

# TELLING OUR CHILDREN ABOUT SEXUAL ABUSE

*“Knowing about sexual abuse helps keep children safe and protects them from it. When adults talk openly with children about sexual abuse, and discuss what the Child can do if they are in a threatening situation, then they give the child permission to tell.”*



## SO WHAT DO WE TELL THEM?

### TEACH THEM ABOUT THEIR FEELINGS.

Children need to be taught to trust their feelings. Talk about what makes them feel safe and happy. Talk about what makes them feel sad, angry or scared. Talk about what that makes their bodies feel like.

### GIVE PERMISSION

for them to tell someone they trust if they are scared. Tell them that if they tell an adult and the adult does not believe them that they should keep telling until someone does something to help them.

### USE THE RIGHT NAMES

for sexual parts of the body when you are talking to them about sexual safety. Teach them to respect their bodies and their privacy.

### EXPLAIN

that their bodies are theirs and no-one has the right to touch them in a way that makes them feel scared or uncomfortable.

### REMOVE THE GUILT

associated with being a victim by stressing that if someone touches them in a sexual way it is not their fault and they should tell someone they trust.

### TALK ABOUT GROWN-UPS

and explain that sometimes they do things that are not alright.

### HAVE A “NO SECRETS” POLICY

in your family. Surprises are good, but secrets are not. Encourage children to be open and honest with you\*.

[\* Adapted from Commission for Children and Young people: Information Sheets: Child Sexual abuse [www.kids.nsw.gov.au](http://www.kids.nsw.gov.au)

