

CHILD SELF-PROTECTION BOOKLET

My body, my rules

A story with Tuca the armadillo, to read together
with a grown-up who loves you.

Ages 3 to 6



PRODUCED BY



Na Rota do Afeto
capacitando e interagindo pelo mundo

Free prevention material

Free to share with families and schools

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Read this first, without the child

This booklet teaches self-protection without teaching fear. It does not describe crimes, does not depict violence and contains no frightening images. It teaches four simple things: **my body is mine, I have safe grown-ups, I tell when something feels wrong** and **it is never my fault**.

How to use it

- **Read it out loud, together.** At this age children learn from your voice and your reaction, not from the text.
- **Ten minutes at a time.** Two or three pages is plenty. You don't have to finish it in one sitting.
- **Keep it light.** If you read with a grave face, the child learns the subject is forbidden — and that is exactly when they stop telling you things.
- **Repeat it.** Re-read every two or three months. Self-protection isn't taught once; it settles in through repetition.
- **Let them ask.** Answer what was asked, using the correct word, then stop. Don't expand.

A note on "don't talk to strangers"

It is the most repeated line and one of the least protective. Most violence against children involves someone the child knows — family, neighbours, school, church, the circle of trust. A child trained only to fear the unknown is left unprotected exactly where the risk is highest, and also loses the ability to ask an unfamiliar adult for help when lost.

So this booklet does not teach children to fear people. It teaches them to recognise **situations** and **sensations**.

The final pages hold more detailed guidance for adults, including how to respond if a child discloses something, and where to look for help.

Hi! I'm Tuca.

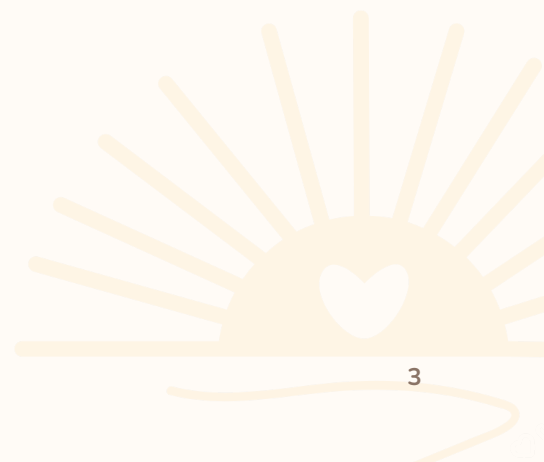


I'm an **armadillo**.

When I need to protect myself, I curl up like this — and I'm safe inside my little shell.

You know how to protect yourself too.
You just need a few rules.

Shall we?



My body is mine.

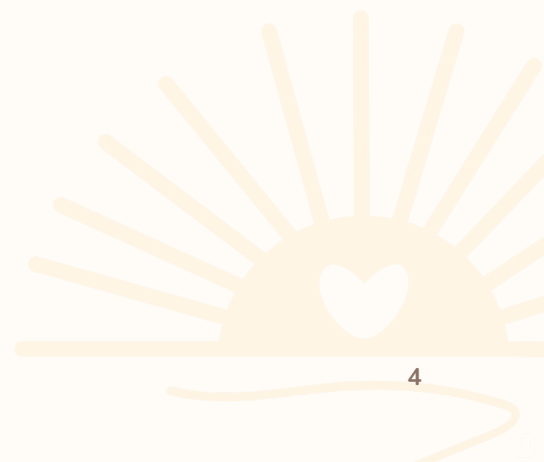
**It is my house.
I live inside it.**

Nobody comes into my house without my permission.

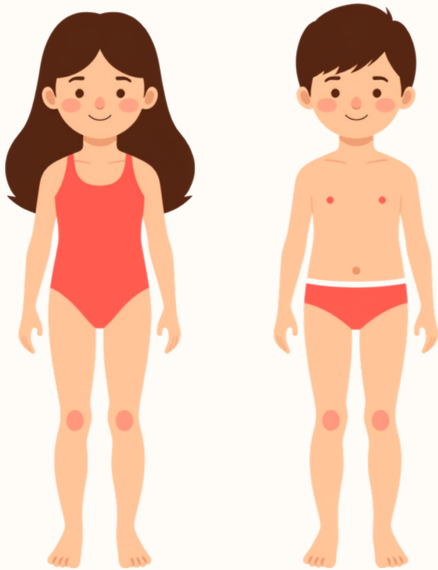
Nobody touches my things without asking.

