

My Body is MINE!



A Coloring & Read-With-Me Book
for SAFETY SMART Kids
(and the Grown-Ups Who Care for Them!)



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A Word to Parents and Guardians

As we all know, good parents do everything possible to protect their children.

That includes protecting them from sexual abuse. Experts estimate that at least 10% of children are sexually abused before they are 18 years old. In some places, it may be much higher than 10%.

Children can't protect themselves from abusers. They need to be protected by their parents, and by other responsible adults. But there are some lessons we can teach our children to help them stay safe:

- Children need to know what parts of their bodies are private, and what those parts are called.
- Children need to be encouraged to say "NO!" if someone touches their private parts, or touches them in some other way that makes them upset, confused, or uncomfortable.
- Children need to know that they should tell a parent or other trusted adult if anyone does something that makes them feel scared or uncomfortable.
- Children need to know that they should never, ever keep secrets about touching.

Most children who are abused never tell anyone. They are too afraid of being hurt by the abuser, or of being blamed by their parents. They are often worried about how upset others will be. They may be too ashamed or embarrassed. A child might even be tricked by an abuser into believing that the child is at fault.

Every child needs to learn what to do if they are in danger from an abuser. Keep in mind that most abusers are not strangers. They might even be family members, older or larger children, or people whose jobs include supervising children.

Please sit down with your young child and read this book with them. Encourage them to color the pictures, ask questions about the lessons, and understand why it is so important to be safe.

Above all, assure them that you love them and that you know it is your responsibility to protect them. They should understand that it is always safe to talk to you. If your children are ever touched in a bad way, they need to know that you will take them seriously, and won't blame them for it, and will help them.

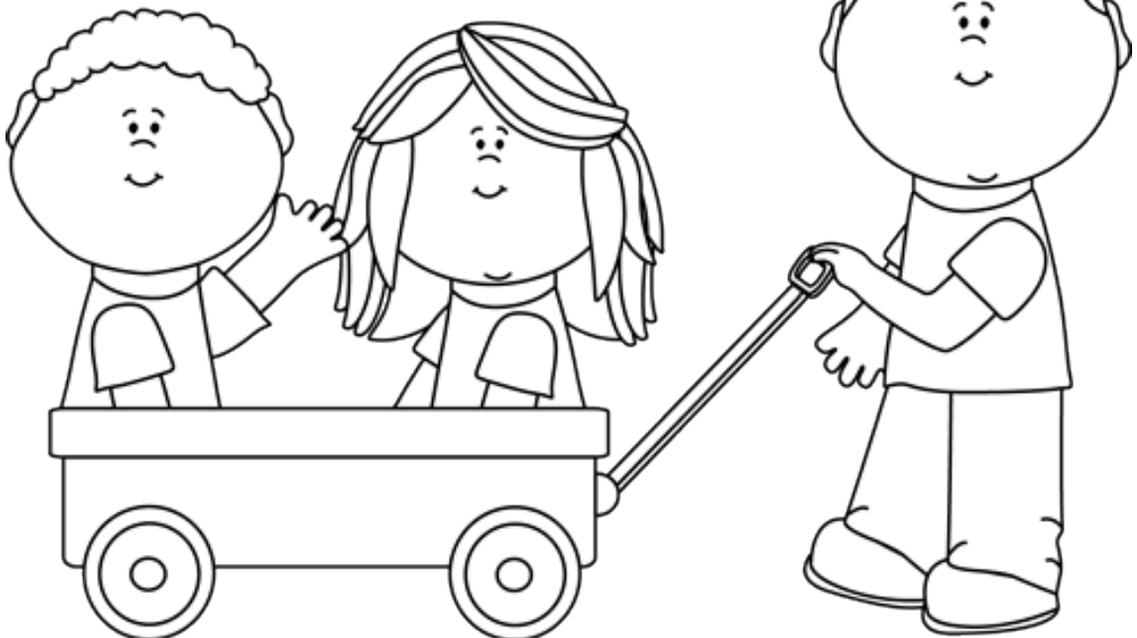
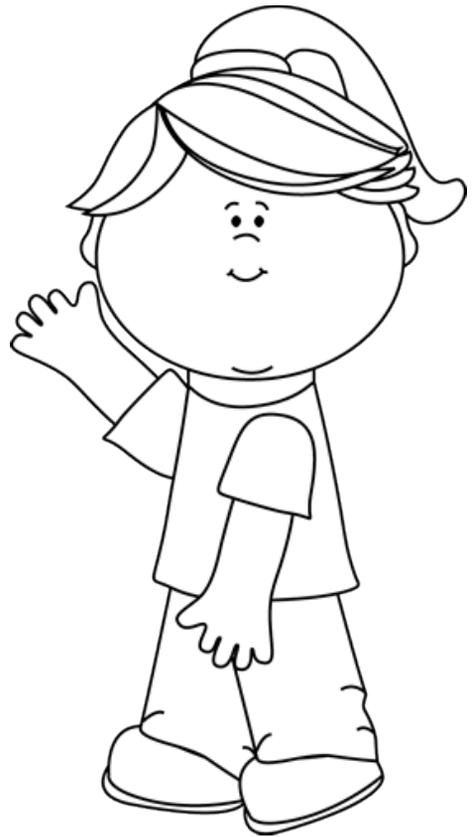
Finally, please take a look at the last few pages of this book to find more information for parents and guardians.

This book is about **YOU!**

There is something very special that is **YOURS.**

Read this book with your mom or dad.

Ask them questions as you go through the book!

