

*you care so be aware*



**Your child's best  
protection is YOU**

PRESENTED BY



## Every child could be at risk

We all have reason to be concerned about recent incidents of violence, harassment, and child abuse that have been in local and national news...so be aware!

### Safe kids...

- question instructions they do not understand.
- refuse instructions they feel are wrong.
- do not automatically



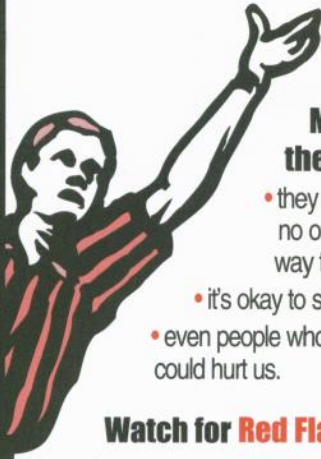
## Who is **least** at risk?

- Kids who are encouraged to be assertive.
- Kids who can share troubling feelings or incidents.
- Kids who get accurate, healthy information.
- Kids who feel loved and worthy of respect.
- Kids who are listened to and believed.
- Kids whose parents are involved in their activities and know the people in their lives.

## Who is **most** at risk of sexual abuse and other problems?

- Kids hungry for attention and affection.
- Lonely or sad kids.
- Troubled kids.
- Kids who feel unloved.
- Kids who rationalize inappropriate behavior.
- Kids who are able and willing to keep secrets.

## Turn nice kids into



# The Game Plan for Safe Kids

## Make sure children know the score - Explain that...

- they are in charge of their own bodies- no one is allowed to touch them in a way that hurts or feels uncomfortable.
- it's okay to say no - even to an adult or friend.
- even people who seem nice or people we love could hurt us.

## Watch for Red Flags

*These could be signs of potential abuse:*

- Someone showing inappropriate interest in your child.
- An adult who wants to be your child's friend and spends excessive amounts of time with your child.
- An adult inviting your child to a sleep-over.
- An adult asking your child to keep secrets.

## Children who are being abused may:

- behave differently when the abuse starts.
- care less about their appearance, health, or schoolwork.
- talk or act sexually at too early an age.
- develop sleep or health problems.
- become secretive and withdraw from family and friends.
- suddenly dislike or avoid a specific individual.
- be nervous around adults, or fear physical contact.
- have unusual bruises or marks.

## Get your signals straight

- Be a supportive parent - encourage your child to share troubling feelings and situations.
- Be clear about what behavior you consider "fair play," and what is "out of bounds."
- Establish a family password for emergency situations or when someone else needs to pick up your child.
- Teach children the words they need to tell you about touching they don't like.

## Coach the right moves

*Teach your child what to do in specific situations, such as...*

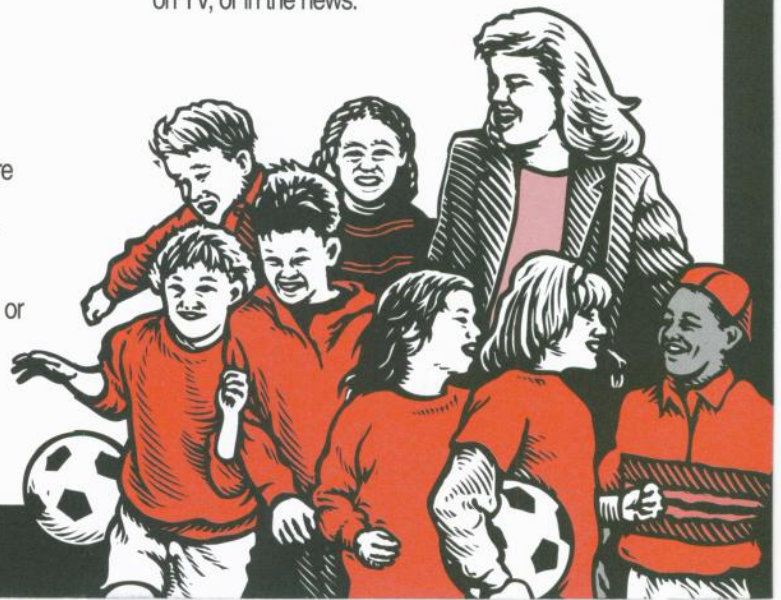
- a stranger approaches, or says to get in the car.
- someone behaves in a threatening manner.
- someone wants to touch or be touched in an area that a bathing suit would cover.
- an unrelated adult wants to play a secret game, or sleep together.

## Stay in the game

- Make sure you know all of the people in your child's life.
- Go to your child's sports practices and games, programs and activities.
- Talk with your kids about their day - and take time to really listen.
- Talk about difficult subjects like sexuality, drugs, violence, and peer pressure.

## Practice, practice, practice

- Repeat safety messages with your child frequently.
- Practice safety techniques - act out different situations and go over what your child should do.
- Discuss relevant situations that come up in conversation, on TV, or in the news.



## To report suspected child abuse, contact:

**911 for help** *in an emergency situation*

Family Crimes Unit  
Baltimore County Police Department

**410-853-3650**

Baltimore County  
Department of Social Services

**410-887-2520**

For more information about child abuse and its prevention, visit

**www.sobeaware.org**, or call:



Prevent Child Abuse Maryland

**1-800-CHILDREN** or

**1-410-841-6599**

For more information about Baltimore County's "You Care, So Be Aware" program, or to learn about recreation programs in your area, call your local office at:

SW Area - **410-887-1071**

NW Area - **410-887-6747**

N Area - **410-887-6957**

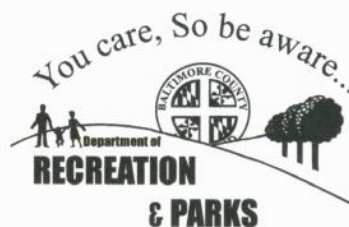
NE Area - **410-887-5306**

E Area - **410-887-0258**

SE Area - **410-887-7161**

Therapeutic Office - **410-887-5370**

General Information - **410-887-3871**



A Lifetime of Involvement

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