing or previous abuse. It therefore becomes important to let them know that no matter what the reasons are/were it is still not their fault. It is also never too late to report matters of abuse.

Materials required

- Marker pen
- Any sticking substance (Blu Tac / double sided sticking tape / cello tape / board pins)
- Session 7 worksheets

Objective

At the end of the session 7 the children will internalize:

Core Message 1: I can shout/say 'No' for my safety.

Core Message 2: Safety guide to follow when someone breaks a safety rule: NO. GO. TELL.

Core Message 3: There is no shame in any part of our body.

Core message 4: It is not my fault if someone troubles me. The trouble maker is to be blamed.

Core Message 1: I can shout/say 'No' for my safety.

Methodology: Role plays and examples for discussion:

Q1) If someone's bullies you, what can you say?

Q2) If someone comes too close to you and you don't like it, what can you say?

Q3) If someone touches you and you don't like it, what can you say?

Q4) If someone makes you uncomfortable, breaks your body rules, or troubles you, what can you say or do?

A1) "Stop it! I don't like it!"

A2) "Please move away!"

3) "Stop it! I don't like it!"

A4) Say no. Go away from that person whenever you can.

Discussion: In these instances ask them how the student can protect him/ herself. Bring in the concept of NO-GO-TELL. Go away from that person. Go on telling until you get help.

Preempt the abuser. Before he can tell stories to your parents, you go and tell them what happened.

What should you do when someone breaks Personal Safety rules or when someone violates your body safety rules? In such a situation we can 'Say "No" and get away from the situation'.

Refer to Annexure 7:1 for more examples for role plays and what-if questions.

Tips for Trainers

- When demonstrating 'Saying No', you should stand straight and look into the eyes of the other person and say 'No' emphatically.

Making Connections

Teaching children that it is okay to say "No" is essential as it would, in some cases, help them prevent any form of abuse as much as possible.

Core Message 2: Safety guide to follow when some breaks a safety rule: NO. GO. TELL.

- (1) An uncle touching and hugging a niece
- (2) Older cousin asking his cousin to watch a movie with him. Sits very close to the boy and begins to touch his thighs.
- (3) Driver of the auto the student comes to school in touching the thigh and saying "Oo so you are growing up!"
- (4) 25 year old cousin tells the younger cousin that he will teach him about growing up. He shows some pictures and movies. Then he begins to touch in an unsafe manner. When boy says he will tell his father the cousin says "but your father won't believe you. He trusts me. He is v proud that I am in a professional job. You don't study well. You have at times lied to him! He won't believe you.
- (5) Rita is a 16 yr old girl. Her neighbor boy is a friend who she meets and talks casually to him around her home now and then. Of late in the conversation, he has been using sentences which seem to have double meaning or he says jokes which are confusing / seem to have double meaning. When she tells him that she doesn't like what he is saying, he denies it saying 'What is wrong? I only meant this'. This type of conversation is making her uncomfortable.
- (6) Riti is a 16 yr old girl. She and her classmates went out for a college excursion arranged by the college in which all of them played in the waterfall. During this time, one of her classmates took some photos of her in which her clothes have moved a bit off her body. He is now pressurizing her to come out with him or else he will put up these photos for everybody to see. She does not like him and does not want to go out with him. What can she do in this situation?
- (7) Asima is a girl who is 16 yrs old. On the way to college, there is a man who could be in his forties who stands in front of a shop. He looks at her leeringly which makes her feel very uncomfortable and yukky. Do you think this is unsafe behavior? What can Asima do in this situation?

Saying No

Along with saying No loudly, stand straight and look into the troublemaker's eyes.

Demonstrate this in front of the class and then ask all the students to repeat it in the same manner.

How will you say NO to a shopkeeper who asks you to touch his/her private body parts by offering you a bribe of a video game from his/her shop?

Practice using phrases they like - such as, NO, DON'T, I DON'T LIKE THAT, I'M GOING TO TELL ON YOU.

Sometimes we find it difficult to say 'No' to elders we know well as we feel they may get upset for disrespecting them. However, the only way we can protect ourselves from further harm is if we express our displeasure. If a person truly cares for us they will immediately stop behaving in a manner we do not like. Also the person who may be trying to harm us may stop doing so when he / she realizes that we are not afraid of him/her and are brave enough to express our displeasure.

Tips for Trainers

- Please discuss as everybody is special and unique all of us have different understanding of personal space.
- **Assertive** means to be firm and confident about your feelings but without hurting the other person.

One example is if someone breaks safety rules you assertively tell the person, "I don't like it. Stop it."

Aggressive is when you harm the person by physically hurting or saying cruel things to that person.

Core Message 2: Safety guide to follow when some breaks a safety rule: NO. GO. TELL continued...

Not being Able to say 'No'

Sometimes however, in spite of knowing all the different ways of saying 'No' we may still find it difficult to say anything. This can happen if we are scared or just confused or shocked. In such a situation we must not get upset with ourselves. Such things happen sometimes. We can try saying 'No' in our mind either at that moment or sometime later if possible.

Getting Away from the Situation

We can say 'No' and try to 'Get Away' from the situation.