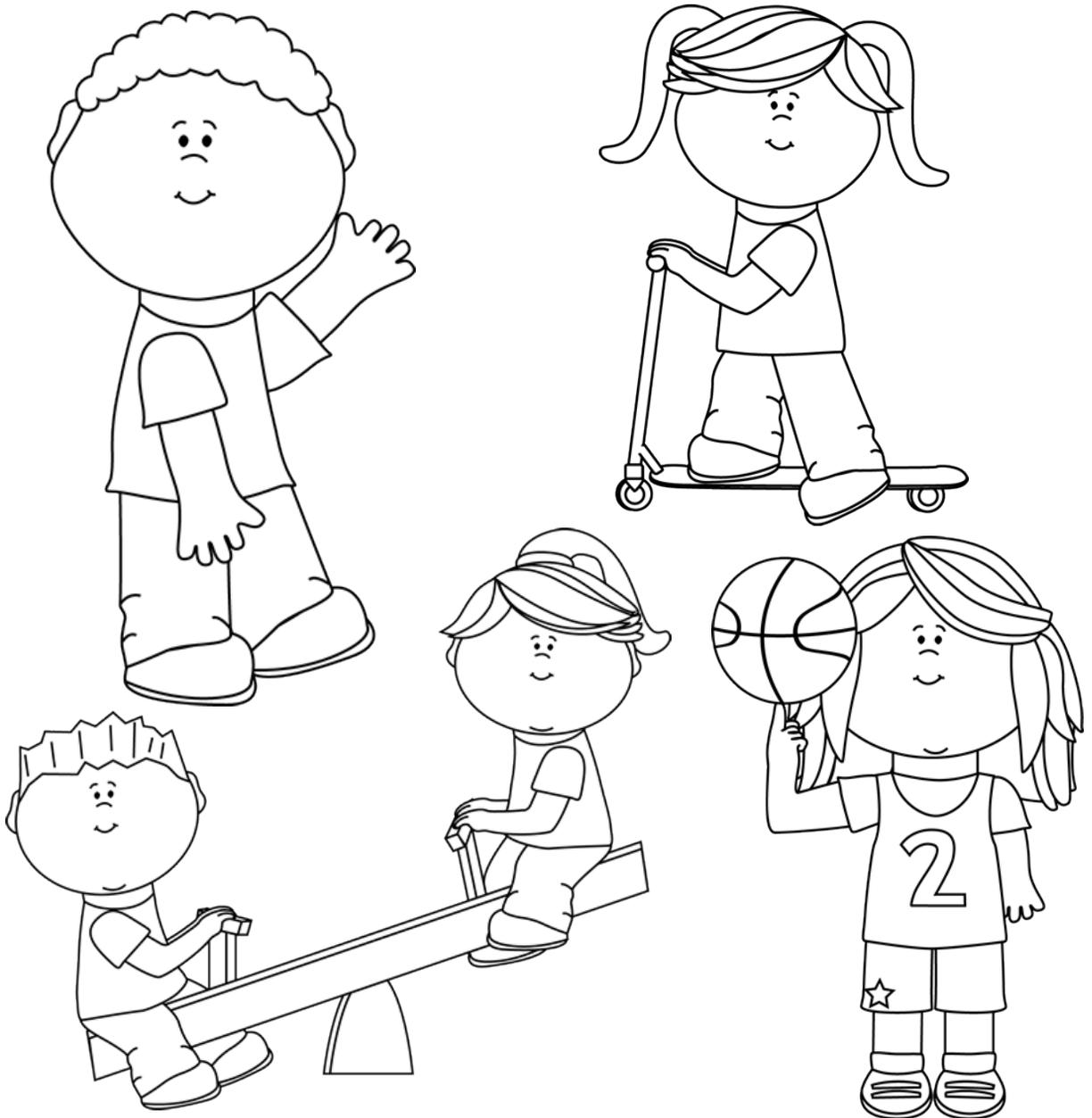


You have your very own body!

Animals have bodies too. They are all different.



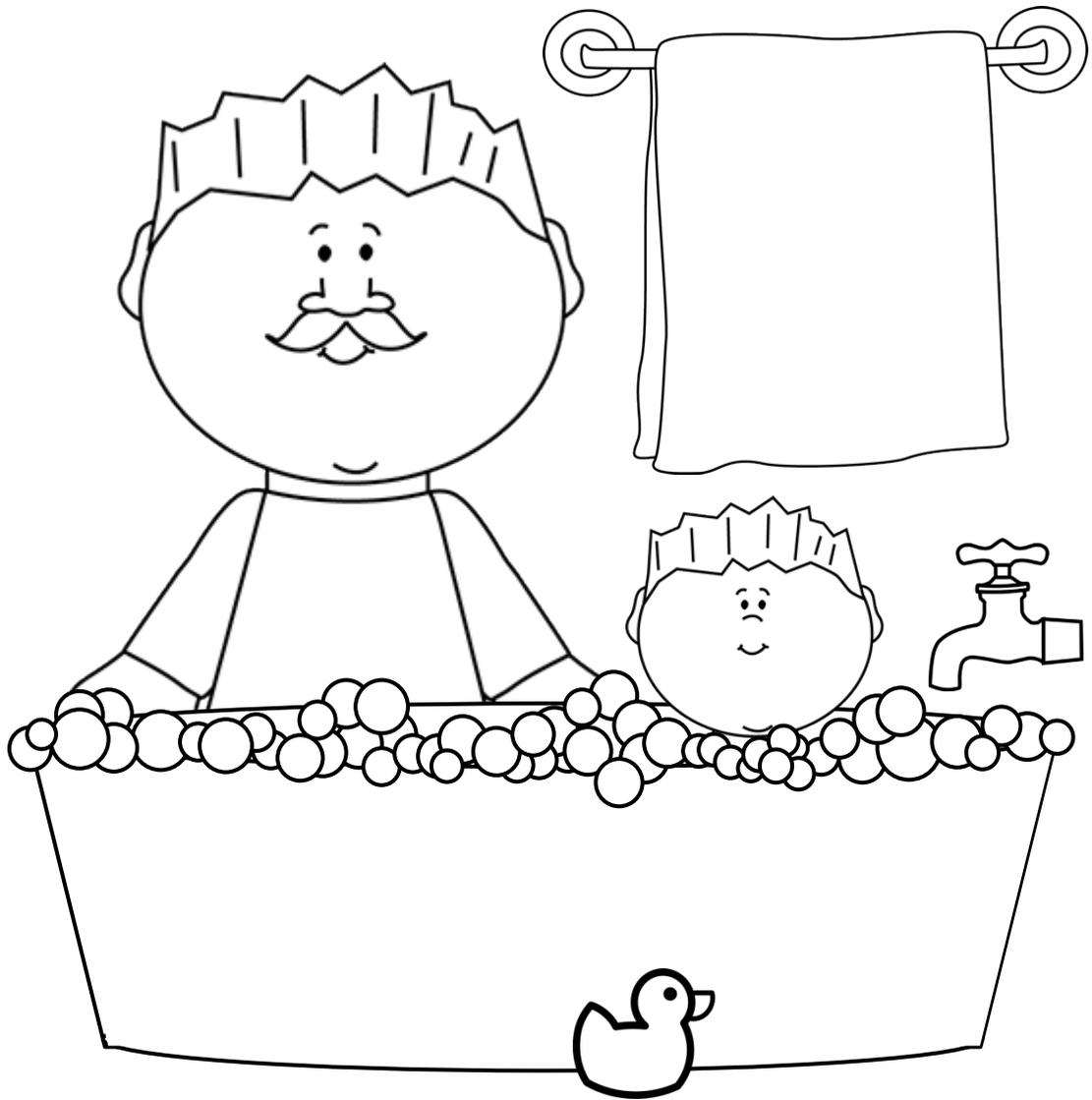
Your body has many parts. Each part is special.
Some parts are private.



