

VITAL INFORMATION FOR FACILITATORS

Reasons for the Training: Teaching children and youth about personal boundaries is the first step to personal safety. Children learn boundaries from the adults in their lives who model that behavior. Teaching personal safety requires adults, parents, and other caring adults to teach children appropriate personal and relationship boundaries, how to avoid problematic situations and how to protect themselves from violators whenever possible. The aim of the two group sessions for Afghan children and youth is to provide them with a foundation for personal safety. Please keep in mind that the two group sessions are just the beginning of what we all need to do to keep children safe.

Intended Audience: Both the training sessions, *Understanding Physical Boundaries and Touch* and *Learning Touching Safety Rules*, are for Afghan children and youth ages 5 to 18 years of age. The first group training session, *Physical Boundaries and Touch*, was originally created for unaccompanied Afghan minors and has been adapted for all Afghan children and youth ages 5 to 18.

Pre-training Procedures: Prior to conducting these group sessions, organizational safety protocols should be established, reviewed, and followed in cases of suspected child abuse, neglect, or exploitation. Please see national and local resources below that provide assistance and information about reporting suspected maltreatment.

Mandatory Reporting for Facilitators: Facilitators do not need to be mandated reporters to conduct these group sessions. Mandated reporters are individuals who have a legal responsibility to report suspected abuse, neglect, and exploitation of children. All U.S. states and territories have laws identifying who are required to report suspected child abuse, neglect, or exploitation, and some states require that any person report suspected child abuse or neglect. Whether required by law or not, if you suspect that a child (under the age of 18) is being abused, neglected, or exploited, you should immediately report your concerns to your supervisor and/or your local department of social services and/or your state hotline.

Licensing and Training Requirements and Recommendations for Facilitators: Facilitators do not need to be licensed or trained mental health professionals or childcare professionals. However, it is recommended that any non-clinical professionals who conduct these group sessions review the content thoroughly prior to conducting the sessions. It is highly recommended that all facilitators, including those with a refugee/migrant background, assess their own biases surrounding the group topics and level of comfort in delivering the information.

Supervision of Facilitators: Lastly, it is recommended that non-clinical professional facilitators receive supervision by a qualified mental/behavioral health or childcare professional, as well as receive training on the contents of the group sessions.

National & Local Resources for Suspected Child Maltreatment

Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline **1-800-4ACHILD (1-800-422-4453)** Professional crisis counselors available 24/7 in over 170 languages to offer crisis intervention, information, and referrals to emergency, social services, and support resources.

State Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Numbers Includes state toll-free numbers and websites for specific designated agencies to receive and investigate reports of suspected child abuse and neglect.

CyberTipline **or** 24/7 hotline **1-800-843-5678** Provides information about how to report online sexual exploitation of a child if you suspect that a child has been inappropriately contacted.




MANAGING CHILDREN'S & YOUTH'S REACTIONS TO TRAUMA

When facilitating groups that touch on sensitive and potentially traumatic topics, it is important to be prepared for a wide array of reactions from children and youth, particularly traumatic reactions from children and youth who have a history of trauma. The below information is intended to assist facilitators in recognizing and appropriately managing children's and youth's reactions to trauma.

Trauma affects our physical and emotional health, behaviors, and relationships, and how we learn. The impact of trauma will be different for every child/youth, as it is influenced by the intensity and duration of the trauma and the number of times the trauma occurred. For children, the impact of trauma is also influenced by their age, previous experiences, supportive relationships, and the relationship to an offender, if relevant. The type of trauma may also influence the impact on children/youth – whether trauma was caused by nature versus people, strangers versus parents and caregivers, and single, time-limited traumatic event versus ongoing trauma with no specific end.

Children's & Youth's Reactions to Stress, Trauma, & Crisis

When children and youth are triggered by words, topics, images, or sensations that are associated with traumatic experiences, the 'threat system' becomes activated, leading them to feel unsafe and potentially resulting in fight-flight-freeze reactions: fight (fight to protect oneself), flight (try to get away from the threat), or freeze (as if frozen with fear, not able to quickly think of ways to get away or protect oneself). The experience of threat and the resulting sense of feeling unsafe happens in our thinking (head), our emotions (heart), and bodies (hands). This can cause children and youth to react in unpredictable ways. They may become withdrawn, anxious, aggressive, uncooperative, defiant, clingy, or stop talking. Children and youth will try to do whatever they can to regain a sense of safety, including engaging in what might appear as challenging behaviors. This is why it is important to look for signs that a child's threat system has been activated. If it has, helping to create a sense of emotional and physical safety is vital, and using Head, Heart, and Hands (HHH) is a helpful way to remember the importance of considering the child's or youth's holistic reaction to trauma when trying to help them.

| HEAD  | HEART  | HANDS  |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flashbacks • Negative thinking • Distorted thoughts (self-blame or recurrence of trauma) • Thoughts like, “Everyone is going to die,” “Everyone is angry with me” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feelings that feel too BIG to cope with • Anger • Guilt • Shame • Scared/fear • Embarrassed • Worthless • Powerless • Overwhelmed • Numb • Isolated | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traumatic memories have sensations or experiences linked to the body. • Increased heart rate • Short/labored breathing • Damp palms • Feeling disconnected from one’s body (dissociation; appear to be daydreaming/spaced out/dazed/blank stare/trance-like state, perplexing forgetfulness, such as knows facts or skills one day and not the next) • Feeling like one’s throat is closing and cannot speak |
| <p style="text-align: center;">BEHAVIORS</p> <p>When children and youth are overwhelmed or triggered by their thoughts, feelings, and sensations, they may exhibit a range of behaviors such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regressive behaviors (return to younger behaviors they’ve grown out of, like thumb sucking, bed wetting, baby talk, or refusing to sleep alone) • Temper tantrums or emotional meltdowns • Inappropriate sexual talk and/or behaviors • Want to be left alone/do not want to be around family or friends • ‘Zone out’ or appear to be in a daze • High risk, dangerous behaviors • Use of substances • Disrespectful, defiant, or aggression towards other children/youth, adults, or animals, including bullying, hurting others, or destroying property • Self-harm (cutting, banging head, burning, picking at skin, pulling hair) • Running away | | |

Tips to Effectively Respond to Children’s and Youth’s Responses to Trauma

How you respond to a child/youth when they are triggered and/or feeling unsafe is important.

