

Somerset Youth and Community Service

Don't Touch Me! Session Plan



NB – this session works best in single sex groups

Aims: To explore the concept of personal space, so that young people can let others know what is and isn't acceptable to them

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the session the participants will have:

- Decided where it's OK to be touched and by who
- Practised telling someone to stop touching them
- Know who they can talk to if someone is touching them inappropriately

Group size: 4 -8 (preferably single sex)

Time: 1 hour

Venue: Private space

Materials:

- Large teddy bear or flipchart drawing of a blobby person
- 'Who would you allow to touch you and were?' handout.
- Flipchart paper and pens
- 'Who would you allow to touch you and were?' handout.

| Time | What | Who | With |
|---------|--|-----|--|
| 5 mins | Introduce the session. Ensure young people know it's OK to opt out during anytime, if they are uncomfortable with anything discussed. | | |
| 20 mins | <p>Introduce your teddy bear and give it a female /male name (to match the group). Make up some background information about the bear (so example: this is Imelda / George, s/he is a friendly bear and likes picnics and experimenting with make-up / listening to music / playing football. S/he has a good sense of humour and enjoys having fun with her friends. S/he prefers wearing just her fur, but quite likes to sport a skirt / shorts now and again). Make the bear waive, be shy etc.</p> <p>Then explain that Imelda is a helpful bear and is happy to be part of an experiment. Ask the group (changing the gender if needed):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where is it OK for Imelda to touch herself? • Where is it OK for a stranger to touch Imelda? • Where is it OK for a female friend to touch Imelda? • Where is it OK for a male friend to touch Imelda? • Where is it OK for a mother to touch Imelda? • Where is it OK for a father to touch Imelda? • Where is it OK for a doctor to touch Imelda? • Where is it OK for a Labrador puppy to touch Imelda? • How much difference does our gender and the gender of the person touching us make? | | Large teddy bear or flipchart drawing of a blobby person |



| Time | What | Who | With |
|---------|--|-----|---|
| | <p>Stress that no-one should touch us without our consent – we are touched casually or by accident, but this should stop if we draw back or say we don't want it.</p> <p>Draw out that the more we know someone, <i>generally</i> the happier we are for them to touch more bits of us. But, people have different views about what is and isn't OK so we should always check it out and not make assumptions.</p> | | |
| 10 mins | Give out the 'Who would you allow to touch you and where?' handout. Let them look and ask them if they agree. Discuss any examples they come up with of OK touching and not OK touching. | | 'Who would you allow to touch you and were?' handout. |
| 10 mins | <p>Ask the group what they would do if someone touched them somewhere they didn't want to be touched? They may say their answers depend on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where they're being touched • Who's doing the touching • Whether or not the other person is under the influence of drink or drugs • What they think the intent of the person is <p>It may be worth raising these things in response to their answers, just to help them consider.</p> | | |
| 10 mins | <p>Tell the group that violence is a last resort and usually an assertive response will do the trick, along with moving away from the situation. Sometimes people misread signals and don't know that their touch isn't welcome.</p> <p>Ask the group what an assertive response might sound like and write them up on the flipchart. Answers could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't do that, I don't like it • Don't touch me • Move your hand, I don't want it there • Your squashing me, move away <p>Ask them to practise – make it fun!</p> <p>If someone continues to oppress them, shouting is a good option and making an escape as soon as possible.</p> | | Flipchart paper and pens |
| 10 mins | <p>Ask the group who they would turn to, if someone was touching them inappropriately and wouldn't stop and they wanted help getting them to stop. Make a flip chart list. Answers should cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • youth worker (you!) • parent / family member • teacher / teaching assistant • police officer • doctor or health professional • friend | | Flipchart paper and pens |
| 5 mins | Finish by stressing that no-one has the right to touch you (apart from the police under certain circumstances) if you don't want them to. | | |



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