Do you know the names of the private parts?

There is a **RULE** about private parts!

No one else should touch private parts,
except to keep us clean or healthy.

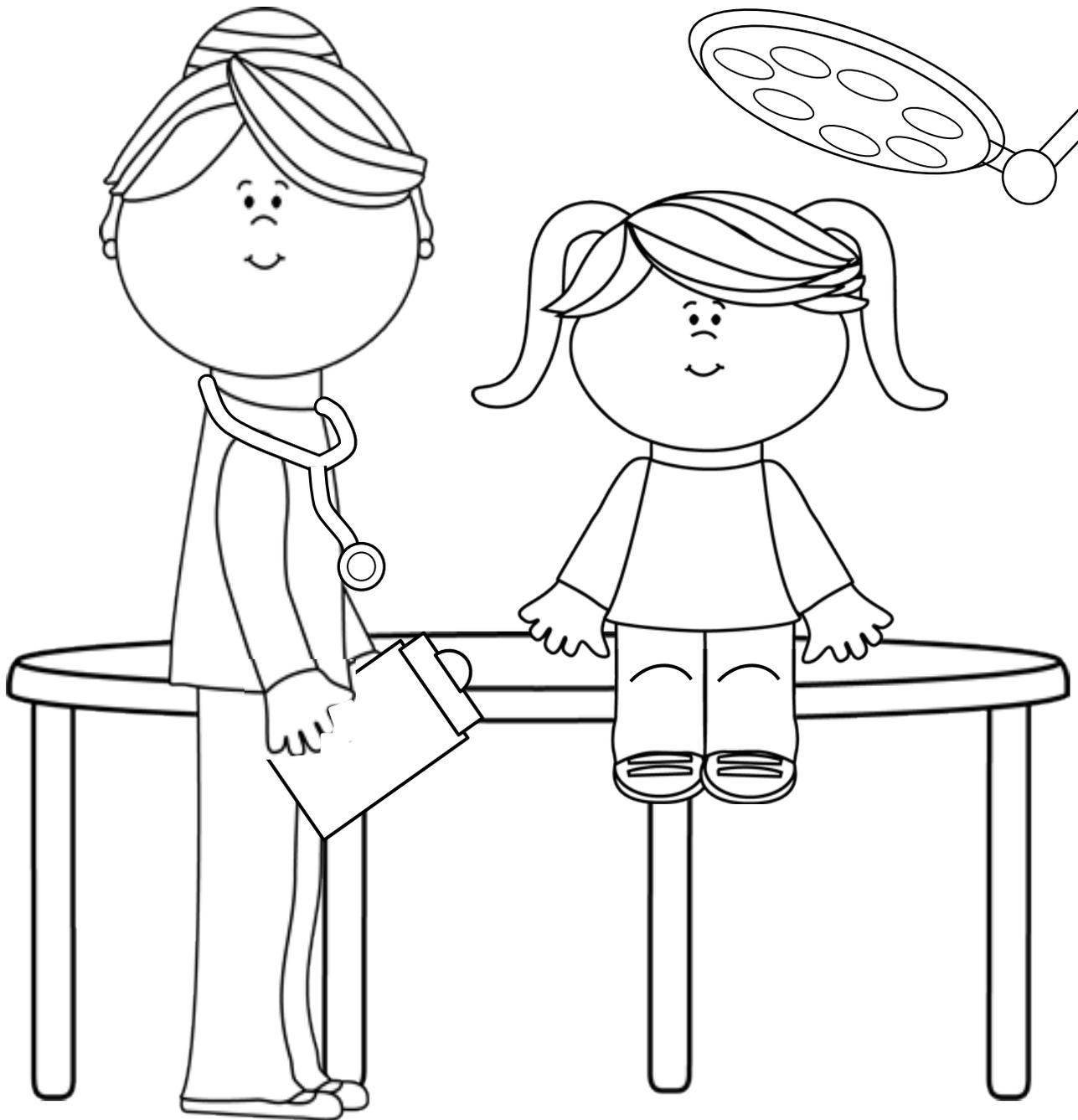


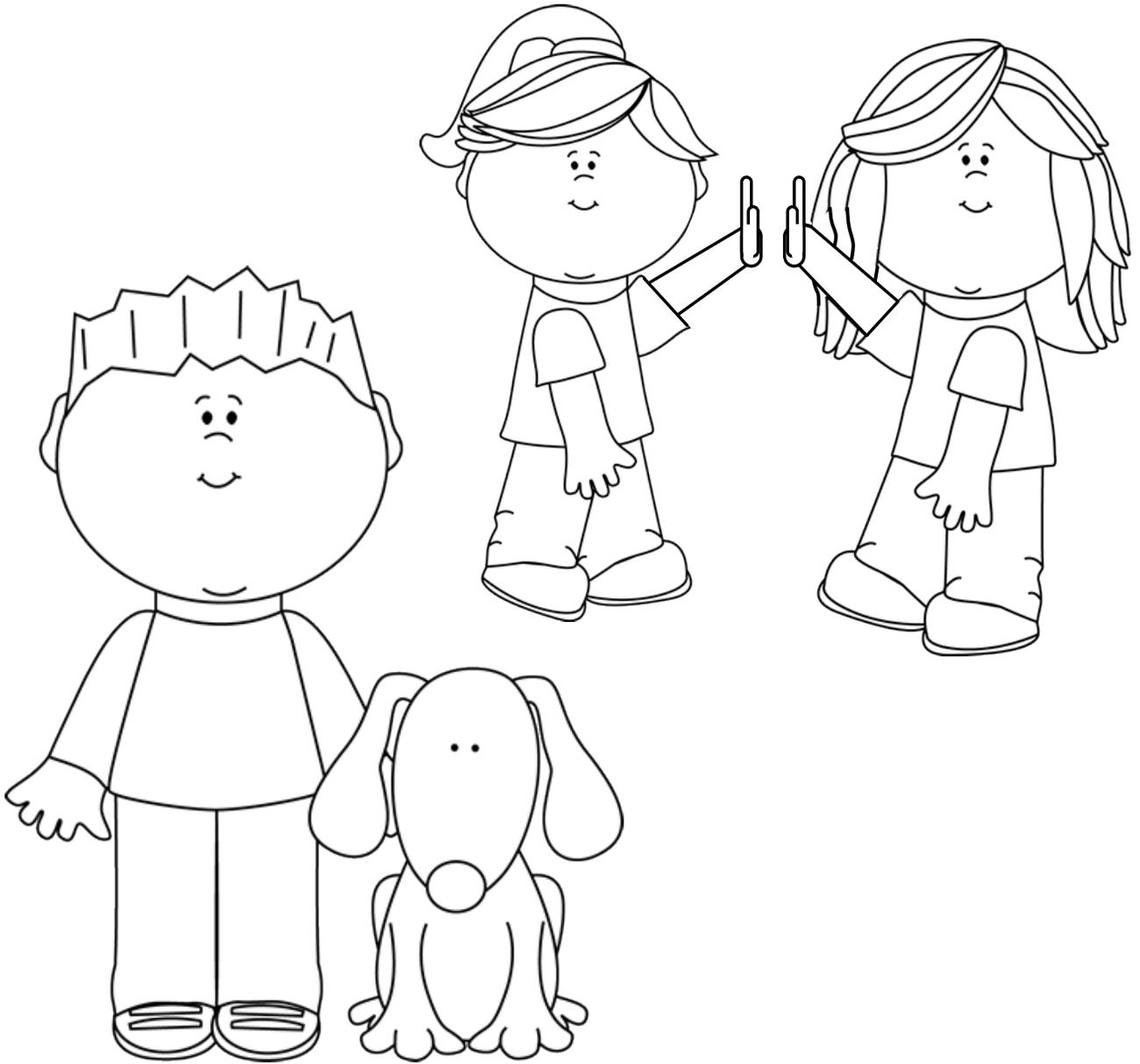
When we're little, we might need help to keep us clean. We might need help with a bath or shower. We might need help after we use the bathroom. That's okay.

But it is NEVER a secret!
It is okay to tell someone.