Contact

Your tone of voice, facial expressions, body posture, and movements need to signal safety to help calm a child down. If needed, you should take a moment to regulate yourself before entering into a crisis situation with a child by practicing deep breathing, praying, or any other regulation strategy.

If in a group, approach the child slowly, and in a soothing voice, ask if the child would like to remain where he/she is or go somewhere more private/quiet. You can try to offer a comfort object such as a blanket or toy or something nurturing like water.

Whereas some children may respond by speaking or using gestures, other children may be unresponsive. Use a calm and steady voice and talk in short sentences that communicate one idea per sentence. If a child does not respond verbally, ask questions that may elicit a nonverbal response or gesture. If a child is completely unresponsive verbally, continue communicating safety. Just sitting with the child quietly may also be comforting.

Containment

Many different things may be happening at once in the child's immediate environment that can add to feelings of being unsafe. Try to reduce and manage these where possible as this will help to regulate a child's stress response. Addressing basic and immediate physical needs is called containment.

Look around and think about what the child is experiencing in terms of sensory input (such as loud noises, voices, lights, etc.) and move the child away from any sensory input that might be contributing to their sense of being unsafe. Physical containment can include a comfortable place to sit or a comfort object.

If the child appears to hear and understand you, use grounding techniques to help the child focus on his/her senses in order to bring the focus to more calming and positive things in the present moment. For example, "Is there a tree/toy here that you can see?" or "How soft is this blanket?"

Current Concerns

Understanding the child's current/immediate concerns in the situation can help you respond better. Before addressing these concerns, remind the child of your name and what your role is in order to build trust. Then assess the child's orientation to the situation by asking them their name, age, where they are, and what day of the week it is. If the child can correctly answer these questions, talk about his/her immediate concerns. For example, "Is there something I can do to help you right now?" "What are you most worried about right now?"

If the child is unresponsive verbally, provide 'helpful truths,' like "It seems like you are having a hard time right now, but you are safe in this room with me."

If the child responds verbally, actively listen, reflect/summarize what they said, validate his/her feelings, allow feelings to surface, provide support, and provide psychoeducation around normal stress responses, if appropriate. Answer any questions the child may have. Wherever possible, meet the child's basic needs – food, shelter, and connection with others.

Once you understand the child's immediate concerns, you can ask for assistance from more formal support services, if needed. If more formal support services are not immediately available, provide parents/caregivers with the appropriate resources to meet/treat the child's specific needs/issues. Referrals can also be made to local therapeutic services. When handing care over to another service provider, ensure that the child and parent/caregivers understand that care is now being handed over to someone else. If the child is already receiving outside therapeutic services, be sure to speak with the child's parent/caregivers about the crisis situation so that parent/caregivers can follow-up with the child's therapeutic provider.

If more formal support services are not needed and the child is ready to return to the original setting, such as group or classroom, give the child a comfort object to take with them or make a plan with the

child on how to ensure the child's sense of safety. For example, the child may want to remain at your side when returning to the group.

DELIVERING THE GROUP SESSIONS

In order to deliver the most effective group session and ensure fidelity, facilitators should become familiar with the format and structure of each group session prior to conducting them. Both group sessions follow the same structure and format:

Title of the Session with duration

Objectives

Materials: Materials needed to conduct the group session

Summary: Brief summary of the group session

Session Facilitation: Welcomes youth to the group session followed by introductions by facilitators and participants.

Part 1: Rules, Safety, Privacy, and Confidentiality: Discussing these group norms will ensure safety, establish cohesiveness, and clearly outline expectations for appropriate behavior.

Part 2: Icebreaker/Warm Up Activity: Energizes participants and fosters cooperation and group unity.

Part 3 to Part 5: Main educational content of group sessions.

Part 6: Closing/Community-Building Activity: Wraps up the group session by reminding participants of important lessons learned. Promotes participants' active learning and comprehension, as well as praising youth for their participation.

For ease of facilitation and throughout both groups, please note the following uniform formatting:

Instructions for Facilitators: These are instructions to assist facilitators in preparing for the next segment of the group session, directions that facilitators are to give to participants, or instructions on how to conduct an activity or segment of the group session. More brief instructions for facilitators will also be provided within [brackets].

Sample Script: *Sample scripts will be italicized and are suggested scripts for facilitators to use when speaking to participants.*

ALL CAPS: Words in all capital letters signify another topic within the same segment/part of the group session.

USCRI YOUTH GROUP SESSION ONE: UNDERSTANDING PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES & TOUCH

[TIME: 1.5 - 2 hours]

The following content should be used by facilitators to deliver group sessions to Afghan children and youth.

Objectives:

By the end of the session, youth will be able to:

1. Describe what personal boundaries are
2. Identify their personal space bubble and describe culturally appropriate distances of personal space
3. Describe the different people in their lives, the nature of these relationships, and the appropriate boundaries, behaviors, and touches in each
4. Identify appropriate and inappropriate touching based on the nature of the relationship in various hypothetical scenarios
5. Participate in group building and trust enhancing exercises

Materials:

- Copy of group session facilitation guide: USCRI Youth Group Session One: Understanding Physical Boundaries & Touch
- Attendance sheet
- Whiteboard/Chalkboard/Flipchart
- Dry erase markers/Chalk/Markers
- White or colored construction paper
- Pencils or pens
- Markers or crayons
- 3 pieces of paper labeled Agree, Somewhat Agree, and Disagree
- Tape

Summary:

This session is focused on personal boundaries, identifying one's personal space, and learning culturally appropriate distances of personal space. In addition, youth will explore their own and other people's personal boundaries by drawing a picture of different people in their lives – the nature of these relationships and appropriate behaviors and forms of touching within each relationship.

Session Facilitation:

Greet and welcome youth as they arrive for group session. Take attendance of all youth present. You can either have them practice writing their names in English themselves on the sign-in sheet or ask each of their names and write them down on the attendance sheet yourself. Introduce yourselves by telling youth your names and that you are from USCRI and will be doing a group with them.

Part 1: Rules, Safety, Privacy, and Confidentiality

Aim: To explain expectations of the facilitators and minors and to acknowledge efforts to maintain safety, privacy, and confidentiality.

Sample Script:

In order for everyone to feel safe, respected, and open to sharing, it's important that we go over some group rules.

