5 DAYS OF ACTION

ONE

DAY

AT

A

TIME

Resource & Activity Guide

we can protect kids.

www.FiveDaysofAction.org

5 DAYS OF ACTION

one DAY AT A TIME

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PARTNERSHIP TO PROTECT CHILDREN

This guide and all materials for the Five Days of Action were created with support from the **YMCA Guardians for Child Protection, YMCA of the USA (YUSA), Darkness to Light, the Redwoods Group Foundation, and Praesidium**

5 DAYS OF ACTION

One DAY AT A TIME

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Five Days of Action 2020!

Five Days of Action is a week designed to raise awareness and inspire adults to take action to protect children from sexual abuse.

The West Suburban YMCA encourages adults and organizations in the community to play a vital role in making Newton and the surrounding towns a safer place for children, especially during this ever-changing environment. As our communities continue to press pause and participate in social distancing, we know that protecting kids looks different this year. Not only is our community dealing with a pandemic that is separating kids in need from the safe adults in their lives, but there are spikes in domestic violence, cries for social justice for Black lives, and more concerns about the mental health of youth and adults.

NOTE

The **YMCA Guardians for Child Protection** is a group of YMCA CEOs committed to activating the power of the Y Movement – and other youth serving organizations – to engage communities, improve internal operations, and advance policy and environmental change to protect children from sexual abuse.

Five Days of Action will help communities and parents/caregivers take it *One Day at a Time* and will offer tips, tools, activities, and resources that are relevant to the current environment.

Uncomfortable Fact

Children are much more likely to be abducted or abused by **someone they know.**

Being a Trusted Adult

This reality can make it hard for children to understand what types of adult behaviors are inappropriate or dangerous. This is compounded when the abuser claims to love the child or is an authority the child has been told to respect.

BUT YOU CAN HELP! As a trusted adult, there are things you can do to demonstrate to children that you are a safe adult.

Respect children's bodies and boundaries

Trusted adults empower children to assert their boundaries and have control of their own bodies from a young age. This means talking about consent early. Children should understand that they can assert their own boundaries and that in turn they need to respect the boundaries of others. For example:

PRACTICE Boundaries

- *"Can I give you a hug?" "I don't really feel like a hug. How about a high five?"*
- *"Little brother, it doesn't look like your sister wants tickles right now- look at how she's frowning and looking down. Let's respect her space."*
- *"I noticed that you seemed uncomfortable when your coach gave you a hug today. Do you want to talk about it? It's OK to tell him you would prefer a high five."*

Listen and respond to children's concerns

When children approach you with safety concerns, it is important to take them seriously, even if they are seemingly small issues. By listening closely and treating the issue thoughtfully you help build confidence in children that they can trust you to help them when in trouble. This also helps empower them to be diligent about their own safety. Role playing can be helpful for children to help them practice being assertive about their boundaries.

PRACTICE Listening and Responding

"Mr. Jones, a girl on the playground grabbed my shirt and stretched it out."

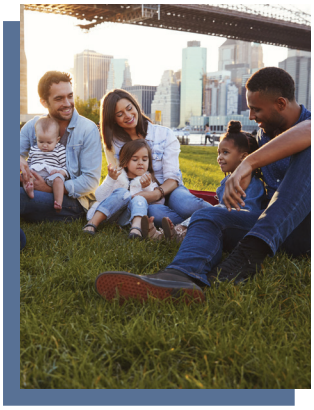
"I'm sorry that happened. Are you OK? Try talking to the girl; let her know what she did and how it affected you. If it happens again, let me know and we will work it out together."

Be an informed resource

It's normal for children to use the internet to look for information about sex, development, and relationships. However, they may not be finding the best or most appropriate information this way. Talking to children openly about healthy relationships and having age appropriate conversations about sexual development will help reduce the risk that they are exposed to unhealthy or unrealistic information online.

PRACTICE Discussing Hard Topics

Abusers are emboldened by the taboo around talking to children about sex and sexual development. Get comfortable with the topics or terms that have made you uncomfortable in the past. Consider saying these words into a mirror, or rehearsing on your own something you want to later address with a child.



Model and explain to other adults

It can be hard to address the subject of child sexual abuse with family and friends, but avoiding these conversations is part of what allows it to continue. When practicing boundaries or listening and responding, be frank with the adults around you about why you are practicing these behaviors with the children in your life.

PRACTICE Modeling and Explaining

"My partner and I are trying to help the kids set their own physical boundaries; we're testing out handshakes versus hugs today. It's hard sometimes, but it's important to help keep them safe from abuse. Kids who have a good understanding of boundaries early on are better prepared to spot and report sexual abuse if it ever happened. We appreciate your support in this effort by not forcing the children to give a hug if they do not want to."