Sometimes a doctor or nurse might touch our private parts if they hurt or when we get a check up. That's okay too.

But it is NEVER a secret!





Some touches are safe, like when we pet a nice dog, or when friends give each other a high five.

But some touches are unsafe, or bad for your health, like when someone hits someone else.

Unsafe touches might make you feel sad, or mad, or scared, or confused.

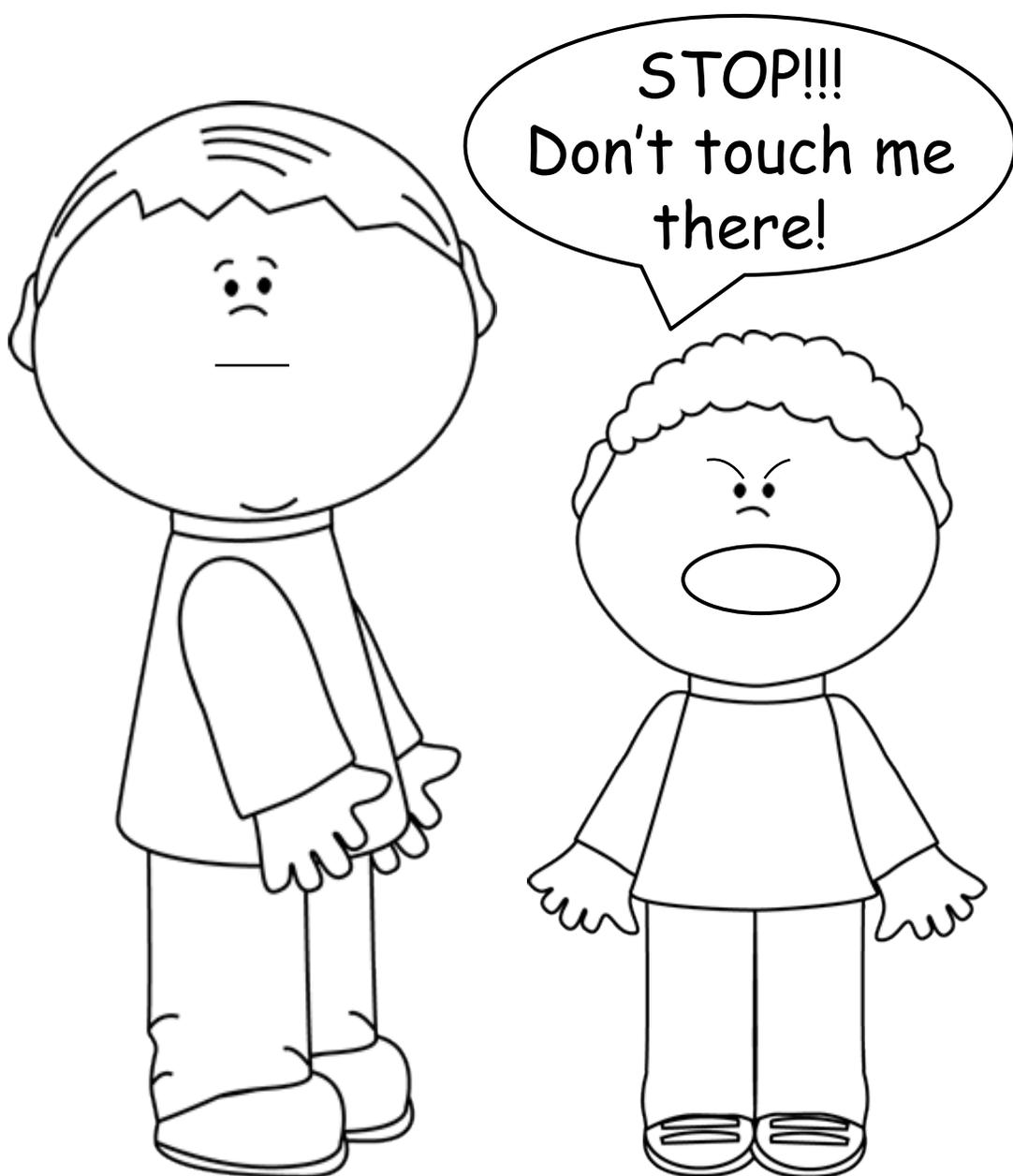
If someone touches your private parts, or touches you in some other way that you do not like, you should tell them to STOP!!!