[Go over the following rules with youth]

- *Confidentiality: Everything that is said in this group stays in this group.*
- *Only one person speaks at a time while others listen. Do not hold side conversations while someone else is talking.*
- *Be kind, polite, and courteous to each other.*
- *No one will be forced to share if they do not want to.*

[Add any additional and relevant rules]

Part 2: Icebreaker/Warm Up Activity

Aim: To do an energizer activity to warm up.

Instructions for Facilitators:

Prior to starting the activity, paste 3 signs (Agree, Somewhat Agree, and Disagree) in 3 different areas of the room.

Sample Script: *I will be making a series of statements, and for each statement, you must decide whether each statement describes you completely (Agree), somewhat (Somewhat Agree), or not at all (Disagree) and then you must stand beneath the sign that represents your position on each statement.*

[After reading each statement below, allow enough time for participants to decide their positions and stand beneath the sign that represents their positions]

Statements:

1. *When I see someone, I know, I will greet them physically in some way – a hug, kisses on the cheeks (ruy motchee), handshake, high five, etc.*
2. *When I meet someone for the first time, I will greet them physically in some way – a hug, kisses on the cheeks (ruy motchee), handshake, high five, etc.*
3. *I do not mind when people close to me, like my brother, mother, or best friend, borrow things of mine without asking my permission.*
4. *I do not mind when people I am not close to borrow things of mine without asking my permission.*
5. *If someone is angry at me, it is acceptable for them to yell at me and call me names.*
6. *If I am angry at someone, it is acceptable for me to yell at them and call them names.*
7. *Tickling someone even when they are telling you to stop is entirely acceptable because it is funny and done all in good fun.*
8. *I would be entirely comfortable with a stranger sitting very close to me.*
9. *Complimenting a female teacher, case worker, or youth specialist on their looks is inappropriate.*
10. *Close friends hold hands.*
11. *If a boy has a romantic crush on a girl, it is okay to kiss the girl without her permission.*
12. *I do not like it when someone hugs me from behind.*

Instructions for Facilitators:

Ask participants to return to sitting in a circle. Ask participants the following questions and explore their answers with follow-up or probing questions. Questions to ask participants:

- *What was it like for you to do that activity? What was interesting about it?*
- *What did you notice about where people stood? How did everyone feel when everyone had the same responses? How did everyone feel when your responses were different, and you were standing in different positions?*
- *What did you learn about yourself or others?*

Part 3: Physical & Personal Boundaries

Aim: To review what personal boundaries are, identify one's personal space bubble and to learn culturally appropriate distances of personal space.

Instructions for Facilitators:

Ask participants the following question and allow participants to respond while noting their responses on a whiteboard/chalkboard/flipchart:

Who can tell me what boundaries are?

[Explain what boundaries are to participants using the information below:]

Boundaries are the physical and emotional limits that define one person as separate from another person or from others, much like fences for property and borders for countries. Boundaries are lines that every person has that defines what they are comfortable with and what they are uncomfortable with and what is acceptable and not unacceptable to them. There are all kinds of boundaries:

- *Environmental boundaries* include a country's or state's borders, or property lines or even restricted areas of buildings, for example.
- *Physical boundaries* include not only whether you have any kind of physical contact with another person, but how much. For example, you may be okay shaking hands with someone, but don't want to hug them. Or maybe you love to be hugged, but hug someone who hates to be hugged.
- *Personal boundaries* refer to how much you share of your personal life. What do you keep private? What do you tell other people?

Sample Script:

Today we will be focusing on our physical and personal boundaries – what we are comfortable with – and what to do if we are with someone whose boundaries are different from ours. It is important to know and communicate our boundaries and it is equally important to know and respect the boundaries of others.

Have you ever heard the phrase “personal space bubble” or “personal bubble” [say in Dari and/or Pashto AND English]?

This is a common phrase used in the U.S.

[Say EACH term out loud and have the participants repeat them in English.]

*A **personal space bubble** refers to an imaginary bubble around you to represent the comfortable distance between you and others. Each person has varying comfort levels of personal bubbles. Some are larger than others.*

People, places and even things can influence our personal space bubble. For example, most of us are comfortable with a shorter distance between ourselves and family members versus teachers, other adults or even friends. Maybe you feel more comfortable with people in your own home or familiar places versus new situations or locations.

Interactive Exercise on Personal Bubbles

Sample Script:

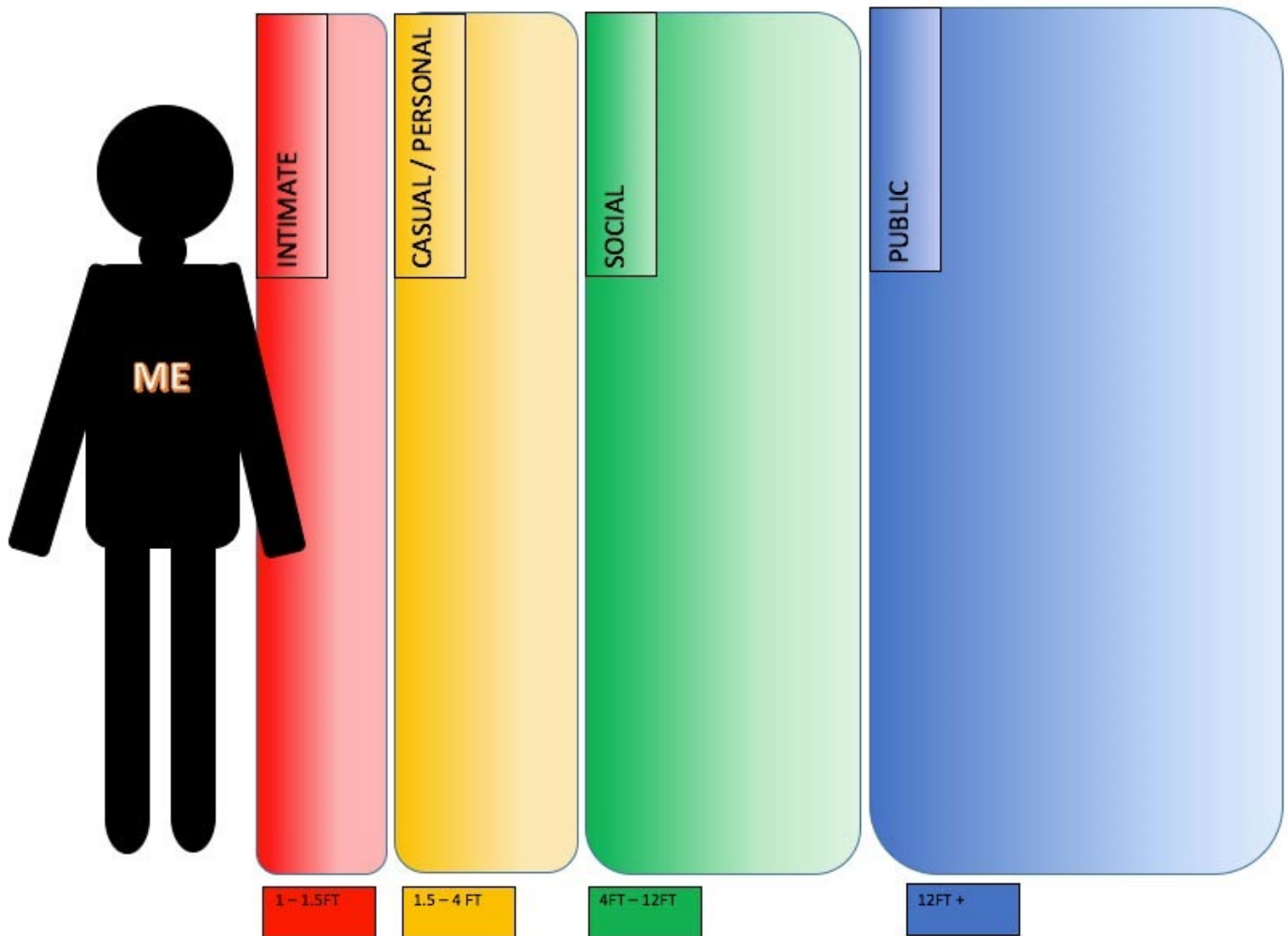
Please stand up again and spread out. [Model this behavior and ask participants to follow] Please put your right hand out in front of you with the palm of your hand facing out (like telling someone to “stop”). While holding your right hand out in front of you, put your left hand up so that it is parallel to your left shoulder. [Model this behavior and ask participants to follow] Now start turning to the right and move around in a circle, going all the way around until you are where you started (360 degrees). [Model this behavior and ask participants to follow] You just made an imaginary personal space bubble around you with your hands.

In the U.S., you may hear someone say something like, “You’re in my personal bubble. Back up please” [say it in English and have participants repeat it in English]. This means that someone entered into their personal bubble, and they are requesting more space. This imaginary bubble around each of us is our private space and we do not have to let anyone in if we do not want to.

Different cultures have different standards of personal space. For example, personal space among Afghans is much smaller than for Americans. In the U.S., generally, personal space is broken down into four areas.

[Show the Image below to youth. Use the descriptions below the image to explain the four areas and demonstrate the approximate distance for each area.]

Image: Distances of Personal Space



0 - 1.5 feet: Intimate Space for hugging or whispering

1.5 – 4 feet: Casual/Personal Space for interactions among good friends or family members

4 – 10 feet: Social Space for interactions among acquaintances/classmates/co-workers

10 feet or more: Public Space used for public speaking or interactions with strangers.

CONSENT

Instructions for Facilitators:

Use the information below in the box to explain the concept of consent to participants.

Consent

Consent means asking permission from someone and someone asking you for permission before giving or receiving a hug or any other kind of touch, borrowing something, or entering into someone's personal space bubble. The important thing about consent is respecting the answer the other person gives. It is equally important that other person – both kids and adults – ask YOU for consent and respect your answer if you say no. No matter which circle someone is in, it is still respectful to ask for consent before they touch you. If someone does not ask for consent before touching you and you do not want to be touched, telling the person “NO” is not rude.

[Model what asking for and giving consent looks like with various people in participants' lives (i.e., mother, sibling, friend, aunt/uncle, teacher, acquaintance, etc.). For example, “Can I sit next to you on the bus?” “Is it okay if I give you a goodbye hug?” “No, grandma, I don't want a kiss/hug.”]

Part 4: Circle of Relationships Activity

Aim: To help youth understand their own and other people's personal boundaries by drawing a picture of different people in youths' lives in concentric circles – what their relationship is with these people, how youth should behave with them, and what behavior is OK from those people and toward those people. To help youth understand appropriate touching through discussions of various scenarios.

Here is an example of a completed Circle of Relationships drawing (with different color coding):



Instructions for Facilitators:

Ask participants to write their name or draw a picture of themselves in the middle of their pieces of paper and then to draw a **circle in purple** around their name or picture. It recognizes that the participant is the most important person in their world. Explain to participants that this **purple circle/space** is their private space and they do not have to let anyone in if they do not want to. Ask participants to discuss who and under what circumstances they would allow someone else into their private space (parents, siblings, or close friends for hugging, kissing, or whispering; dentist or doctor, etc.).

Ask participants to draw another circle in **blue** around their purple private circle. Tell participants that there are very few people who belong in the **blue circle**, such as people who are closest to them; people who they share a close, loving, and trusting relationship with. This usually includes their immediate family members, such as their parents and siblings, and possibly a few extended family members who they are very close with. Ask participants to label the **blue circle** with the names of people who belong in this space. Tell participants that appropriate touches in this circle include kisses, cuddles, and hugs.

Ask participants to draw another **circle in green** around their blue circle. Tell participants that the people who belong in the **green circle/space** are usually extended family members and close friends. Ask participants to label the **green circle** with their extended family members and close, best friends [Note: It may be necessary to distinguish between close friends and other friends]. Explain to participants that appropriate touches may include a one-arm hug, greetings with kisses on cheeks (Afghan style), side hugs, high fives, fist bumps, or pats on the back or shoulder. These actions are less intimate and include less physical contact than interactions with people in the blue circle. Remind participants that even with people in this circle, it is still appropriate for consent to be asked and received before touching, kissing, or hugging.

Ask participants to draw another **circle in yellow** around their green circle. Tell participants that the people who belong in the **yellow circle/space** include friends and adults whose names are known to them. These are people who have been introduced to them, but do not know well, in other words *acquaintances* [say this word in English and have participants repeat it back in English; it may be necessary to differentiate friends from acquaintances]. Ask participants to label the **yellow circle/space** with their other friends and acquaintances (such as classmates). Explain to participants that appropriate touches include handshakes, fist bumps, high fives, and side hugs. For the most part, touch is mainly limited to hands.

