



EDUCATEEMPOWERKIDS

A SIMPLE LESSON FOR TEACHING YOUR CHILD ABOUT PREDATORS

AGES 3-7



BACKGROUND

You may want to precede this lesson with the lesson about Good Touch/Bad Touch. Help your child to understand what a predator is. Children may think that they will be punished if they tell an adult about a “bad” experience that happened to them simply because they were there during the experience. Unfortunately, predators are most often people we know and trust. Reinforce that you will believe your child if he or she comes to you with concerns about inappropriate behavior. This is just one of many, many discussions you should have with your child. (See related discussions below.)

PREPARATION

Review the objective of the lesson and understand why it is important to talk to your child about it. Read over the lesson first and try to anticipate what your child is ready for and what questions your child might have. Familiarize yourself with the glossary terms.

OBJECTIVE

To teach your child what a predator is, help them to understand that a predator can be anyone, how being aware of their surroundings can help them stay safe and what to do if they find themselves in a situation that makes them uncomfortable.

WHAT IS A PREDATOR?

The term is often used to describe the deceptive and coercive methods used by people who commit sex crimes where there is a victim, such as rape or child abuse. A sexual predator is someone who seeks to obtain sexual contact through “hunting.”

WHY ARE PREDATORS DANGEROUS?

It is important for every family to discuss who is a trusted non-family member. If there are known issues with any adults with whom your child has contact (including family members), create an appropriate plan with your child to deal with the situation. This may include things like not being alone with the person, not going places (especially alone) with the person, staying in the living room or yard and not going into a bedroom with the person, etc. Avoid blanket definitions (such as “We trust our teachers”) because, unfortunately, that is not always true. Also explain that just because you “know” someone does not automatically mean that they are a trusted adult. Be specific and concrete in your planning in order to reassure and empower your child.

Consider employing a “safe word” (a secret word that you agree on as a family) that you can give to other adults to let your child know that it is ok to do what that adult says (for example, if another adult needs to pick them up from school in the case of an emergency).

OTHER POINTS TO MAKE

- Many people are good people
- There are bad people
- Pornography is sometimes used by predators to groom children
- Doctors can examine you when a parent is present
- These are people we trust (list people that your family trusts)

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR CHILD

- Do you ever get an “icky” feeling around anyone?
- What can you do if an adult or another child makes you uncomfortable?
- Who is someone at school/church/soccer/etc. that you can talk to if a parent is not there?
- What should you do if someone touches you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable?

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOUR CHILD HAS BEEN TOUCHED IN A WAY WHICH MAKES HIM OR FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE?

- Make your child feel safe and loved.
- Assure your child that he or she will always be believed.
- Try not become overly emotional, if you do, explain to your child what you are feeling.
- Never make your child feel ashamed
- Thank your child for trusting you and telling you. Ask them to help you understand what happened, so you can help them.

FOLLOWING UP

- Teach your child to come to you if anyone touches them where underwear covers or in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable or confused.
- Each time your child is not in your care for any period of time, it is a good idea to remind them of ways to protect and prepare themselves.
- It may be helpful to practice ways that a child could approach a parent or trusted adult with information about “bad touching.”
- This will not be a one-time discussion, you’ll want to reiterate these principles continuously. This lesson will likely lead to other valuable discussions like anatomy, relationships, good touch/bad touch and predators, all of which can be found in ***30 Days of Sex Talks, Empowering Your Child with Knowledge of Sexual Intimacy*** (available on Amazon.com).

RELATED DISCUSSIONS

(which can also be found in 30 Days of Sex Talks)

Good Touch/Bad Touch

Public

Private

Respecting Others

GLOSSARY TERMS

Groom: To prepare or train someone for a particular purpose or activity. In the case of sexual predators, it is any willful action made by the offender to prepare the victim and/or the victim's support network that allows for easier sex offending.

Instinct: An inherent inclination towards a particular behavior. Behavior that is performed without being based on prior experience is instinctive.

Sexual Abuse: The improper sexual usage or treatment of another person or entity, often to unfairly gain power or other benefit in the relationship. In instances of sexual abuse, undesired sexual behaviors are forced upon one person by another.

Test Touch: Seemingly innocent touches by a predator or offender, such as a pat on the back or a squeeze on the arm, that are meant to normalize kids to being in physical contact with the predator. Test touches can progress to trying to be alone with the child.