

SMART KIDS



Child Abuse Prevention Tips for Parents

JCFS Chicago's **SMART KIDS** program, designed for Orthodox Jewish Day Schools, teaches children from preschool to fourth grade about boundaries, bodily autonomy, and making smart choices in uncomfortable situations.

These principles can be integrated into daily life and adapted as children grow.

S - Seek a Safe Helper

Teach children to identify someone who can assist them in unsafe or uncomfortable situations when their regular caregiver is unavailable. This could be a store clerk, firefighter, or parent with a child at the park.

M - Make The Uh-Oh Feeling Matter

Empower children to recognize the “uh-oh feeling” that arises when they encounter potentially unsafe situations. Encourage them to say no and seek out a trusted adult to share their feelings.

A - Ask First

Ensure that children’s whereabouts are always known to the responsible adult. Establish consistent rules such as seeking permission before changing plans, opening doors, accepting treats, answering phones, or taking rides.

R - Respect Your Body

Teach children that it’s okay to refuse unwanted touch and to use anatomically correct terms for body parts. This clarity aids communication, especially with healthcare providers.

T - Tell a Trusted Adult

Foster open communication with adults who respect your family’s safety rules. Discuss and identify trusted individuals whom children can approach anytime. Differentiate between surprises and secrets, emphasizing that secrets should never be kept from trusted adults.

Parents play a crucial role in prevention. Regular, brief conversations about safety are more effective than a single lengthy discussion. Start teaching and reinforcing these safety rules from a young age.



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