Ask participants to draw another **circle in orange** around their yellow circle. Tell participants that the people in the **orange circle/space** include professionals and other people whose jobs are to help them. These people can include community helpers, like store clerks, postal workers, restaurant waiters, etc., and also include professionals, like teachers, case managers, youth specialists, community health workers, and clinicians. Ask participants to label the **orange circle/space** with their community helpers and professionals. Explain to participants that appropriate touches include fist bumps, high fives, nodding at or waving to these people.

Finally, ask participants to draw another **circle in red** around their orange circle. Tell participants that the people in the red circle/space are people they do not know. They do not recognize their faces or know their names – they are *strangers* [say this word in English and have participants repeat it back in English]. Ask participants to label the **red circle/space** with the word “strangers.” Explain to participants that touching does not happen with strangers. Remind participants that they cannot tell if

a stranger is good or bad because they do not know anything about the stranger. However, it is important to be safe.

Have participants share their Circles of Friends drawing with the group, asking each of them about specific individuals they labeled in each circle. Follow-up with the following questions:

- *How would you greet [choose a name/label] in the [color] circle?*
- *Which people would it be okay to kiss or hug? [For adults other than mother and father, make sure participants understand the importance of asking for consent before kissing, hugging, or any other intimate touch]*
- *Who would you invite to your house for dinner?*
- *Who would you invite into your bedroom to watch tv?*
- *Who could you talk to if you are worried about something?*

[Provide participants with positive reinforcement for their drawings and participation.]

Part 5: Boundary Scenarios

Aim: To help youth connect the boundaries they identified in the Circles of Relationships activity to fictional scenarios through discussion. To help youth understand appropriate touching through discussions of various scenarios.

Instructions for Facilitators:

Tell participants that you are going to describe some scenarios that involve boundaries, personal space, and consent and will discuss each scenario together.

Scenario 1: *Mariam has been asking to go go-cart racing for a long time now. During a community meeting, a youth specialist announces that they will be going go-cart racing later today. Mariam is so excited that she runs over to the youth specialist and hugs her. After Mariam stops hugging, the youth specialist says, “Mariam, I understand that you are excited, but please do not hug me. It makes me feel uncomfortable and it is not appropriate. How about a high five?”*

Questions to ask participants:

- *How would you feel and react if you were Mariam?*
- *Is it appropriate to hug a youth specialist? Why or why not? (Hint: People are in charge of their own bodies, and it is not okay to touch them if they do not want you to, just like it’s not okay for someone to touch you in a way you don’t like. Remind participants of consent: It would be appropriate if Mariam asked the youth specialist, “Would it be okay if I gave you a hug?”)*
- *Which circle would a youth specialist belong to?*
- *What might be a more respectful way to show excitement and gratitude to professional staff?*

Scenario 2: *Ali likes spending time on the computer or his cell phone, playing games and chatting with online friends. His online friends are people that Ali has never met. Ali only knows them through chatting. One of the people Ali has never met asks for Ali’s home address and telephone number so that they can meet at a shopping mall near Ali’s home.*

Questions to ask participants:

- *What can Ali do when a friend who he chats with asks for his home address and phone number? (Hint: Ali could say that he is not allowed to give any personal information through the computer. Personal information includes phone numbers, addresses, etc.)*
- *Should Ali meet the friend who he chats with?*
- *How can you tell if what you read or hear thought the internet/online is true or that the identity of the person is accurate? (Ask a trusted adult)*

Scenario 3: *Sara’s math teacher, Ms. Jacobson, has helped her improve in math so much that she now has an “A” in math. After class one day, Sara expresses her gratitude to Ms. Jacobson for all her help in math by saying, “Ms. Jacobson, thank you so much for all of your help. I am so lucky to have such a great teacher like you.”*

Questions to ask participants:

- *What circle would Ms. Jacobson belong to? (Hint: **orange circle/space** that includes professionals and other people whose jobs are to help them)*
- *Is what Sara said to Ms. Jacobson respectful and appropriate? Why or why not? (Hint: it is appropriate)*
- *What if Sara complimented Ms. Jacobson on her appearance by also saying, “I think you’re really pretty.” Would this be appropriate? Why or why not?*
- *Would it be appropriate if Sara asked Ms. Jacobson to come over to her house for dinner? Why or why not?*

Scenario 4: *A new boy, Janzabe, arrives at school. One day while kicking the soccer ball/football around outside, he runs and jumps on another boy’s back for a piggy-back ride. The other boy falls with Janzabe on top of him and hurts his knees.*

Questions to ask participants:

- *What advice would you give Janzabe?*
- *What do the rules at school say about this kind of behavior and touch? Is it allowed or not allowed? (Hint: it is not allowed)*

Part 6: Closing/Community-Building Activity

Aim: To close the group session, bringing youth together to remind them they have a community of friends and support.

Instructions for Facilitators:

Close the group by asking each participant to answer the following:

1. [Fill in the blank] Today, I learned _____.
2. [Fill in the blank] One thing that I can do this week to improve myself is _____.
3. [Fill in the blank] One thing that I am grateful for today is _____.

[End the session by praising participants for their great work and thank them for showing up and participating.]

USCRI YOUTH GROUP SESSION TWO: LEARNING TOUCHING SAFETY RULES

[Duration 1.5 - 2 hours]

NOTES FOR FACILITATORS

Tips on Informing Parents

Prior to teaching Afghan children, inform their parents of the information that will be presented, including teaching children and youth the correct anatomical names for private parts, and emphasizing the central role that parents have in ensuring that their children feel comfortable talking to them about the issues presented in the lesson. Emphasize to parents that they are the most important personal safety teachers for their children and are in the best position to continue reinforcing these teachings and strategies with their children at home. If needed, explain to parents that although these topics can be awkward and uncomfortable to talk about, openly talking to their children about them will help keep them safe.

Explain to the parents that children should begin learning about safe versus unsafe touches as soon as they are able to understand your words.

Gender and Age Factors: Segregate groups by gender when presenting this material.

Language and Terminology: Use kid friendly language that children will understand based on their vocabulary and developmental stage. Teach children about safe and unsafe touches, and then teach children the correct names of all their different body parts, including their private parts using the bathing suit rule, and explain to children that their bodies are special, and they are the boss of their own bodies. Be specific with naming body parts. When educating children about their body parts, do not shy away from using the correct anatomical names for private parts (e.g., breast, vagina, buttocks, penis, etc.). It is important that children know and practice saying the correct names so that they are not embarrassed, and if they are touched inappropriately, they can accurately report it.