IT'S NOT EASY, BUT IT'S WORTH THE PRACTICE.

It is our shared responsibility to protect children.

For more resources, visit MissingKids.org/NetSmartz

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NetSmartz®

A program of the NATIONAL CENTER FOR MISSING & EXPLOITED CHILDREN®

NetSmartzKids

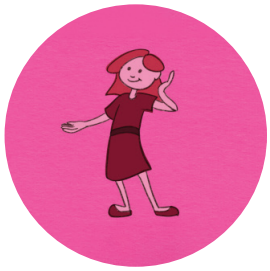
Who is a "Trusted Adult"?

Trusted adults are people whose words and actions make you feel safe. Trusted adults act this way both online and offline.

Actions

Trusted adults...

Listen to you when you have a problem or question



Help you and make you feel safe

Respect your body and your personal space

Words

Trusted adults say things like...

I'll answer your questions.

You can tell me if you have a problem.

I care about what you think.

A trusted adult can be any grownup whose actions and words make you feel safe; a teacher, a mentor, a parent, a coach—anyone who loves you and respects you. It is always OK to ask for help from a trusted adult and to **keep asking** the same person or another trusted adult if they don't understand or if you don't **get the help that you need.**

Watch videos, play games and learn at NetSmartzKids.org

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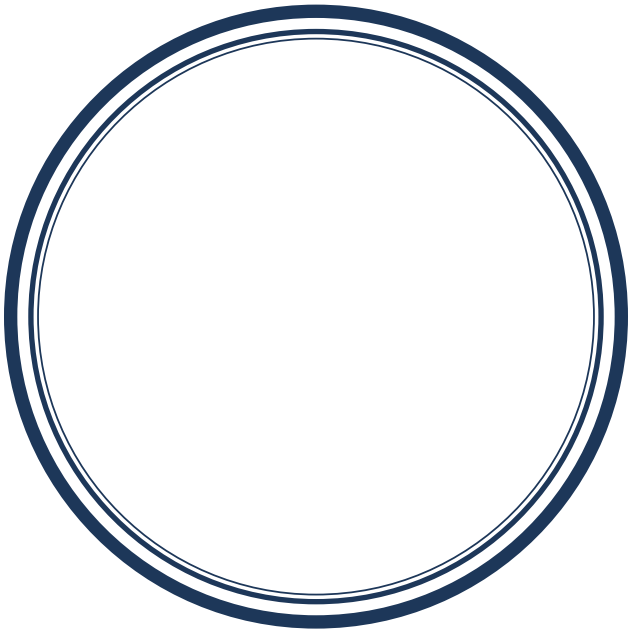
A program of the

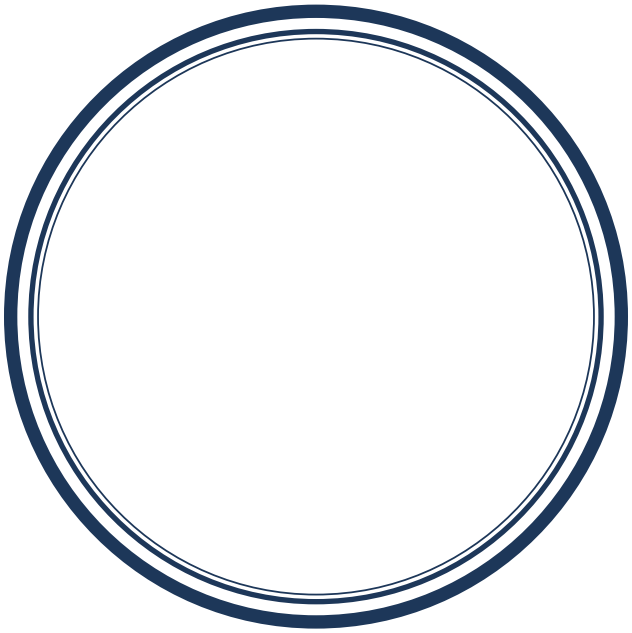
Name: _____

NetSmartzKids

Some of My Trusted Adults

Draw a picture of your trusted adult in the circles.
Below the picture, add their name and why you trust this person.





Name: _____

I trust this person because

_____

_____

_____

_____

Name: _____

I trust this person because

_____

_____

_____

_____

Watch videos, play games and learn at NetSmartzKids.org

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KEEP YOUR KIDS SAFE ON THE INTERNET

Technology and the internet connect people worlds apart, and for kids provides an opportunity to learn, explore, and socialize. But there are also dangers that come along with the internet.

