

10 TIPS FOR TEACHING KIDS ABOUT GOOD TOUCH BAD TOUCH

By [Krissy of B-Inspired Mama](#)

I know, I know, I know. This is a really tough subject to talk about.

*But we have to. But we have to get past that discomfort and put aside our differences as mamas, parents, teachers, and community members and **talk more about this terrible topic.***

LET'S TALK KIDS & GOOD TOUCH BAD TOUCH.

Some of us have personal experience – *very personal experience* – with childhood sexual abuse. Which makes it harder to talk about but makes it even more important to be open to sharing and learning from one another, too.

This post – as with [all parenting posts in my “From the Mouths of Moms” series](#) – *brings moms together to learn from one another.* Below you will find *exact quotes* from a diverse group of blogging mamas (*with tons of parenting experience and kids of all ages*). *All of them are fellow moms – just like you – who have to teach their kids about this difficult subject of appropriate and inappropriate touching, too.* And some of them might just have more experience with this *than anyone ever should.*

So be open and kind and loving while you read and learn from them. Let's hear what they have to say...

ALRIGHT, MAMAS, HOW DO YOU TEACH YOUR KIDS ABOUT GOOD TOUCH BAD TOUCH?

1. Give Them Ownership of Their Body

“I began telling my children at about 18 months that they own their bodies (‘Your body is all yours.’) and that no one has a right to touch them unless it’s okay with them. At [ages] 2 and 3.25 now, they know that their bodies belong to them and that they can reserve certain parts as ‘private.’ Even if it’s something like holding hands with someone or having a friend hug or kiss them, they know they have the right to say no if they don’t like it.” *Chrissy from [The Outlaw Mom](#)*

2. Use Appropriate Language

“As soon as my kids seemed at all curious about their body parts during bath time, I taught them the correct names for [their anatomy](#) . I think it really helps them to have that knowledge in case they ever need to talk to me about anything.” *Krissy from [B-Inspired Mama](#)*

3. Keep Conversation Light and Easy

“One thing I find that helps is keeping these kinds of conversations serious but still unemotional (almost lighthearted) so that kids feel very comfortable talking about it and asking questions. And I try to let these conversations happen naturally and work them into our everyday life. Like talking about it during [potty or bath time](#).” *Krissy from [B-Inspired Mama](#)*

4. Use the Swim Suit Rule

“In the guidance lessons in [Kindergarten classes](#) children were told that if your swimsuit covers it, it’s a private area and no one should be seeing or touching

that area. Tell a grown-up if someone is touching you in the wrong places because it's a Mommy and Daddy's job to keep you safe. It's a simplified version but easy for younger children to understand." *Kim from [The Educators' Spin On It](#)*

Edited to add: Reader and child welfare worker, Liz, mentioned in the comments below to think beyond the swimsuit rule. "Most predators who have an on-going relationship with the child (teacher, coach, relative, clergy...) will not begin by touching the child in the sensitive areas, but will begin by rubbing their back or stroking the hair—and children, because they are literal creatures, will think 'well, I don't like it, but it must be okay because it's not covered by my swimming suit.' And then by the time the predator moves to the sexual areas, it may be too late as the grooming process is fully underway. So, we recommend the line be ANY touch/space intrusion that makes the child uncomfortable" (see tip #9). And another reader pointed out that we cannot forget that the mouth should be considered a private area, too. I'm so glad that we have this series to learn from one another as moms.

5. Explain What Safe Touch Is

"In our discussions, I have talked about how, on rare occasions, parents and doctors might have to do something they won't like to keep them safe and give them concrete examples – like getting a shot at the doctor's office, or being pulled out of the street. I did switch pediatricians at one point because I felt like the one we were seeing was not taking the time to talk with my child. The one we go to now is excellent at explaining why something has to happen, even though that sometimes makes the visit take much longer."
MaryAnne from [Mama Smiles](#)

6. Empower Them to Say NO

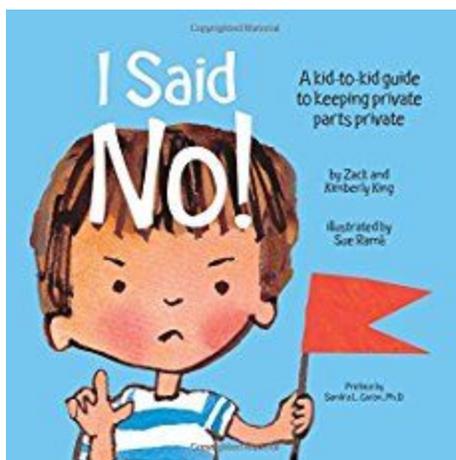
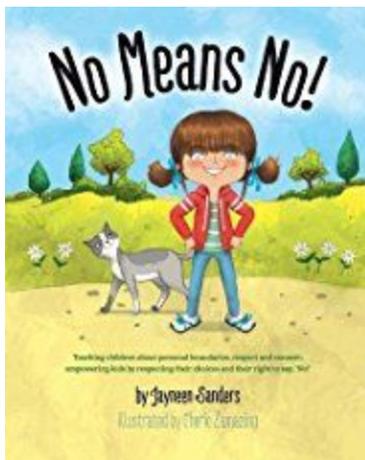
"I also always stressed that if someone touched them in a way they didn't like to tell that person to stop ... and to ALWAYS tell me about it. Keeping the