Important Reminders:

The information being presented may evoke difficult and challenging emotions and memories in children who have a history of abuse. It is essential that staff be prepared to manage these situations with the utmost sensitivity prior to presenting this information to children and youth. Please see the section titled *Managing Children's & Youth's Reactions to Trauma*.

Objectives:

By the end of the session, youth will be able to:

1. Identify safe, unsafe, and unwanted touches.
2. Accurately name private body parts using the swimsuit rule.
3. Assert that they are the bosses of their bodies and have the right to tell others not to touch their bodies.
4. Refuse unsafe touches assertively in response to scenarios.
5. Refuse unwanted touches assertively in response to scenarios.
6. Demonstrate how to tell a safe and trusted adult about unsafe touches and ask for help.

Materials:

- Copy of group session facilitation guide: USCRI Youth Group Session Two: Learning Touching Safety Rules
- Attendance sheet
- Whiteboard/Chalkboard/Flipchart
- Dry erase markers/Chalk/Markers
- White or colored construction paper
- Pencils or pens
- Markers or crayons
- Handout: Private Parts and/or Handout: Safe Touch
- Copy of pictures that depict safe, unsafe, and unwanted touches

Summary:

This session is focused on teaching youth about the differences between safe, unsafe, and unwanted touches and accurately labeling body parts, including private parts. This session will teach children that they are the boss of their bodies and how they can assertively refuse any touches that are unwanted and unsafe. Youth will also learn the importance of telling a safe adult when they are touched inappropriately.

Session Facilitation:

Greet and welcome youth as they arrive for group session. Take attendance of all youth present. You can either have them practice writing their names in English themselves on the sign-in sheet or ask each of their names and write them down on the attendance sheet yourself. Introduce yourselves by telling youth your names and that you are from USCRI and will be doing a group with them.

Part 1: Rules, Safety, Privacy, and Confidentiality

Aim: To explain expectations of the facilitators and minors and to acknowledge efforts to maintain safety, privacy, and confidentiality.

Sample Script:

In order for everyone to feel safe, respected, and open to sharing, it's important that we go over some group rules.

[Go over the following rules with youth]

- *Confidentiality: Everything that is said in this group stays in this group.*
- *Only one person speaks at a time while others listen. Do not hold side conversations while someone else is talking.*
- *Be kind, polite, and courteous to each other.*
- *No one will be forced to share if they do not want to.*

[Add any additional and relevant rules]

Part 2: Icebreaker/Warm Up Activity

Aim: To do an energizer activity to warm up.

Facilitator Instructions:

Instruct participants to stand and form two lines (Line A and Line B) facing each other, standing about 10-12 feet apart (make sure each person in Line A has a partner in Line B). Participants (in Line A) should slowly walk towards their partner (in Line B). At the point that they (in Line B) do not feel comfortable getting any physically closer, participants (in Line B) should put up their hand and say “Stop!” and at that point, participants who were walking towards their partners should stop where they are.

Have everyone take a moment to look around to see the differences or similarities around the amount of physical space between the partners in Line A and Line B.

Now have participants in Line A return to starting positions. Now, participants (in Line B) should slowly walk towards their partner (in Line A). At the point that they (in Line A) do not feel comfortable getting any physically closer, participants (in Line A) should put up their hand and say “Stop!” and at that point, participants who were walking towards their partners should stop where they are.

Have everyone take a moment to look around to see the differences or similarities around the amount of physical space between the partners in Line A and Line B.

Ask participants to sit down.

Discuss participants’ reactions to the activity, the concept of personal space, and explain to participants that in doing this activity, they have set boundaries [say “boundaries” in English] around their personal space [say “personal space” in English].

Part 3: Safety and Safe, Unsafe, & Unwanted Touches

Aim: To teach youth about safety, the differences between safe, unsafe, and unwanted touches.

Facilitator Instructions:

Introduce the topics by relating them to safety. Ask children what they do to stay safe.

Suggested answers include:

- Do not go to places your parents/family members have told you are dangerous or unsafe.
- Always look both ways before crossing a street.
- Always wear a helmet when riding a bike, scooter, or skateboard
- Do not share personal information online.
- Get permission before leaving.
- Do not play with fire.
- Call 911 during an emergency.
- Do not talk to strangers.

Tell children that today’s safety topic is about our bodies, various kinds of touches, and what to do to stay safe.

Safe Touches

Sample Script:

Most touches are okay and safe. **Safe touches** are touches that keep us safe and healthy and are good for us. Safe touches make us feel loved, safe, and important. Safe touches can include hugging, holding, pats on the back, high-fives, fist bumps, and an arm around the shoulder.

Facilitator Instructions:

Call on volunteers to share examples of safe touches at home (ex., hugs, games, washing, etc.), at school (ex., high fives, games like tag or duck-duck-goose, etc.), and in the community (ex., touches from doctors, paramedics, dentist, etc.).

Sample Script:

Safe touches can also include touches that might hurt, like getting a shot from a doctor. When you go to a doctor to get a shot, the doctor is giving you a shot to keep you healthy, which makes it a safe touch. When you go to see a healthcare provider, like a doctor/pediatrician, dentist, nurse, behavior health provider, another adult, like your mom or dad, will more than likely be in the room with you. In these situations, you can always ask for a trusted adult to be in the room with you to ensure your safety, even with healthcare professionals.

[For younger children: Explain that safe touches also include when an adult/parent/caregiver helps young children with diaper changing, going to the toilet, bathing, or looking at private parts if something is hurting. When they get older, they will be able to do these things on their own.]

Unsafe Touches

Sample Script:

***Unsafe touches** are touches that hurt your body or your feelings (for example, hitting, pushing, pinching, or kicking). These kinds of touches are not okay. These kinds of touches should be reported right away to a grown-up.*

Unwanted Touches

Sample Script:

***Unwanted touches** are touches that might be safe but that you do not want from that person or at that moment. This can be different for everybody. Only you can recognize when a touch is unwanted for you. You will know that it is an unwanted touch based on what thoughts you have, how it makes you feel, or what you feel like doing. For example, you may have the thought, “I don’t like it” or “Get off of me!” An unwanted touch may make you feel uncomfortable, frustrated, or annoyed. Or an unwanted touch may make you feel like running or pulling yourself away from the touch or person.*

Is okay to say “No” to an unwanted touch even if it is from someone you know, like a hug from your grandma. It is always okay to say “No” to a touch you do not want, whether it is a safe touch or an unsafe touch.