Even if they are bigger than you.

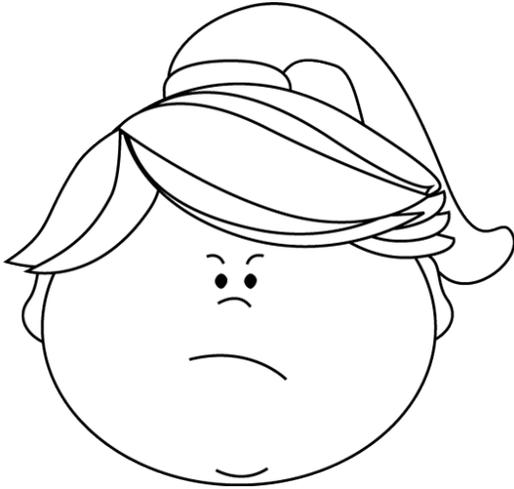
Even if you know them.

Even if they are grown up.

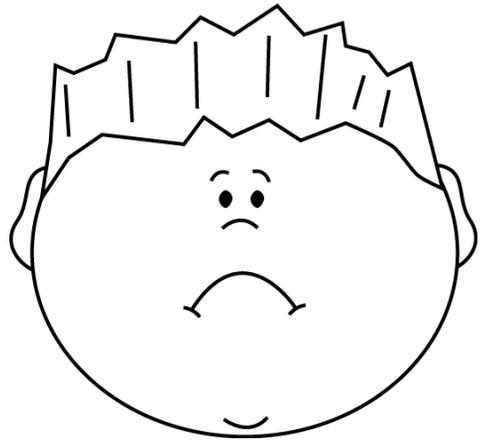
Even if they look and act friendly or nice.



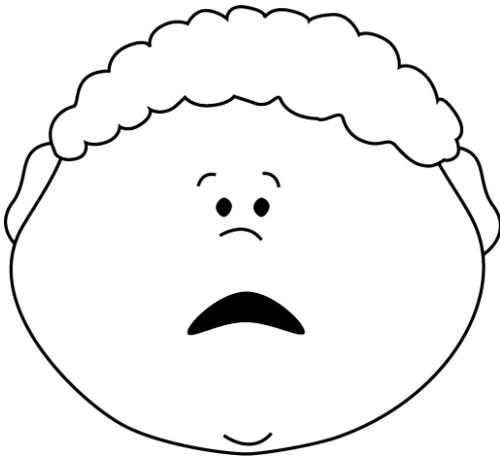
If someone touches your private parts, or hurts you, or touches you in some other way that you do not like, it might make you feel bad ...



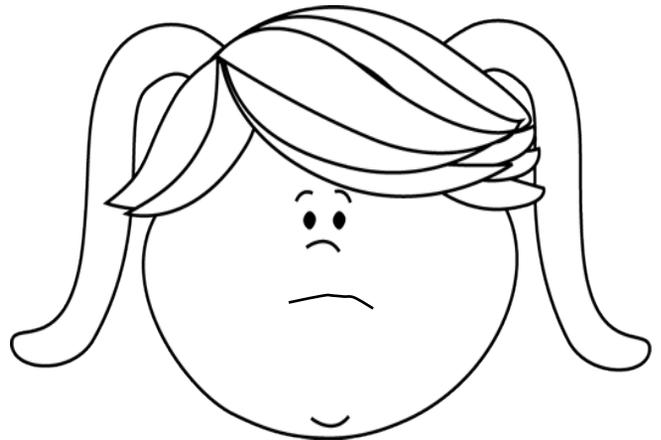
Or Mad



Or Sad



Or Scared



Or Confused

Have you ever felt mad, or sad, or scared, or confused?

Feeling bad is not fun, is it?

But if it happens, you can feel better!