With schools moving to digital learning, your kids may be spending more time online. Whether playing games, having classes or socializing with friends, they are in front of a screen more than normal. So, how do you ensure they are staying safe online? By talking to your kids, educating them, and putting safeguards in place, you can help them have safer digital experiences.

Just like you would if your children were going to a friend's house, it's important to set some ground rules, be proactive, and keep the lines of communication open with everyone involved.

Set Ground Rules

- You may already have rules around device and internet use. Discuss how these new scenarios will affect your current rules and establish clear guidelines on which sites, apps, and downloads they can access.
- If your child is doing virtual learning, be sure to connect with their teacher and school to get the specifications of what software and platforms they will be using and familiarize yourself with them.
- Keep your kids on a schedule with their virtual learning and online activities so you know when and what they are doing. Be sure to include time away from devices in the schedule.
- Discuss the importance of never giving out identifying information such as name, address, neighborhood, and phone number online.
- Know that you may need to adjust device and online time limits to reflect your new environment.
- Have rules about where devices live and can be used – public parts of the house where you can easily monitor their activity. At bedtime have rules around turning off devices and not having them in bedrooms.

Brainstorm some ground rules that make sense for your family or situation. Include the kids in the conversation.

www.D2L.org

Be Proactive

- If possible, connect with your children before, during, and after online use, just like you would if they were going to school or to a friend's house. Know who they will be with virtually, where they are going virtually, and what they will be doing.
- Talk to them about the apps and services they use, and how they use them to communicate. Pay attention to games and gaming systems, which often have online communication capabilities. Chatting can be an enjoyable activity that accompanies digital fun and learning, but it requires oversight and parental involvement.
- Online enticement happens across all platforms so ask questions, research, and be involved in your kid's online games and apps. Ask them to show you how they use them and do it together. For example, make an Instagram Story with your kids – this way you learn how it works and can see what they are doing on the app. You can also ask some questions based on this scenario – what would they do if they saw an inappropriate video? Do they know where the report button is?
- Now that kids are not getting physical time with their friends, they may be livestreaming or video chatting with friends and family. According to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, livestreaming platforms gives access to millions of people at the touch of a button, including individuals who may wish to harm children. These individuals are aware of the unique vulnerability of children online and often entice children to undress, expose themselves on camera, engage in sexual activity independently and with others (i.e. siblings, friends, pets) and engage in self-harming behaviors. Have rules around when and where they can livestream and video chat - for instance, in open, interruptible spaces like living rooms and in the kitchen.

What are some questions and subjects can you connect with your kids about online safety?

Content provided by Darkness to Light. To learn more or get trained to prevent, recognize, and react responsibly to child sexual abuse visit www.D2L.org.

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END CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

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THE _____ FAMILY

CODE OF CONDUCT

A Family Code of Conduct is a set of guidelines that reflect the values and expectations of your family.

Being clear about your family values around bodies and boundaries can go a long way toward protecting your kids from sexual abuse. It can help kids understand what acceptable and unacceptable behavior looks like, help them make informed decisions, and ultimately avoid dangerous situations. It also helps define your family culture - creating whatever kind of culture you want in your family by modeling your ideal values and behaviors such as kindness, honesty, and even safety.

Your family code should be a living, breathing document; you'll need to adjust some boundaries or add new guidelines as your family grows. Make this a team project - ask your kids what they think should be included. Don't be afraid to get specific, either.

STEP 1: Define your family values and the behaviors that can help you live into them.

VALUES	BEHAVIOR
i.e. Honesty	*i.e. telling the truth, not keeping secrets*

STEP 2: Determine your family boundaries and expectations for conduct.

How do you treat others?

i.e. How do you show respect? How do you share? How do you honor boundaries? What are the rules around keeping secrets?

STEP 2: Determine your family boundaries and expectations for conduct.

Play Dates & Hangouts:

i.e. Who will be at the house/mall/pool/etc. with the kids? Will there be older siblings? How will the kids be supervised? How well do you know the family? These questions can also be applied to online activities such as games and video chats – where are they going, who will be there, what will they be doing?

Photos

i.e. Is anyone allowed to take or post photos of your children? Where are they allowed to be posted?

Sleepovers

i.e. Will you allow your child to participate in sleepovers? What are the sleeping arrangements? These guidelines may overlap with play dates and hangouts guidelines.

Babysitters

i.e. Does your family use babysitters? How do you choose who babysits? What are the rules for babysitters? What are the rules for evening sitting vs. daytime sitting?