What are the different ways by which you can get away? Give time for students to respond.

Yes we can walk away or run away from the place. Sometimes we may call out for help.

It may not always be possible to get away immediately.

What do you think you must do then? Give time for responses.

In a situation where we cannot get away immediately we must learn to wait patiently for the correct time and get away only when it is safe to do so

Bring out the necessity to tell an adult about such incidents.

The case studies mentioned at the bottom of this session can be done by the children in the form of role plays where they enact out a healthy response to the situations depicted.

Activity: learning from case studies:

Case Study 1: Rahul is 17 and his girlfriend Shweta is 16. They have been going out for 6 months and have been physically intimate. They have kissed, and more, but have not gone all the way. Lately, Rahul has been telling Shweta how much he loves her and how he wants to have sex with her. He often says things like, "If you really loved me, you would want it too". Shweta is anxious. She doesn't want to have sex but is afraid of losing him and feels pressured into having sex with him. She has told him that but he does not understand what the big deal is.

- . How do you think Shweta and Rahul could negotiate to resolve the situation?
- Discuss the question in your group.
- Think of the best solution.
- Prepare a 2 – 3 minute role play to act out the solution.
- Present

Tips for Teachers/ Trainers

Ask children to enact healthy response to the situation for e.g. saying No assertively and seeking help; do not depict or make children enact actual scene of abuse

Please reiterate as each one of us are unique and we have different likes and dislikes; so we have different sense of boundaries. We need respect each other's personal boundary even when it is different.

Core Message 2: Safety guide to follow when someone breaks a safety rule: NO. GO. TELL continued...

Case Study 2: Vinayak is a very shy 16 years old. He is quiet and does not speak up in class. He is reserved and spends most of his time daydreaming. He doesn't have many friends. When he was 10, his uncle (his father's brother), started showing him nude pictures on the net. He wanted to leave but couldn't. He felt trapped and also guilty. Slowly his uncle started touching him in all places and making him touch him too. Even though this has stopped as his uncle has now gone abroad,

Vinayak is extremely confused about this. He feels ashamed, as if he did something wrong.

Q. How do you think Vinayak can resolve the situation?

- Discuss the question in your group.
- Think of the best solution.
- Prepare a 2 – 3 minute roleplay to act out the solution.
- Present

Case Study 3: Priyanka, 16, is weak in Maths. She asks her 25 year old cousin brother to teach her. He's her favourite cousin and fun to be with. He comes over and they sit in her room and study. While teaching her, he sits very close to her. He occasionally rubs her back and kisses her on the cheek when she completes a sum. Lately he has started touching her more and more. Priyanka hates it when he does these things but is not sure that he means her harm because she likes him a lot. She thinks maybe she is making a big thing of it in her mind. She doesn't know if she should tell anyone. What if she is wrong, her cousin brother will get so angry and so will her parents.

Q. How do you think Priyanka could resolve this situation?

- Discuss the question in your group.
- Think of the best solution.
- Prepare a 2 – 3 minute roleplay to act out the solution.

Core Message 3: Awareness and alertness helps in safety.

Methodology: What are the different ways in which we communicate with other people?

Discussion: Say that clothes have become a part of our body language. Our bodies are designed to attract. We need to be aware of our surroundings and the people who may be in that place when we decide which kind of clothes to wear. At the same time, the person who takes any action, violates anyone's safety rules is responsible and accountable for it. There is no excuse for abusing or assaulting anyone.

Methodology: Are we aware of our surroundings when we are with other people? How do our senses help us to be safe?

Discussion: We can pick up signals about safety of the surroundings if we keep alert and use our senses. We can sense what is happening then. It makes sense to keep a look out, if we are in our own world talking on our cellophane, texting or listening to music i-pod, we do not have an idea of our surroundings. It is good to be aware.

Core Message 4: There is no shame in any part of our body.

Methodology:

(1) Two people, A and B. A steals B's belongings. Who's blame? Who should be punished? Who's shame?

(2) Draw a stick figure of A and B. B is following safety rules. A is deliberately breaking B's personal safety rules. Who did something wrong? Who is to blame? Whose shame is it?

Further explain with an example:

If person A takes away person B's bag without B's permission, who has done something wrong? Who is to blame? Who needs to feel shame for doing something wrong?

Discussion: explain that B has not done anything wrong, so it is not his blame or shame. The blame and shame is that of A. There is no shame in our body. There is shame in behaviour. Shame and blame – belongs to those who break rules deliberately and harass or abuse others.

Tips for Trainers

Some child might express they are at fault and disclose some violations they have faced or facing.

Please affirm the child. Validate his/her feelings. Build a support structure and do appropriate referral.

Making Connections

A quick recap of all the previous lessons will be useful in building up a strong base for this session.

Sexual abusers may blame the child or put the onus of the abuse on the child and make him/her feel guilty. The child may feel that it was his/her fault that the abuse took place and may not report instances of abuse thereby keeping the cycle of abuse going on. To prevent this from happening it is important that children believe strongly that it was not their fault.

Core message 5: It is not my fault if someone troubles me. The troublemaker is to be blamed.

