

Safe Touches

(Erin's Law)

eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca
Evanston/North Shore

YOU are the boss of your own body! Only YOU get to decide who touches you, when, and where.

Safe touches are wanted and fun.

Safe touches make you feel happy, excited, loved, and proud.

Examples:

- hugs
- high-fives
- fist bumps



There are two types of unsafe touches:

1 Some unsafe touches can make you feel hurt, scared, angry, or sad.

Examples:

- hitting
- pinching
- kicking
- throwing things



2

Some unsafe touches can make you feel uncomfortable, embarrassed, disgusted, or confused.

Examples:

- looking at or touching someone's private parts. The private parts are the genitals (penis, testicles, vulva, vagina), buttocks, and breasts
- asking someone to look at or touch your private parts
- looking at pictures/videos of naked people
- taking pictures of your private body parts

It is not okay for anyone to give unsafe touches. But when an adult gives a child any kind of unsafe touch, it is a crime called child abuse.

Who are the adults who give children unsafe touches? Most of the time, they are someone the child knows, such as a parent, family member, teacher, or coach. Child abuse is different than stranger danger.

There are some exceptions. If an adult you trust touches your private parts to help you be safe and healthy, that is not an unsafe touch.

Examples:

- A doctor giving a check-up or looking at your private parts because they are hurt
- A parent changing a baby's diaper
- A parent giving a child a bath



If an adult tries to give you an unsafe touch, you should....



1

Look the person in the eye and tell them to STOP in an assertive (strong) voice.

2

Remember that it is NEVER a child's fault when an adult gives them an unsafe touch.

Some adults will try to trick children into thinking it is their fault. They might:

- make you promise to keep it a secret.
- bribe you with something you really want, like money, toys, or a trip.
- threaten to hurt you or your family, or threaten that they won't love you if you tell.

3

ALWAYS tell an adult you trust as soon as you can! If an adult doesn't believe you, keep telling until someone helps you. If you waited and didn't tell anyone for a while, it is still okay to tell someone now.



You might tell...

- a parent or guardian
- a grandparent
- other family members
- a teacher
- a coach
- a social worker
- a principal
- a police officer

So what is "Erin's Law?" Erin Merryn, who grew up in the Chicago suburbs, was sexually abused by two adults in her life from the ages of 6-12. She didn't know it was wrong or how to ask for help. When she became an adult, she decided to fight to make it a law in Illinois and 37 other states that children should learn about sexual abuse in school.

RESOURCES

LEARN MORE!

Click these links to watch videos about this topic.

- [What is sexual abuse and how to ask for help](#)
- [How to find an adult you trust](#)

Make a report to the hotline:

1-800-25-ABUSE
(1-800-252-2873)

Contact

YWCA Evanston/North Shore

if you have questions about this fact sheet, child abuse, or healthy relationships:

bhr@ywca-ens.org

847-864-8780 (24 hour domestic violence hotline)