Internet & Social Media Safety

i.e. What are the rules for being on the internet? Are computers kept in open areas in your home? At what age will kids get a cell phone or social media accounts? How will you monitor use? Where will devices live at night? Discuss what information should never be given out online.

Lessons & Camps

i.e. What are the safety policies? What does supervision look like? These guidelines will overlap with your youth serving organization guidelines.

USE THIS SPACE TO DEFINE ANY OTHER RULES RELEVANT TO YOUR FAMILY

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KEEP KIDS SAFE & BUSY
SAMPLE ACTIVITIES

Your routine, annual plans like vacations, and maybe even your finances may have changed due to COVID-19.

We're all navigating this uncharted territory together, *one day at a time*. With all these considerations, what does it look like to also protect children from child sexual abuse? You may have to go to work without your normal childcare available, or maybe you're at home with your kids and need to pivot to find safe activities for them while you work.

When thinking through solutions, it's important to think about the three main principles of minimizing the opportunity for abuse – preventing isolation, keeping situations interruptible, and setting expectations. Try to think about these principles as you make plans for your children.

Here is a sample daily calendar of activities you can adapt to help keep your kids safe & busy:

8 AM: *Rise and Shine! Get ready for the day.*

9 AM: *Cook/Get breakfast - what are some age-appropriate ways for your kids to help you prepare the meal?*

10 AM: *Read a book & have them write daily summaries of what they take away from the book. Any talking points you can use from what they learn to relate to real life? Have them read in common areas that can be observed or in their room with the door open.*

11 AM: *Get some fresh air! Get chalk and draw on the sidewalks or play hopscotch. Play-yard games like kick-the-can or red rover. Help pick weeds – make it a game – who can get the most? Check out this Nature Bingo idea from Alliance for a Healthier Generation.*

1 PM: *Lunch*

2 PM: *Journal time - have your kid(s) write down how they are feeling, what they are excited about, what they are stressed about. For older kids who prefer apps, check out the Mood Meter App.*

3 PM: *Play online learning games if you have internet access. NetSmartz is a great resource to teach children about internet safety in a fun way. No internet? No problem, play the What-If Game, work on a puzzle, or do arts and crafts.*

4 PM: *Turn on some music for a dance party/contest.*

5 PM: *Connect with family members and see how everyone's day was. Does anyone seem off? Any highs or lows from the day to share? If you make this a habit, it will be easier for you to tell if something may be wrong.*

6 PM: *Dinner*

7 PM: *Build a fort in the living room and watch a movie before bed.*

All kids are different, some may be more into reading while others may prefer to be outside. Be flexible and take what works from the above and add in what works best for your family.

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USE THIS SPACE TO COME UP WITH OTHER SAFE ACTIVITY IDEAS WITH YOUR KIDS.

"I have found that using a schedule helps us brainstorm new ideas for activities that we might not have thought of before. My son is also old enough that he can come up with his own schedule, then we talk about what he has planned. This way he's practicing decision making and learning about time management."
- Gwen.B, Mom

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COMMUNITY RESOURCES
FOR RESPONDING TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

MASSACHUSETTS

CALL TO REPORT ABUSE

Contact the Massachusetts Dept. of Child Protection at **1-800-792-5200** or any Law Enforcement Agency at 911. You are not required to provide proof. Anyone who makes a good faith report based on reasonable grounds is immune from prosecution. If the abuse occurred within the past 72 hours, a medical evaluation by a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner is available by going to the Emergency Department at Your County Medical Center or by going to the nearest child advocacy center.

HELPLINES

Child-At-Risk Hotline (24 hour)	1-800-792-5200
CWC Rape Crisis Hotline (24 hour)	1-888-337-0800
United Way Crisis Helpline (24 hour)	888-421-1266 211(after hours)
Darkness to Light Helpline	1-866- FOR-LIGHT (1-866-367-5444)
Childhelp: USA National Child Abuse Hotline	1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Legal Help

MA State Bar	617-338-0500
Mass. Office for Victim Assistance	617-586-1340

Victim Advocacy

New Hope	1-800-323-4673
Independence House	508-771-6507

RESOURCES FOR HEALING

Treatment Providers

MA Department of Mental Health	617-624-6000
Health & Education Services, Inc	978-927-4506

Support groups for survivors and for parents and families of children who have been abused

Center for Women & Community (UMassAmherst)	413-545-0883
Health Imperatives	508-583-3005
Wayside Youth & Family Support Network	508-879-9800

WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION ON CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND/OR TRAUMA

www.darkness2light.org	1-843-965-5444
www.trauma-pages.com	
www.stopitnow.com	1-888-PREVENT (1-888-773-8368)

THERE ARE SEVERAL CHILD ADVOCACY CENTERS IN THE STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS.