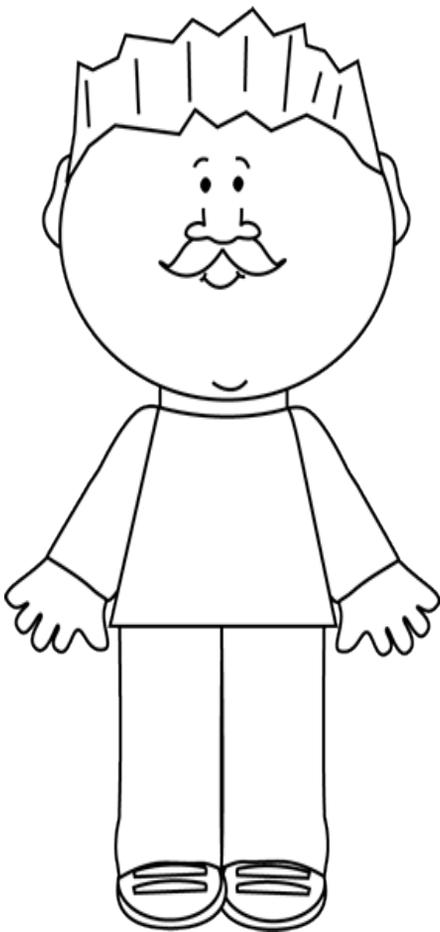
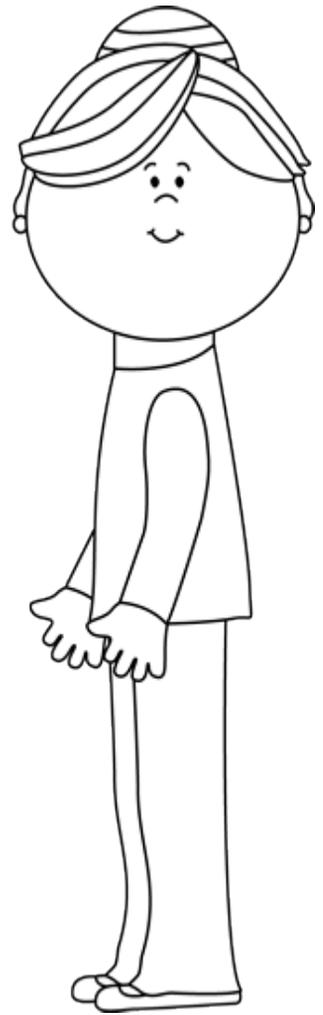
Be SAFETY SMART!



**TELL A GROWN-UP WHO YOU TRUST!
DON'T KEEP IT SECRET!**

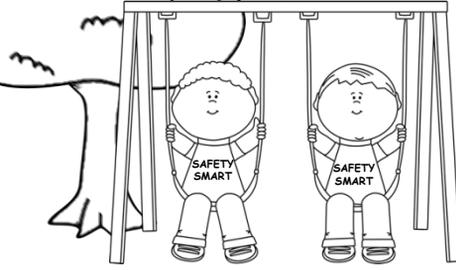
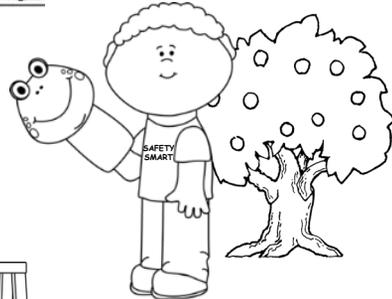
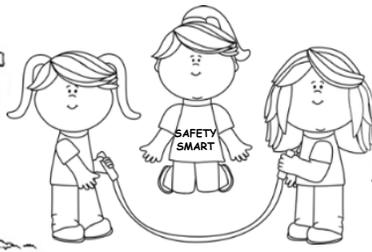
SAFETY SMART kids know that if someone tries to touch their private parts, they can tell their parents or another trusted grown-up.

A trusted grown-up is anyone who will help you be safe.

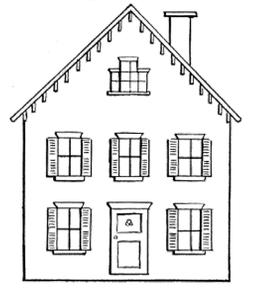
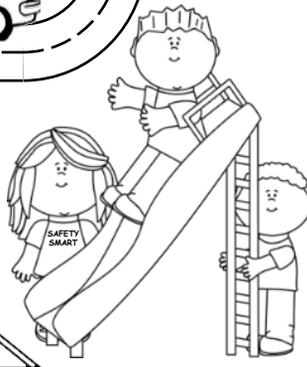
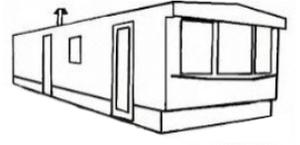


It could be your mom, dad, aunt, uncle, grandparent, teacher, neighbor, a parent of one of your friends, or someone else.

Look at the picture on the next page. In the middle, draw a picture of where you live. Can you think of some places near your home where you might find a trusted grown-up?



Here is a picture of where I live.



HOORAY FOR YOU!

You have gone through
the whole book!

We hope you asked lots
of questions!

You are now
SAFETY SMART!

MY PARENTS
KEEP ME
SAFE!

~~ABUSE~~

~~SECRETS~~

TELL
SOMEONE
RIGHT
AWAY!

I AM
LOVED!

I KNOW
ABOUT
MY BODY!

NO
SECRETS!

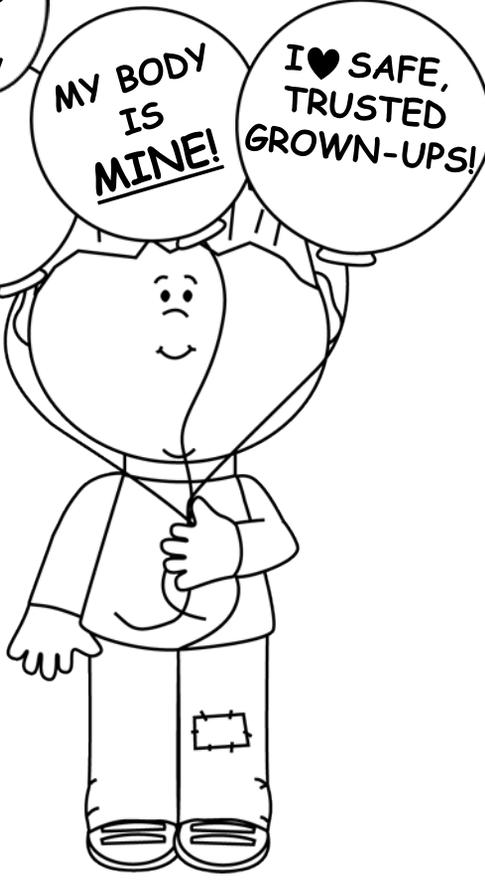
I KNOW
WHO I CAN
COUNT ON!

IT'S OK
TO SAY
"NO!"

PRIVATE
PARTS
ARE
PRIVATE!

MY BODY
IS
MINE!

I ♥ SAFE,
TRUSTED
GROWN-UPS!



SAFETY SMART AWARD

Proudly Presented to _____

Because: _____

✓ I know which parts of my body are private.