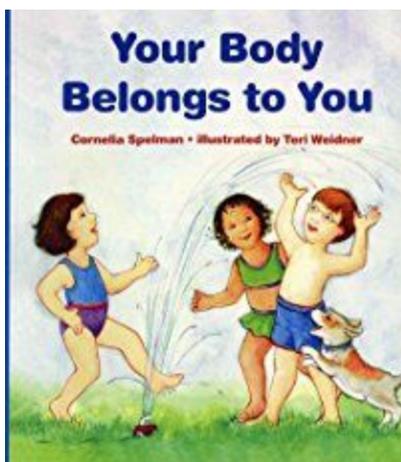
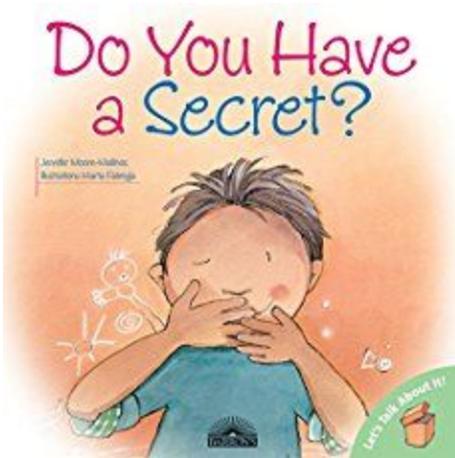
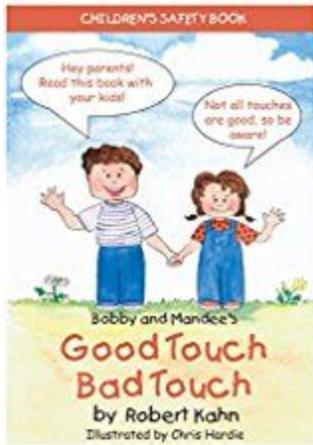
lines of communication open, even with AND especially with, our private areas is of UTMOST importance!" *Laura from [playdramom](#)*

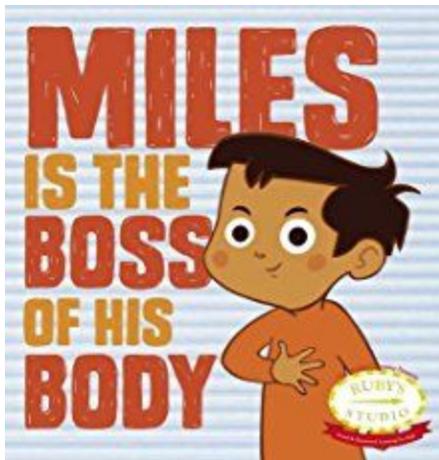
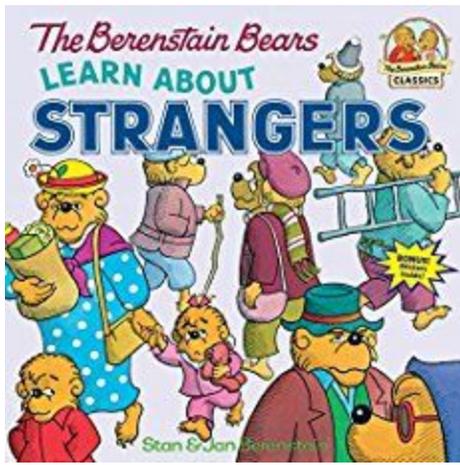
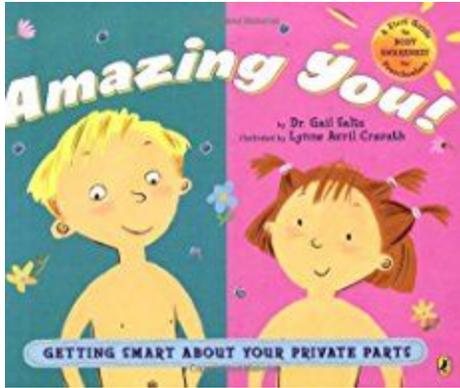
7. Use Books About Good Touch Bad Touch

"I found a great time to talk with my kids about it the other day when we were [reading a book about the human body](#) that showed the skeleton, organs, and body parts." *Krissy from [B-Inspired Mama](#)*

My Suggestions on Amazon:







8. Don't Force Affection

"I don't force my daughter to hug someone if she doesn't want to. I know that a hug from a loving adult isn't a bad touch, but I feel like this empowers my daughter to feel like she has control over her physical body." *Rebekah from [The Golden Glean](#)*

9. Help Your Child Trust Her Feelings

"A therapist told me that kids should be taught that a touch (from anyone) that makes them feel bad or uncomfortable is a bad touch. Kids should be taught to trust their own feelings." *Krissy from B-Inspired Mama*

10. Practice or Role Play

"My kids and I practice what they should say ('No, I don't like that. STOP!') and do (tell me or a trusted adult) if they are ever asked to show or are touched in their private areas." *Krissy from B-Inspired Mama*

When I asked this question of my many blogging mama friends, *you could almost hear crickets chirping*. Maybe a testament to how uncomfortable and difficult – yet important – a subject it is? So I had to include a few extra of my own ideas. I sincerely hope these thoughts – along with the wonderful ones shared by my fellow moms – help to make this a more comfortable conversation for you and your kids which *ultimately leads to fewer children being sexually abused*.

EDITORS NOTE: THIS POST WAS ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN APRIL OF 2013 AND HAS BEEN UPDATED FOR ACCURACY AND COMPREHENSIVENESS.