My body works exactly the same way.

I'm the boss of my body. I decide who hugs me, who picks me up and who kisses me.



The swimsuit rule



Some parts of my body are **only mine**.

They are the parts covered by a **swimsuit** or **swim trunks**.

And my **mouth** too.

These parts have real names

Penis · Vulva · Bottom · Chest

Saying the right name isn't rude. It matters.

"But what about bath time?"

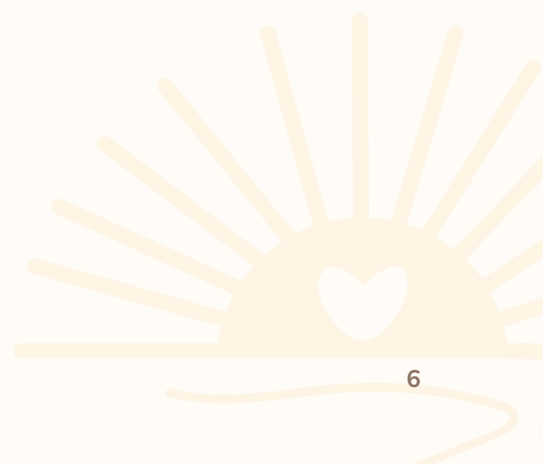
Good question! Sometimes it **is** okay:

When a grown-up who **takes care of me** helps me wash, clean up or get dressed.

When a **doctor** needs to examine me — but always with one of my grown-ups **there in the room**.

Apart from that, nobody may look, touch, or take photos.

And nobody may ask me to look at or touch a grown-up's body. Ever.



Good touch and odd touch

Good touch

Makes your heart feel warm.

A big hug, a cuddle, someone stroking your hair, holding hands, a goodnight kiss.

Odd touch

Makes you feel awkward, like you want to move away.

It squeezes your tummy.

**I can say NO to a hug or a kiss.
Even to people I love. And that's okay.**

Tickling that doesn't stop when I ask isn't a game.



The warning in my tummy



Sometimes something happens and my tummy sends a **warning**:

a chill • a squeeze • a knot

That warning is my body **talking to me**.

When my tummy warns me, I go and **tell** my safe grown-up. Even if I can't explain it properly.

Surprise or secret?

A SURPRISE is meant to make people happy

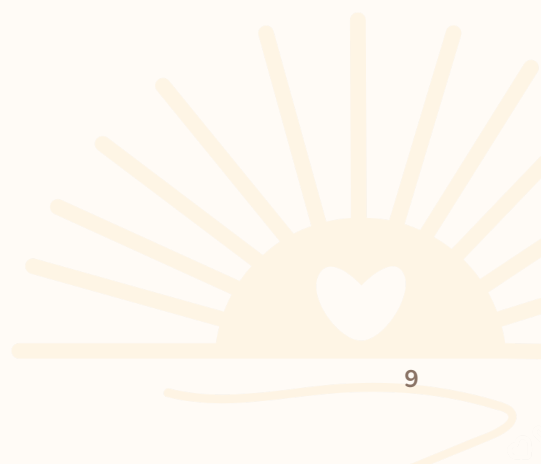
Everyone finds out later. And everyone laughs.
Like a birthday cake hidden in the kitchen.

A SECRET sits heavy in your tummy

It's the one someone **made** me keep. And it makes me feel
tight inside.

**If someone says
"don't tell your mum"
— I do tell.**

I don't keep secrets that hurt. Not for a present. Not even
if the person gets angry.



My safety hand



I have **5 fingers**.

Each finger is a grown-up I can go to when I need help.

If one can't listen, I go to the next. And the next. **Until someone listens.**

Write the five names here, together with your grown-up. At least one of them should be someone from outside your home — a teacher, an aunt, someone at school.