Part 4: Private Parts and Body Safety

Aim: To teach youth about private body parts and safe and unsafe touches.

Sample Script:

*Some parts of the body are private. Private parts of our bodies are part of our personal space. These are the parts of our bodies that we cover with our undergarments or with a swimsuit when we go swimming in water. Our mouths are also a private part of our bodies. No one should touch your **private body parts** except to keep you clean and healthy.*

[Provide examples of adults who are allowed to touch children's private parts at specific times to help keep them clean and healthy: These include: Parents/caregivers, grandparents, etc. who wash them or help them with toilet training and doctors, dentists, nurses that keep them healthy by giving them a physical evaluation, shots, etc.]

Facilitator Instructions:

Provide children with a handout/worksheet to accurately name private parts of the body (2 examples are provided on the next 2 pages). Go over both the female and male private parts, including:

Female:

- Mouth
- Chest/breasts
- Vagina
- Buttocks

Male:

- Mouth
- Penis
- Testicles
- Buttocks

PRIVATE PARTS

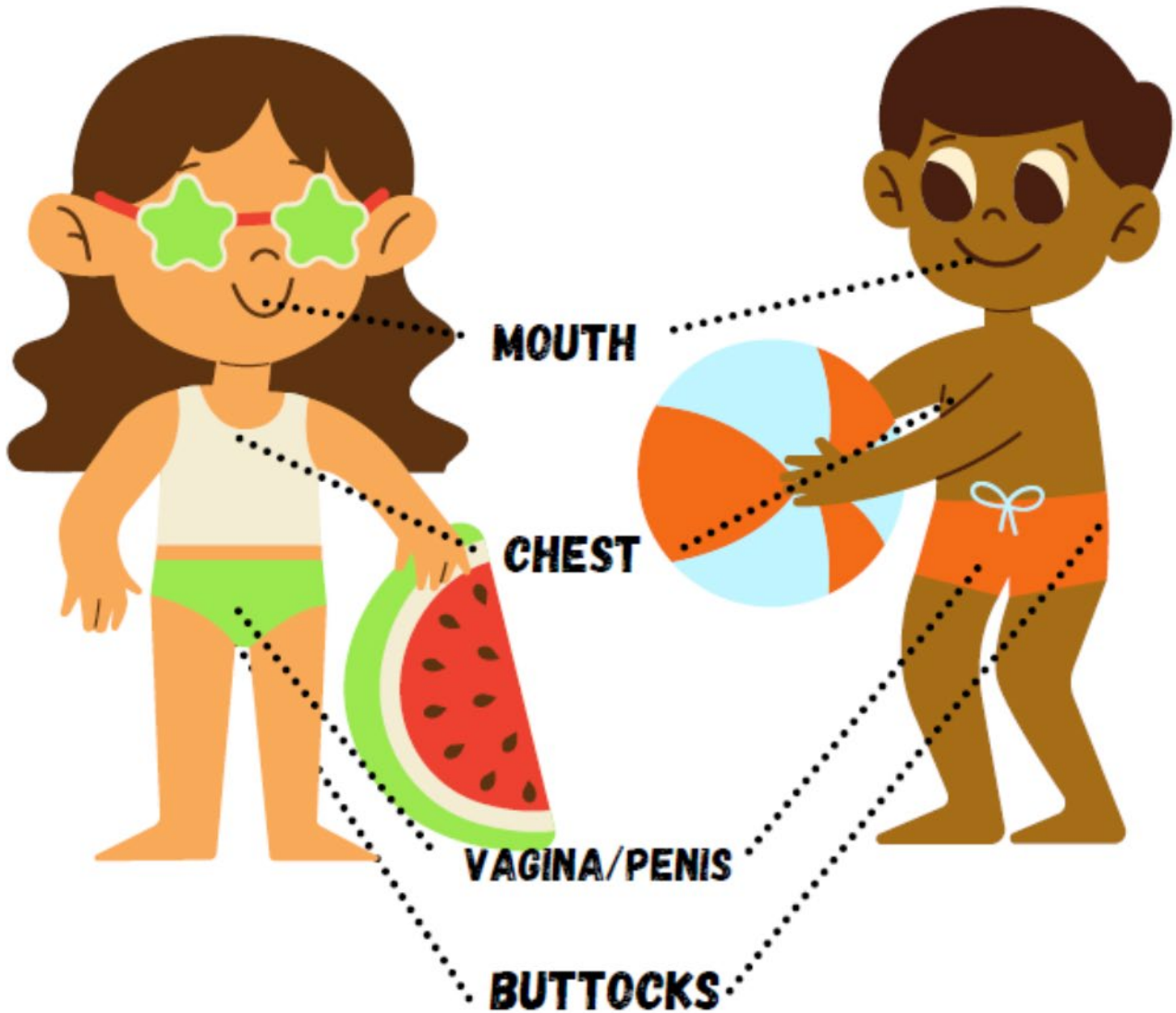
Are the parts of your body covered by a bathing suit.



Private means they're **just for you** and not to be shared with others.

SAFE TOUCH

NO ONE SHOULD BE TOUCHING YOU
ON YOUR MOUTH, CHEST, VAGINA
OR PENIS, AND BUTTOCKS.



YOU ARE THE BOSS OF YOUR BODY!

Retrieved from <https://hopeunitedgaston.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Body-safety->

Facilitator Instructions:

Tell children that unsafe touches can seem playful or gentle. The most important thing we can do is remember the differences between safe and unsafe touches. Any touch to a private part or a part of our bodies that would be covered by a swimsuit or undergarments is an **unsafe touch**.

Explain that another **unsafe touch** that is not okay is if someone older and bigger than you touches you on your private parts and it is not to keep you healthy or clean. Explain additional safety rules:

- If someone touches you on your body where you don't want to be touched, it is an unsafe touch. Usually those are private body parts covered by your swimsuit or undergarments.
- It is not okay to touch someone else's private parts.
- It is not okay for someone to touch his or her own body parts in front of you.
- It is not okay for someone to ask you to touch his or her private parts.
- It is not okay for someone to ask you to take your clothes off or to take pictures or videos of you with your clothes off.
- If a person touches you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable, scared, or nervous, it is an unsafe touch.
- If someone threatens to hurt you if you speak about the situation, it is an unsafe touch.
- If someone tells you not to tell anyone or to keep it a secret after touching you, it is an unsafe touch. Tell a safe and trusted adult immediately.
- Unsafe touching is never okay, no matter who it is doing it. It is wrong for anyone to touch a private area of your body, no matter who it is – even if it is someone in your family, a family friend, or a teacher.

