



Home Connection

Protecting Children from Inappropriate Touch

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Students have been learning about appropriate and inappropriate touch in different situations. Although this is a very difficult topic, the discussion is vital to our children's safety. Experts estimate that 1 in 4 girls, 1 in 7 boys, and 15 to 25 percent of all children may be sexually abused. Sadly, most abusers are not strangers, but people the child knows. They may be relatives, friends, or caregivers.

Children have been taught the "touching rule": No one has the right to touch you in a way you do not want to be touched or in your private area—unless it is to keep you clean or healthy.

Children need to feel empowered to say no if they feel they are being touched inappropriately. We have encouraged children in such situations to say no, get away if they can, and tell someone what happened. A child who reports inappropriate touch or sexual abuse to you needs your support. You might say something like, "I know it was hard for you to tell me about what happened. I want you to know this is not your fault. I am going to take care of you and help you." Reassure the child that telling is the right thing to do.

If you know a child who has been abused or touched inappropriately, contact the Fairfax County Child Protective Services Hotline, (703) 324-7400. You can call anytime, day or night. Social workers at Child Protective Services are trained to help children who have been abused.

Encourage your child to talk to you about any questions she or he has about this topic.

Thank you,

Your Child's Teacher