✓ I know that if anyone touches a part of my body that is private, I should say "NO!" and then GO AND TELL a grown-up who I trust.

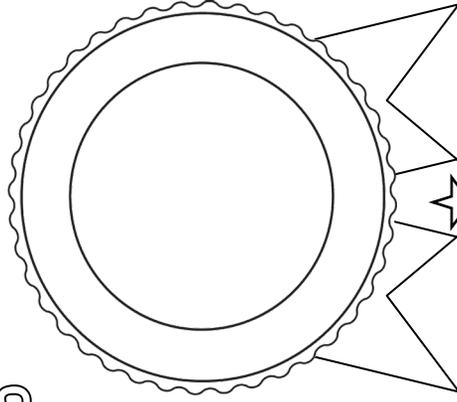
✓ I know that I should NEVER keep any secrets about touching.

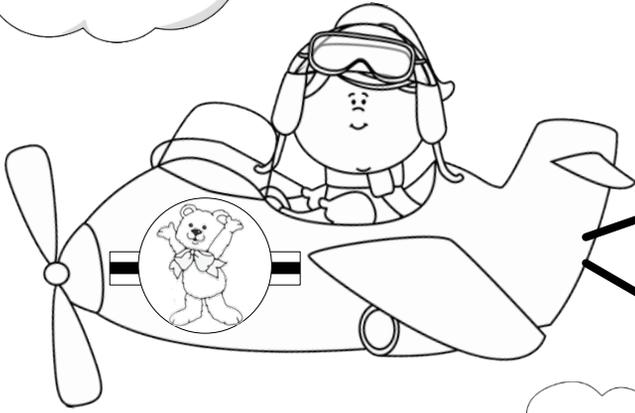
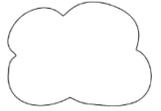
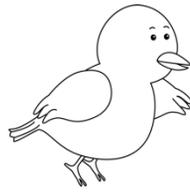
My Name _____

Parent or Other Trusted Person _____

Parent or Other Trusted Person _____

Parent or Other Trusted Person _____





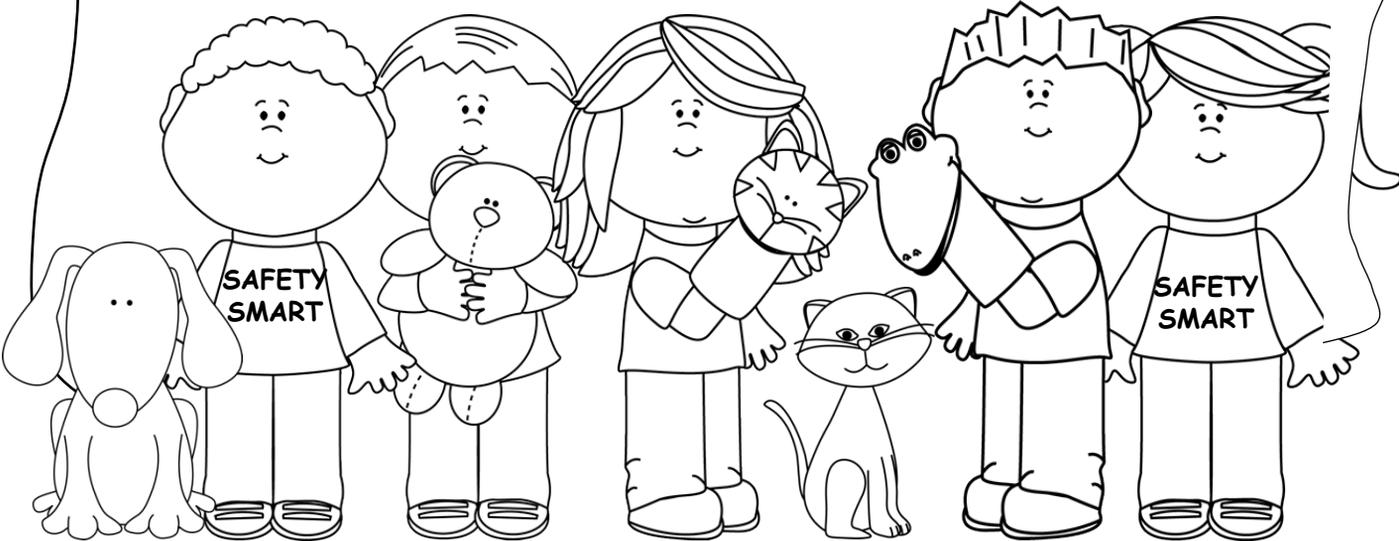
**REMEMBER TO BE
SAFETY SMART!**



After you have colored
your **SAFETY SMART**
Award, show it to your
mom or dad!

**REMINDE
ABOUT
SAFETY
SMART!**

**SAFETY
SMART
KIDS
ROCK!**



Another Word to Parents and Guardians

We hope that you and your child had a good talk as you read this book together.

Please cut out the Safety Smart Award after your child has colored it, and after it has been signed by you, your child, and any other trusted person who helps your child to feel safe. Show your child how proud you are of them!

Display the Safety Smart Award in the child's room, or in some other place where it will help you to remind your child about the important lessons in this book.

Talking about these lessons every now and then will help your child to remember them. It may also help you and your child to talk more comfortably about safety as they grow older.

We encourage you to learn more about how to keep your child – and all children – safe from being sexually abused. Please visit our website at www.ecu.edu/tedibear. You will find many videos, web links, downloads, and other resources. You can even download more copies of this book to read with other children.

If you ever suspect that any child is being abused in any way, remember that all adults in North Carolina are required by law to report suspected abuse to the Child Protective Services office at their county Department of Social Services. You can also call the police or sheriff. They will keep your identity confidential.

You might make a big difference in the life of an abused child. You might also help other children who are being hurt by the same abuser, or who would be hurt in the future if you didn't make that phone call.

Thank you for reading this book with your Safety Smart child, and for caring about keeping every child safe. There is more information for parents and guardians on the following pages.

More Things that Parents Should Know

How can I help schools, churches, clubs, and other organizations to be safer?

