

Teaching Your Child Consent Discussion Guide

A CONVERSATION ABOUT THE WHAT, WHY, AND HOW OF TEACHING YOUR KIDS ABOUT CONSENT.

At Saprea, we believe that empowering communities with knowledge is one of the best ways to prevent child sexual abuse. Thank you for your willingness to facilitate learning in your circle of influence. You are an essential part of everything that we do. Here are some best practices to consider before, during, and after the presentation.

Before:

- ◆ **Communicate clearly** when and where the presentation is taking place. Let participants know what topic will be discussed.
- ◆ **Prepare teaching materials:**
 - ◇ Download the presentation materials and review them thoroughly.
 - ◇ Read the discussion guide.
 - ◇ Print handout for in-person students or include the handout link in your virtual invite. Be prepared to share the link again during your virtual class.
- ◆ **Arrive early and set up:**
 - ◇ Ensure AV equipment is present, plugged in, and functioning properly, or that your video conferencing platform is set up, sound is working, and you can share your screen.
 - ◇ If in person, arrange seating to encourage discussion and have pens available for participants to take notes.
 - ◇ Start the presentation on the first slide in "presentation mode."

During:

- ◆ **Add energy to the room.** Be friendly, positive, and enthusiastic.
- ◆ **Trust the material and your intuition.** Follow the organization and activities outlined in the research-based discussion guides while being yourself and considering the needs of your group. Share personal experiences that enrich and illustrate critical principles.

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- ◆ **When in person, sit with the group.** Larger groups may require you to stand.
- ◆ **Encourage discussion:**
 - ◇ Create a safe environment where participants can be honest and candid.
 - ◇ Thank participants for their comments.
 - ◇ Help as many people as possible participate.
 - ◇ Don't allow one person to dominate the conversation.
 - ◇ Manage time. This discussion is designed to take around 60 minutes.
 - ◇ Prompt each participant to take action on what they learned.
- ◆ **Post local and regional resources in a visible place.** Share abuse hotlines or community counseling centers that participants can contact for support.

After:

- ◆ Make sure participants have a chance to take the exit survey.
- ◆ Review what went well and what can be improved for your next presentation.
- ◆ Follow up with any participants who may have been overwhelmed by the gravity of the topic.
- ◆ Congratulate yourself for the efforts you've made to improve your community!

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Part I: What Is Consent?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to define consent and identify its principles.



Vocal Instructions



Facilitator notes



Explain: Consent is such an important thing to teach to your children. We'll dedicate this session to better understanding consent and identifying some principles that are key to practicing consent. Before we start, we want to clarify what we mean by teaching children consent. At Saprea, our unwavering stance is that a child is never in a position to consent to abuse, which means a child is never responsible to keep themselves safe from sexual abuse, and they shouldn't feel like it was their responsibility to stop someone from taking advantage of them.

However, consent is still an important principle to teach your children. We know that kids can learn to apply principles of consent at a young age. We want them to feel like they have a voice and know how to use it. And as they grow, mature, and find themselves in situations where they may have power or influence over another individual, they will respect the other person enough that they won't act in a way that causes sexual (or other) harm.

To jump into this important topic, we'll start by watching a video of some teens explaining what they've learned about giving consent.



Watch: Press *PLAY* to start the “Teens Talk: What Is Consent” video.



Paired Discussion: (3–5 min.)

- ◆ How would you explain consent?



Explain: Consent is an agreement between individuals that is enthusiastic, reciprocal, and continuous. But what does all of this actually mean? Let's break the definition down into parts.



Large Group Discussion: (3–5 min.)

- ◆ What do the words enthusiastic, continuous, and reciprocal look like to you?
- ◆ Now think back to the Teens Talk video. What is one concept that is missing in the explanations shared by the youth in the video that you'd want your own child or teen to understand?



Explain: With the definition in mind, let's talk through the principles involved in giving and receiving consent.



Facilitator Notes: (5–7 min.) *Distribute the “Understanding Consent: Guiding Principles”* *handout to participants. Have the full group of participants discuss the list of principles.*



Large Group Discussion: (3–5 min.)

- ◆ From the list of principles, choose one that deepens your understanding of consent.
- ◆ Would someone be willing to share why this principle stands out to you?



Take Action: Share something you've learned about consent with someone this week.

Part 2: Why Is Teaching Consent Important?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to explain how teaching consent may reduce the risk of children being sexually abused, or sexually abusing others.



Explain: Our last discussion focused on understanding consent. Now we want to talk through why consent is so important to model and teach.

Consider these statistics:

- ◆ Children know the perpetrator in around 80% of the reported cases of sexual abuse.
- ◆ While there is risk for children of all ages, children are most vulnerable to abuse between the ages of 7 and 13.
- ◆ Youth are responsible for about half of all sexual offenses against other children.

These statistics point to the importance of preventing your child from becoming a victim, but also serve as a reminder of how teaching consent can prevent your child from abusing others. Keep this information in mind as we watch this video; it is a powerful example of consent in action.



Watch: Press *PLAY* to start the *You Have a Voice: Paige's Story* video.



Large Group Discussion: (5–7 min.)

- ◆ There's so much that can be discussed from this video, but what is one thing that stood out to you?
- ◆ In this example, Paige demonstrated both verbal and nonverbal communication. As a parent, how can you teach your child to acknowledge and respect all forms of communication?
- ◆ If you were the parent of the boy, how would you respond and what would you do to help him?



Take Action: Share Paige's video on social media with an example of a way you've empowered your child to give or receive consent. You can scan this QR code to get the link. If you are not on social media, consider texting it to a few friends who come to mind.

Part 3: How to Teach Consent

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to understand that consent can be taught to children of various ages and stages of development. Identify ways to explain and teach consent, including the use of Saprea prevention resources. Identify examples of organic moments to teach principles of consent.



Explain: We've discussed the definition and principles of consent, as well as why teaching it can help prevent sexual abuse from happening to your children. Next, let's explore some ways to approach teaching children of all ages.



Watch: Press *PLAY* to start the *From Parents for Parents: Teaching Consent* video.



Facilitator Notes: (7–9 min.) Direct individuals to the "Teaching Consent" worksheet on the second page of their handout. Give them several minutes to complete it. When participants are ready, invite the full group back for a discussion.



Large Group Discussion: (5–7 min.)

- ◆ What types of ordinary life situations could serve as opportunities for you to teach consent?
- ◆ How do you create a sense of safety that encourages your children to talk to you about these issues?
- ◆ Imagine that you've just finished a great discussion on consent with your 15-year-old. How might you adjust the things you say and examples you give when you have a similar conversation with your 7-year-old?



Take Action: Implement the ideas that you've identified on the "Teaching Consent" worksheet to engage in learning opportunities with children in your home.



Note: *Allow participants enough time to take the exit survey before the Q&A.*