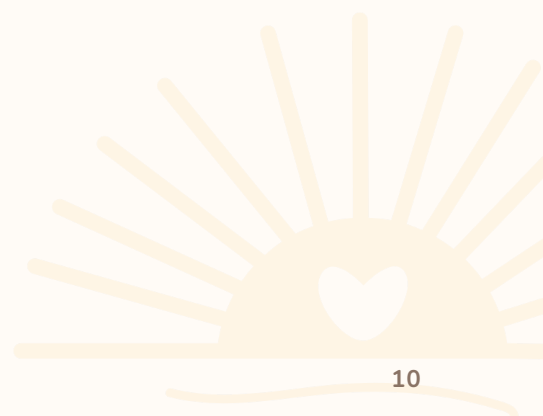
1

2

3

4

5



If I get lost

- 1 I **stop**. I don't wander off looking.
- 2 I **call out loudly** for my grown-up.
- 3 I look for someone who **works there**: at the till, wearing a badge or a uniform. Or a **mother with a child**.
- 4 I say: "I'm lost."

I never leave the place with someone I don't know — not even to look for my grown-up.

And if someone says my mum sent them to collect me, but she didn't tell me beforehand, I **don't go**.

If someone tries to take me

I shout as loudly as I can:

**"THIS PERSON
IS NOT MY MUM!"**



It's never my fault

If someone does something that makes me feel bad, it is **that person's** fault.

Even if I stayed quiet.

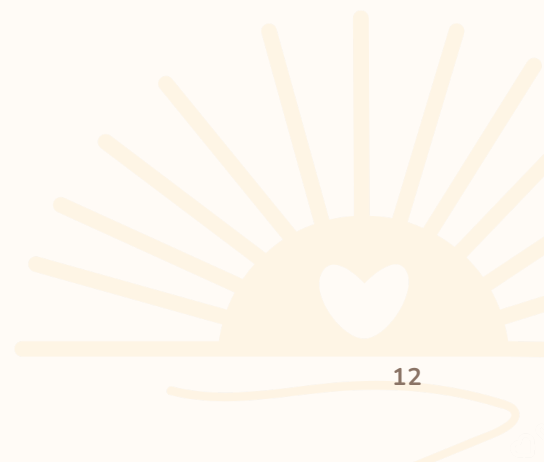
Even if I didn't tell straight away.

Even if I like the person very much.

Even if I broke a rule before.

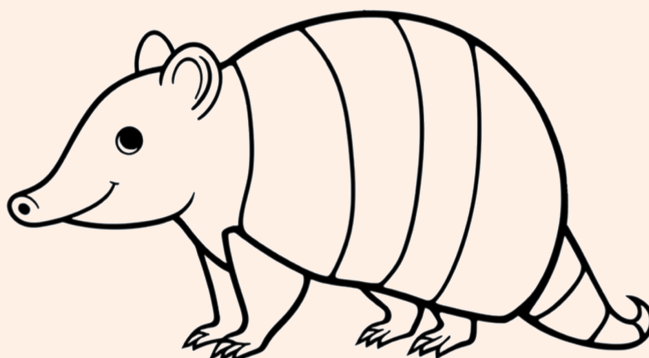
I tell.

And I am loved just the same.



Your turn!

1 • Colour Tuca in



2 • Heart or tummy?

Read these with your grown-up. Draw a **heart** if it's good touch. Draw a **tummy with a knot** if it gives you a warning.

My mum hugs me when I get home from school.

Someone asks me to take my clothes off and says not to tell.

My dad picks me up and strokes my hair.

Someone keeps tickling me and won't stop when I ask.

Someone wants to give me a present my parents mustn't know about.

Signed agreement

I,

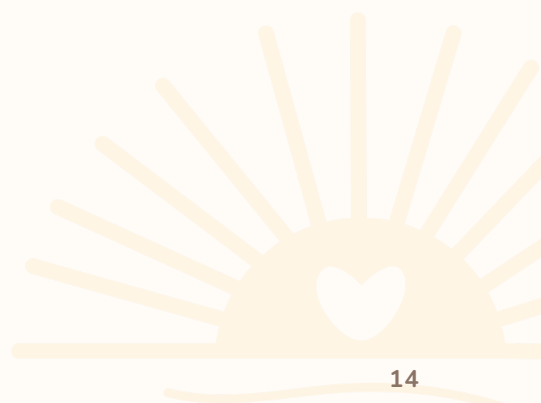
agreed with my grown-up that:

- My body is mine.
- I can say no.
- I tell what sits heavy in my tummy.
- I have 5 grown-ups to go to.
- It is never my fault.