All adults who supervise children need to be aware of the danger of sexual abuse, and take steps to reduce the risk. It is important for all organizations to:

- Carefully screen staff and volunteers before they are allowed to work with children. This should include criminal background checks, sex offender registry checks, interviews, and references.
- Hold all activities in groups if possible, ideally with more than one adult present.
- Make sure that all activities – whether in groups or in one-on-one situations – can be easily seen and interrupted by others.
- Have training and policies to make sure that staff and volunteers know how to spot possible child abuse, and what to do if they suspect it.

Did you know? Child sexual abuse is often carefully planned. An abuser may spend weeks or months “grooming” a child for abuse through gift-giving and other special attention.

What should I do if a child tells me that he or she is being abused?

It takes a lot of courage for a child to tell an adult about abuse, even if the adult is a parent or other trusted person. When it happens, the adult should:

- Listen calmly and patiently, without showing shock, panic, or anger. Show only concern for the child.
- Encourage the child to talk by using expressions like “tell me more” and “what happened then?”
- Don’t ask detailed or leading questions. Be careful not to “contaminate” the child’s memory of events.
- Assure the child that you believe them, and that they are not to blame for the abuse, and that you will help.
- After the conversation is over, write down everything the child said, then call the county Department of Social Services, the police, or the sheriff.

MYTH: Child sexual abuse is so terrible that an abused child will probably ask an adult for help.

FACT: Most abused children are too afraid to tell, or are ashamed or embarrassed. Children also worry about not being believed, and about what the disclosure of abuse may do to their families. Also, children are often carefully manipulated by their abusers to keep the abuse secret.

What are some signs of possible child sexual abuse?

Few sexually abused children have obvious physical signs, but most have behavioral signs. Possible physical and behavioral signs include:

- Redness, rashes, pain, swelling, bruises, or other recurring problems on or near the genitals or anus.
- Frequent urinary tract infections.
- Unexplained fear or hesitancy about spending time with a particular person, or going to a particular place, especially if the child will be left there.
- Compulsive, repetitive, or unusual behaviors associated with the child’s genitals.
- Behavior that suggests the child has been exposed to pornography, or to adult sexual behavior or conversation.
- Withdrawal, depression, persistent anxiety or anger, low self-esteem, or sudden and unexplained changes in personality or behavior.

MYTH: A child’s parents, doctor, or teacher will probably notice physical signs of sexual abuse.

FACT: Most sexually abused children have no obvious physical signs. Most abused kids who get help tell a trusted adult. The adult should then contact the police, sheriff, or county Department of Social Services, who are trained in how best to investigate possible child abuse.

More Things that Parents Should Know

MYTH: Child sexual abusers are not normal, so they probably won't look or act normal.

FACT: Child sexual abusers look and act like ordinary people. They can be in any family, any neighborhood, and any type of job. Abusers often try hard to seem trustworthy and responsible. About 90% of abusers are not strangers to their victims. An estimated 30% - 40% of abusers are members of their victims' families.

Who should I call to report possible abuse?

It is best to call the county Department of Social Services ("DSS"), the police, or the sheriff. In North Carolina, every DSS office has a social worker available 24 hours each day.

- You can find the phone number for your county's DSS office at www.ncdhhs.gov/dss/local/, or by calling 919-527-6335.
- You might not be sure that abuse is happening, but you do not need proof of abuse to make a report in good faith.
- If abuse is occurring, your report will not only help the child you are concerned about, but others who may be hurt in the future.
- If the suspected abuser is an older or larger child or adolescent, they might be abuse victims themselves. An estimated 40% of sexually abused children are abused by older or larger children or youth.

MYTH: Over time, children often recover from sexual abuse on their own. Many don't even remember the abuse.

FACT: Child sexual abuse is serious and often traumatic. If abuse is not stopped, or if abuse victims don't get help, they often develop emotional, physical, and social problems that may last a lifetime. This is true even if the victims don't remember details of the abuse.

What happens when someone reports suspected child abuse?

An investigation is conducted by law enforcement, the county Department of Social Services, or maybe both. This includes:

- Interviews with the child, parents, the suspected abuser, and other children in the home.
- Checking records for previous offenses, and for other reports about the suspected abuser.
 - Making sure that the identity of the person who made the report stays confidential.
 - Making sure that the person who made the report will not be prosecuted. North Carolina law requires all adults to report any reasonable suspicion of child abuse.

Did you know? An estimated 25%-30% of abusers will hurt more than 10 children over time, and 5%-10% will hurt more than 40 children.

Where can I learn more?

One reason that child sexual abuse happens is that so many people do not want to talk about it or even think about it. Organizations that are trying to change this include:

- The TEDI BEAR Children's Advocacy Center: tedibear.ecu.edu.
- The Darkness to Light Foundation: www.d2l.org.
- Prevent Child Abuse – North Carolina: www.preventchildabusenc.org.
- The Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network ("RAINN"): www.rainn.org.
- Childhelp: www.childhelp.org.
- Stop It Now!: www.stopitnow.org.
- The National Sexual Violence Resource Center: www.nsvrc.org.

My name is _____,

and this is my Safety Smart book.

It was given to me by

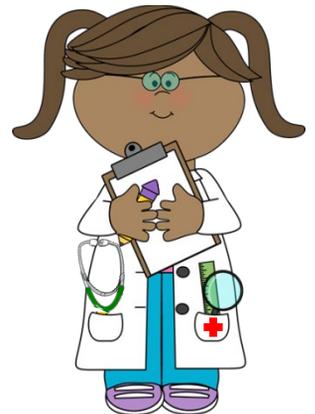
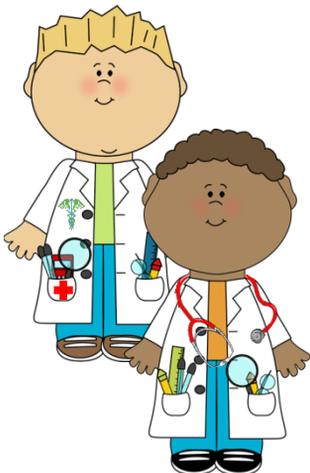
_____,
who I can always talk to, and who I can trust
to keep me safe.



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