Feel free to call the center with any questions about where to find resources related to child sexual abuse. Contact the nearest CAC to set up an interview if abuse is reported:

Massachusetts Children's Alliance
14 Beacon St, Suite 420
Boston, MA 02108
617-573-9800

CAC of Bristol County
58 Arch Street
Fall River, MA 02724
508-674-6111

DARKNESS TO LIGHT

MASSACHUSETTS

MASSACHUSETTS STATE REPORTING LAWS

https://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/statutes/manda.cfm

PROFESSIONALS REQUIRED TO REPORT

Gen. Laws Ch. 119, § 21

Mandatory reporters include:

- Physicians, medical interns, hospital personnel, medical examiners, psychologists, emergency medical technicians, dentists, nurses, chiropractors, podiatrists, optometrists, osteopaths, allied mental health and human services professionals, drug and alcoholism counselors, psychiatrists, or clinical social workers
- Public or private schoolteachers, educational administrators, guidance or family counselors, or child care workers
- Persons paid to care for or work with a child in any public or private facility, home, or program that provides child care or residential services to children; persons who provide the services of child care resource and referral agencies, voucher management agencies, family child care systems, or child care food programs
- Licensors of the Department of Early Education and Care or school attendance officers
- Probation officers, clerk-magistrates of a district court, parole officers, social workers, foster parents, firefighters, or police officers
- Priests, rabbis, clergy members, ordained or licensed ministers, leaders of any church or religious body, or accredited Christian Science practitioners; persons performing official duties on behalf of a church or religious body that are recognized as the duties of a priest, rabbi, clergy, ordained or licensed minister, leader of any church or religious body, accredited Christian Science practitioner ; persons employed by a church or religious body to supervise, educate, coach, train, or counsel a child on a regular basis
- Persons in charge of a medical or other public or private institution, school, or facility or that person's designated agent
- The child advocate

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY TO REPORT

Gen. Laws Ch. 119, § 51A(a), (h)

If a mandated reporter is a member of the staff of a medical or other public or private institution, school, or facility, the mandated reporter may instead notify the person or designated agent in charge of such institution, school, or facility, who shall become responsible for notifying the department in the manner required by this section. No employer shall discharge, discriminate, or retaliate against a mandated reporter who, in good faith, files a report, testifies, or is about to testify in any proceeding involving child abuse or neglect. Any employer who discharges, discriminates, or retaliates against that mandated reporter shall be liable to the mandated reporter for treble damages, costs, and attorney's fees.

(continued on following page)

HOW TO REPORT IN MASSACHUSETTS

For reports Monday-Friday, 8:45 AM to 5:00 PM: Department of Children and Families (Berkshire Office) **413-236-1800.** For reports after 5:00 PM and weekends: Child-at-Risk Hotline **800-792-5200**

For mandated reporter training:
http://middlesexcac.org/51A-reporter-training/

STANDARDS FOR MAKING A REPORT

Gen. Laws Ch. 119, § 51A

A mandated reporter must report when, in his or her professional capacity, he or she has reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering physical or emotional injury resulting from:

- Abuse inflicted upon the child that causes harm or substantial risk of harm to the child's health or welfare, including sexual abuse
- Neglect, including malnutrition
- Physical dependence upon an addictive drug at birth
- Being a sexually exploited child
- Being a human trafficking victim as defined by chapter 233, § 20M

PRIVILEGED COMMUNICATIONS

Gen. Laws Ch. 119, § 51A

Any privilege relating to confidential communications, established by §§ 135 to 135B, inclusive, of chapter 112 [pertaining to social worker-client privilege] or by §§ 20A [clergy-penitent privilege] and 20B [psychotherapist-patient privilege] of chapter 233, shall not prohibit the filing of a report under this section or a care and protection petition under § 24, except that a priest, rabbi, clergy, member, ordained or licensed minister, leader of a church or religious body, or accredited Christian Science practitioner need not report information solely gained in a confession or similarly confidential communication in other religious faiths. Nothing in the general laws shall modify or limit the duty of a priest, rabbi, clergy member, ordained or licensed minister, leader of a church or religious body, or accredited Christian Science practitioner to report suspected child abuse or neglect under this section when the priest, rabbi, clergy member, ordained or licensed minister, leader of a church or religious body, or accredited Christian Science practitioner is acting in some other capacity that would otherwise make him or her a mandated reporter.

INCLUSION OF REPORTER'S NAME IN REPORT

Gen. Laws Ch. 119, § 51A

A report shall include the name of the person making the report.