child's signature or drawing

grown-up's signature

Date: ____ / ____ / ____



If your child tells you something

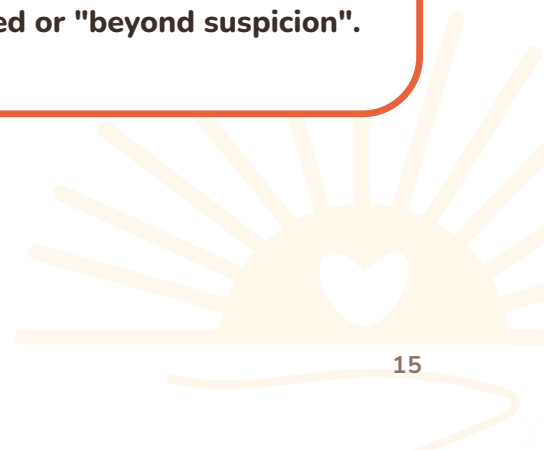
The moment a child speaks is the most decisive moment in the whole of prevention. How the adult reacts in the first thirty seconds determines whether they keep talking or fall silent — sometimes for years.

Do

- **Keep your face calm.** Panic, tears or anger are read by the child as "I caused this" or "I shouldn't have told".
- **Believe them, and say so.** "I believe you. I'm glad you told me."
- **Remove the blame explicitly.** "You did nothing wrong."
- **Listen without interrupting.** Let the child use their own words.
- **Write it down afterwards** — their words, and the date.
- **Seek specialist help:** child protection services, police, a child mental-health professional.

Avoid

- **Interrogating.** Repeated, leading or insistent questions contaminate the account and can damage any investigation.
- **Asking them to repeat it** to several family members. Many countries have specialist interview procedures precisely to avoid this second harm.
- **Confronting the suspected person** yourself before getting guidance.
- **Promising secrecy.** Say instead: "I'm going to take care of this with people who know how to help."
- **Doubting them because the person named is known, loved or "beyond suspicion".**

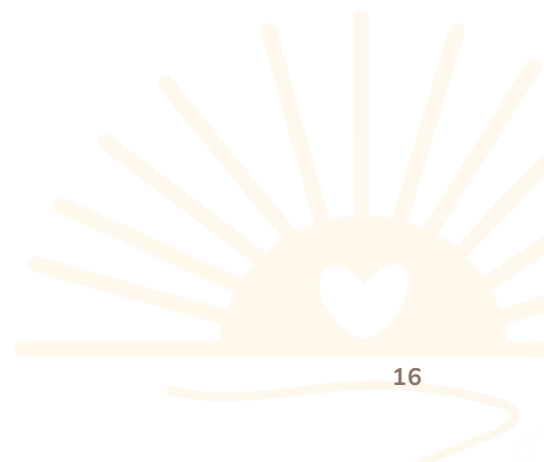


Signs worth noticing

A sudden change in behaviour; regression (bed-wetting again, baby talk again); specific fear of a person or a place; changes in sleep or appetite; sexual knowledge that doesn't match their age; withdrawal; new aggression; a sudden refusal to be alone with someone. No single sign confirms anything on its own — but all of them deserve attention and conversation, not interrogation.

Prevention is a climate, not an event

The best-protected child is not the one who memorised a list of rules. It is the one who is certain that if they tell you anything at all, they will be heard without shouting, without punishment and without judgement. That certainty is built in the small everyday conversations — long before anything happens.



Where to get help

Services and numbers differ from country to country. Look up the ones where you live, write them below, and keep this page somewhere you can find it quickly.



Emergency number

Police or emergency services in your country, for immediate danger.



Child protection service

The statutory body responsible for child welfare where you live.



National child helpline

A free, often anonymous line for reporting concerns and getting advice.



Police — child protection unit

Many countries have officers trained specifically for offences against children.



School safeguarding lead • family doctor

Two people who already know your child and are required to act on concerns.

Check these contacts before you need them. Child Helpline International lists national child helplines in many countries and can be a starting point.

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ABOUT THIS MATERIAL

My body, my rules

A free prevention booklet for families, schools, clinics and community projects. It may be printed and shared freely, provided the content is not altered and it is not used commercially.

This material is educational and **does not replace** assessment, guidance or follow-up by a qualified professional, nor legal advice.

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