Reiterate the touching rule by telling children that no one, no matter how old or big they are, should ever touch your private parts except to keep you safe, clean, and healthy. Explain to participants that if an unsafe touch does happen, it does NOT make them bad and that it is the fault of the other person.

Facilitator Instructions for Activity:

To ensure understanding and comprehension, show children the following pictures and have them identify whether the pictures depict safe, unsafe, or unwanted touches.

You can also present scenarios and ask children whether the scenarios depict safe, unsafe, or unwanted touches.

Below are some pictures and scenarios that you can present to the children.

Pictures:



Scenarios:

- Your younger brother likes to jump on your back, and sometimes it really hurts.
- Your grandpa wants to kiss your cheek.
- Another student keeps trying to hug you. She is trying to be nice.
- Your neighbor gives you a big hug every time she sees you.
- Your uncle tickles you really hard.
- Your older sister is kicking you under the table.
- An older boy pulls you down the hall by the arm.
- Your cousin pinches your leg to get your attention.
- A student in your class puts an arm around your shoulder when you do not want him to.
- A family member touching your body in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable.
- An adult or other child showing their private body parts to you.

Part 5: Safety Steps

Aim: To teach youth about ownership of their own bodies, how to assertively refuse unsafe or unwanted touches, and the importance of reporting unsafe touches to a trusted adult.

Sample Script:

Your bodies are very special and belong to you, so it is important to take care of your bodies. You are the boss of your own body. You decide which touches feel safe and which ones do not. You have the right to tell others if you do not want to be touched. You can tell people to stop if you think they are going to touch you on a private part of your body or if they touch you and it is unwanted.

Is it easy to tell someone when they are touching you in a way that you don't like?

[Allow for responses from participants and validate their thoughts and feelings.]

Can you give examples of when it's been easy to tell someone to stop and when it has not been easy?

[Allow for responses from participants and validate their thoughts, feelings, and experiences. If applicable, highlight responses from participants that demonstrate greater ease with friends or those closer to participants' ages versus greater difficulty telling an adult or someone older than them to stop.]

Regardless of how hard it might be to speak up, we all need to be able to. If not, we will not feel safe at school, at home, with our friends, or anywhere else. And we all have the right to feel safe.

Facilitator Instructions:

Explain that there are four Safety Steps in order to keep children safe, especially when it comes to unsafe or unwanted touches. Use the following script about the four Safety Steps:

Sample Script:

1. *Say words that mean "No," so you can refuse with your words. "Stop" or "I don't like that" or "Don't touch me." If you need to, SHOUT. To shout means to get loud. If someone is making you feel unsafe, we can shout at them to STOP, tell them to GET AWAY, or shout for HELP! It*

does not matter who it is, where you are, or what you are doing. Nothing is more important than our safety, and we can protect ourselves by loudly and clearly saying NO! [Model this for children and youth by being clear, serious, and loud]

2. *Get away and remove yourself from the situation. You can run away to get away from the person making you uncomfortable.*
3. *Tell an adult as soon as possible.*
 - *Ask: Who are some adults you can go to for help when someone is not respecting your boundaries? [If possible, encourage participants to identify at least two safe adults]*
 - *Ask: What happens if the person who is not respecting your boundaries or who touches you in an unsafe or unwanted way is an adult? [Make sure children and youth understand that they should find and tell another adult they know and trust. Reiterate that they have the right to feel safe in their bodies.]*
 - *Ask: What happens if you tell an adult and that adult does not believe you? [Tell participants that they must go to another adult that they trust until a trusted adults does believe them.]*
4. *Lastly, never keep secrets about touching. You should never keep secrets that make you feel bad or uncomfortable. If someone asks you to keep a secret that makes you feel bad or unsafe, you must tell a safe adult.*

Ask: *What are some ways you can tell someone when you do not want to be touched?*

[Allow for responses from participants, validate all responses, and highlight responses that incorporate the above safety steps.]

Role Plays

Facilitator Instructions:

Use role plays so that children can practice refusal skills and use their words to keep themselves safe.

Instruct children/youth to shout the appropriate responses to each situation loudly, clearly, and as forcefully as they can:

Examples:

- *You are in a crowded mall with your parents when a person you do not know tries to take your arm. Everyone shout: DON'T TOUCH ME!*
- *You are at recess/break and another student touches you in a way that hurts. Everyone shout: DON'T TOUCH ME!*
- *You are in a store and a person you do not know asks you to go somewhere with them. Everyone shout: HELP! I DON'T KNOW THIS PERSON!*
- *You are at home and a relative touches you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable. Everyone shout: I DON'T WANT TO BE TOUCHED!*
- *A stranger asks you to help them with something. Everyone shout: HELP! I DON'T KNOW THIS PERSON!*

SAFE ADULTS

Facilitator Instructions:

Help children identify safe adults in their lives that they feel comfortable talking to or going to for help.

Explain that safe friends and adults are people who:

- Won't hurt the youth without a good reason and won't confuse or scare the child intentionally.
- Are sure to respect the child's wishes and the wishes and rules of the child's parents/guardians/caretakers when it comes to personal safety, including touching safety.

[Use role plays to demonstrate certain scenarios that will help children practice talking to a safe adult about unsafe touches.]

Part 6: Closing/Community-Building Activity

Aim: To close the group session, bringing youth together to remind them they have a community of friends and support.

Sample Script:

Remember that you are the boss of your own body, and no one has the right to touch you in ways that you do not want or that make you feel unsafe or uncomfortable. Remember that you can always go to an adult for help.

Facilitator Instructions:

Have participants sit in a circle and have each participant answer the question or complete the sentence/fill in the blank. Then do the same for the next question/complete the sentence/fill in the blank.

1. If I needed to ask an adult for help, I would ask _____ (fill in the blank) or _____ (fill in the blank).
2. What is one thing you learned from this group?
3. What is one thing that you like about yourself or consider a strength?

[End the session with thanks]

Sample Script: *Great work everyone! Thank you for showing up and participating.*