

# Green Bear Guidelines

## Personal Safety—Up to 11 Years of Age



### Child Sexual Abuse Statistics

- *One in ten children will be sexually abused by their eighteenth birthday.*
- *Fifty-four percent of sexually abused children are victimized before the age of seven.*
- *Family and acquaintance child abuse perpetrators have reported they look for specific characteristics in the children they choose to abuse.*

## Age Specific Ways to Teach Children about Abuse

### Up to Three Years of Age

- Teach children the correct name for body parts.
- Teach children they have the right to say, “No!” to unwanted touches, then immediately tell a grownup.

### Four to Seven Years

- Teach children that respect doesn't mean blind obedience to adults and authority.
- Play the, “What if . . .” game with your child.
- If your child appears distressed, ask the child what they feel without assuming or making suggestions. Listen to their answers.
- When your child starts overnight visits, discuss safety away from the home.

### Eight to Eleven Years

- Show interest in your child's activities
- Continue talking with your child openly about sexual abuse, and let them know whatever happens, it is not their fault
- Talk with your children about inappropriate materials (such as video games, television, online activities, and movies) and share what you find unacceptable
- Know your child's friends as well as their parents.

### Building Self Esteem in Children

Children with high self esteem are less likely to be sexually abused and are more likely to tell if they are abused. Children with high self esteem act independently, assume responsibility, take pride in their accomplishments, handle peer pressure appropriately, and offer assistance to others.

*For more information contact Southeast Missouri Network Against Sexual Violence at 573-332.1900 or log on to [www.greenbearmo.org](http://www.greenbearmo.org) or [www.semonasv.org](http://www.semonasv.org).*