

Rock Against Child Pornography and Abuse

Is a registered charity working to give a voice to the silent victims of childhood abuse. The children of yesterday, today and tomorrow.

RACPA UK can be found at

www.racpauk.org

and on Facebook and Twitter.

We can also be contacted confidentially at:

racpauk@gmail.com

Further important information can be found at

www.virtualglobaltaskforce.com

www.ceop.gov.uk

www.iwf.org.uk

All these agencies work on a national and international basis to protect children from online exploitation of any kind and have simple reporting procedures for child pornography websites, inappropriate content or contact concerning children or young people and for advice and information in all aspects of internet safety.

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What you need to know about Keeping your child safe in the real world

Advice and information for parents and carers



One of the first and most important things you can teach your child is that they can talk to you about anything, they can ask questions that will be answered, age appropriately of course, and that there is a BIG difference between the secrets that make you happy, like birthday presents or surprises, and the secrets that make you unhappy, confused or upset. One of the abusers' greatest weapons is the secret. So, giving your child the tools they need to know the difference is taking that weapon out of the hands of the abuser.

Your child should also understand what private and privacy means. That everyone is allowed to keep their private things to themselves and have privacy within the home or any other environment. They should also be taught to respect the privacy of others. This way healthy relationships can be formed that have respect at their core.

Of course, this is something that is an ongoing process, children develop different social skills at different ages, and no-one knows your child the way you yourself do. So, you will know when the time is right to approach these issues and how best to get your child to understand them.

And of course...the BIG question of sex education comes to the fore. Do we leave it to the schools to teach our children about sex and relationships? Do we KNOW what the schools are teaching them? Or should we, as parents, take responsibility for it in the way that is most comfortable for us and our children?

There is no 'ABC' or lists of 'This is how you do it' but here are a few suggestions:

Do try to:

- Always respond if a question is asked. If not, your child may feel that it is somehow wrong to talk about sex and relationships and clam up when you are ready to talk about it.
- Listen to what you are being asked! Often the question is a lot simpler than it first sounds, so don't make it more complicated than it needs to be.
- Be comfortable talking about the subject, make jokes, laugh about it, be easy about it. This will take the stress and embarrassment away for both of you.
- Talk while you are doing other things, driving, walking, washing up. Make it a natural conversation, not one that must be held, especially only under certain circumstances.

- If questions turn up at inappropriate times, and we all know they can, have a phrase handy such as *Good question, we will talk about it when we get home* Then of course make sure that you do!
- If you don't know the answers to something, then admit it! This gives a great opportunity for you and your child to look for the answer together, online, leaflets, books. This can then open up a whole new resource for both of you.

Try not to:

- Tell them they are too young to know something, and you will tell them when they are older. Find a way to answer questions at the level they are being asked.
- Lecture! Talking too much or giving too much information will put a child off asking again. Make it a conversation.
- Be afraid to tell your child what you think, and why you think it. Ask their opinion about the issue raised, show them you are interested in what they think and make it easier for them to talk to you.
- Let any anxieties show when you are asked something and bombard them with questions about why they want to know about that particular thing! If you are concerned wait until you have a very clear idea about the origins of the question before getting worried.

If your child is secure and comfortable, knows questions will be answered without judgement, that they can come to you without embarrassment or fear, then they grow up with the confidence to speak out, to question others behaviour and to say no if, or when, the need arises.