

# Psychoeducation Information Sheet for Elementary and Middle School Children

## Section 1: Touches and Private Parts

### What are okay touches?

Okay touches are touches that we are comfortable with and/or are good for us. Shaking hands, slapping high-five, or hugging our mom are examples of okay touches. Some okay touches hurt but are actually good for us like when we go to the doctor and get a shot.

### What are not okay touches?

Not- okay touches are touches that make us feel uncomfortable and/or are not good for us. Punches, kicks, and bites are examples of not-okay touches. It is also not okay for someone to touch or look at our private parts.

### What are private parts?

There are certain parts of your body that no one is supposed to touch except if someone is trying to help you. These are the parts that are covered by your bathing suit. Some of these parts are different for boys and girls. We all have different names for private parts, but we need to learn the doctor's names. For girls, there are three private parts. The breasts are covered by the top part of a girl's bathing suit, the vagina is covered by the front bottom part of a girl's bathing suit, and the buttocks (butt) are covered by the back bottom part of a girl's bathing suit. For boys there are two private parts. The front part of a boy's bathing suit covers the penis, while the back part covers the buttocks (butt). Boys and girls both have buttocks (butts). Private parts, like any other part of the body, serve a function. Therefore, there is nothing funny about them as compared to other parts of the body (e.g., the hand is used to hold things).

## Section 2: Definitions and Characteristics of Child Abuse

### What is child sexual abuse?

Child sexual abuse is when someone looks at or touches your private parts or makes you look at or touch their private parts.

### What is child physical abuse?

Child physical abuse is when someone hits you and leaves marks and/or bruising on your body.

## Section 3: Information About Survivors

### Who can be abused?

Child abuse can happen to anyone. It can happen to both boys and girls, regardless of age or background.

### Does abuse happen to a lot of children?

Abuse happens to a lot of children. For sexual abuse, 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 7 boys will have been sexually abused by the time they are 18 (Cohen, Mannarino, & Deblinger, 2006; Sapp & Vandeven, 2005 ). For physical abuse, 1 in 5 children will experience physical abuse by the time they are 18 (Briere & Elliott, 2003; Finkelhor, Turner, Shattuck, & Hamby, 2013).

### How do children feel after they have been abused?

Children may have a lot of feelings after being abused. They may feel sad, ashamed, scared, worried, or confused. Whatever feeling a child feels is okay because everyone is different.

**Why are children often afraid to talk about the abuse?**

Talking about sexual abuse can be hard. Sometimes children feel shy and embarrassed by what happened. They also may be afraid that the abuser will hurt them if they talk about it or afraid that no one will believe them. Sometimes children are afraid they may get in trouble or might think that what happened was their fault.

**Section 4: Information about Perpetrators****Whose fault is it when a child is abused?**

When a child is abused, it is always the other person's fault, and never the child's fault. This is important to understand because a lot of children who have been abused blame themselves for what happened.

**Who are the people who abuse children?**

Anyone can abuse children. However, most people treat children well and do not abuse them. Most of the people who sexually abuse children are men, but there are women who sexually abuse children, too. Additionally, 1 in 3 children who are sexually abused are abused by an older child or teenager. Most people that physically abuse children are parents or family members who are taking care of children. In most cases, children are abused by someone they know. People who abuse children have a serious problem and need to get help. Abuse is never a way of showing love.

**Section 5: Personal Safety and Treatment****What can you do if someone has or is trying to abuse you or someone you know?**

Whenever you or someone you know has been sexually abused, you should tell your parents or a grown-up you trust. If someone is trying to abuse you, you should yell "No," run away, and tell a grown-up right away. If the grown-up does not believe you or help you, you should keep telling other grown-ups until you get help.

**Why is it important to talk about what happened?**

Even though it's hard, talking about what happened will make you feel better. You will learn that you can talk about the abuse and still be okay. Talking about the abuse also makes it possible for people to help you.

**What is therapy? How can it help me?**

Therapy is when you meet with a grown-up whose job is to talk to children who are having problems. During therapy you will talk about your feelings, learn about abuse, and learn how to stay safe. The good news is that you will also play a lot of games and have a lot of fun.