Explain: if someone touches your private body parts it is never your fault. It is always the fault of the person who broke Personal Safety Rules by touching you.. Remember if anyone breaks Personal Safety Rules then it is always that person's fault and not your mistake.

Say loudly, clearly and confidently, "It is never my fault if someone else breaks Personal Safety Rules". Give time to repeat this if necessary.

There could be times when a person breaking Personal Safety Rules may make you believe that they meant no harm to you and that it was only for fun. Even if you think the person was right at that moment, you must still remember that it was not your fault. And you can still tell.

Repeat again, "It is not my fault" loudly, clearly and confidently.

Use gestures while stating, 'It's not my fault'. Encourage students to repeat the same as often as possible to instill the concept firmly in their minds.

What if you felt shy or scared and so did not say, 'No' to the person? Is it then your fault? Give time for responses.

It is still not your fault, if a person breaks Personal Safety Rules. It is always that person's fault for breaking the rule.

Even if you find it difficult to say, 'no' always think, 'no' in your head and keep telling yourself that it is not my fault. Think, 'no, I don't want this, I didn't ask for it, this is not my fault.' Thinking, 'no' even if we don't say, 'no' will give you the courage to tell someone at a later date. It is never too late to tell.

Also ask the students if it is their fault if they are forced or coaxed into breaking Personal Safety rules in a situation. It is still not your fault. The person who does the action (breaks rules) is to blame.

Accidental violation of rules: In such a case we must remember that it happened by mistake, it was not intentional. We don't continue looking or touching and go away from that place.

Making Connections

When children who have been abused grow older, they often experience unease or guilt, or shame. Very often they also blame themselves for being abused. Even children who have learnt that they should report matters of abuse to their elders start feeling a huge sense of guilt if they had not reported the matter earlier. They also start blaming themselves for keeping quiet about the matter. They may also think that since the abuse took place a long time ago they need not reveal it as it will not help them. Due to these factors children find it difficult to report matters of ongoing or previous abuse. It is therefore important to let them know that no matter what the reasons are/were, the abuse is still not their fault and it is never too late to report matters of abuse.

Summarize and review the key messages:

Closure : Activity on identifying Safe/unsafe behavior (Activity provided in the Annexure 7:2)

What did you learn today?

Reiterate

Core Message 1: I can shout/say 'No' for my safety.

Core Message 2: Safety guide to follow when someone breaks a safety rule: NO. GO. TELL.

Core Message 3: Awareness and alertness helps in safety.

Core Message 4: There is no shame in any part of our body.

Core message 5: It is not my fault if someone troubles me. The troublemaker is to be blamed.

The safety guidelines that we have discussed now and the ones that we will discuss in the next sessions are all such that will not only help you take care of yourself but will also help you to assist your friends whenever necessary.

Annexure 7:1

What if:

- Your friend's uncle touches her private body parts when no one is around. When she tells her father about it he does not listen to her. What must she do?
- Someone talks about your or others' private body parts?
- Your friend's uncle says to her, "We will play a fun game of seeing each other's private body parts", what should your friend do?
- One elder boy says, "I will teach you how to use the internet for finding information from the mobile", and then shows you someone's private body parts, what should you do?
- Your elder brother or sister shows you pictures of naked people and talks to you about them. When you tell your mummy about it, she does not believe you. What should you do?
- One of your friends tells you to watch a movie in which adult private parts are shown, what would you do?
- Your cousins plan to tease each other by peeping in the bathroom while the other cousin is having a bath, what would you do?
- A big boy says that he'll show you something cool about your private body parts. What must you do?
- Your tuition teacher touches her private body parts while teaching her about private body parts and shows her pictures of others private body parts in some magazines, then what should she do?
- M and T are best friends. Last month, T refused to go to computer room at night as he wanted him to look at a film showing the private body parts of adults. After that M has stopped talking to her and is talking ill about her to other friends.

Annexure 7:2

Identify- Green, Yellow or Red Behavior?

1. Tanya and Naman met during the school mela and felt instantly attracted to each other. They have been spending a lot of time together and yesterday they kissed for the first time. They both enjoyed the kiss, but are also nervous about whether it was the right thing to do.
2. Dheeraj has a crush on an actress and feels sexually aroused when he thinks of her. Sometimes, when he is alone in his room, he feels like masturbating while fantasizing about her. He feels guilty about this as he feels it is not ok...
3. Samira has been spending a lot of time chatting online with a boy who is 5 years older than her. She really likes him and feels excited about the thought of dating him. He has told her that he wants to be her boyfriend and wants to kiss her the next time they meet.
4. Amar recently discovered a computer folder with some pornographic videos. He started watching the videos out of curiosity about sexual intercourse and has been watching them every night since then. He is restless and unable to sleep on the days when he is not able to find alone time to watch the clips.
5. Sia's boyfriend has been insisting that they need to express their love for each other by being physically intimate, but she tells him that does not feel ready. He is upset with her and tells her that she does not trust him and if she doesn't agree, he'll break up with her.
6. Sunny and Priya are kissing in her room and Sunny gets the idea to film themselves with a phone. Priya is not feeling comfortable with the idea but Sunny insists that it's harmless fun because nobody will get to see it.