

Gender A B C

Education Programme
for Primary Schools



Body Safety / Female Genital Mutilation

The GenderABC project is coordinated by



and implemented by



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This educational module was developed by **Médicos del Mundo** and **APF – Associação para o Planeamento da Família** in the framework of the project GenderABC.

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Section I

INTRODUCTION

I. Purpose

The World Health Organization defines “child maltreatment” as the abuse and neglect that occurs to children under 18 years of age. This includes all types of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, negligence and commercial or other forms of exploitation, which result in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power. Available data also suggest that about 20% of women and 5-10% of men suffered sexual abuse as children¹.

According to the Council of Europe, it is estimated that in 70% to 85% of cases of abuse, the abuser is somebody the child knows and trusts, and is usually male. Approximately 70% of perpetrators know their victims before abuse takes place, and which fall into the first two categories listed below. Some of them hold prominent positions in the community and use their status to gain easy access to children and the trust of their families.

Child sex abusers can be:

- From a child’s family or family circle, including a parent, a step-parent, relative, or a family friend
- From a child’s circle of trusted adults, including school staff, teachers, coaches, scout leaders, the clergy, doctors, care givers etc.
- Adolescents and children who sexually harm other children. Children in this category can be as young as 5 years old. The overwhelming majority of children in this category are male. Few become adult sex offenders
- Child corrupters, or people who expose children to pornographic images or live sex performances, often to lower their inhibitions
- Users of online child pornography
- Child traffickers who recruit children for child prostitution
- Clients of prostitution who knowingly use the sexual services of a child²

Traditional harmful practices jeopardise women and girls’ body safety. This is the case for Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), i.e. all procedures involving partial or total removal of the female external genitalia or other injuries to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons, as defined by the World Health Organization.

¹ World Health Organization, available online at: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/child-maltreatment>
² Council of Europe, “One in five” Campaign, https://www.coe.int/t/dg3/children/1in5/WhatWeKnow/perpetrators_en.asp

FGM is a form of violence against women and girls that has a global presence. Schools, teachers and educators should be aware of the risk factors, whilst avoiding the stigmatisation of the participants. The aim of this module is to ensure that participants are conscious that nobody can touch or change their body without their consent.

Rather than frightening them, the module focuses on helping girls and boys to protect themselves by increasing their skills to identify risk, address proper strategies and act against gender-based violence. Boys will learn that they cannot touch girls without consent.

The module works on six messages that make participants able to more easily identify, prevent and protect themselves from gender-based violence³:

- 1. My body belongs to me: No is No
- 2. Body private parts
- 3. Safe and unsafe touching
- 4. Dangerous Secrets vs Happy Surprises
- 5. Listen to your body: early warning signs
- 6. Trust network

2. Main topics

- Human body: intimate parts
- Safe and unsafe touching
- Feelings/emotions and body language
- Secrets vs happy surprises

3. Keywords






Female genital mutilation • Intimate body parts • Emotions
Trust network • Body safety • Surprises vs secrets

4. Learning objectives

- Respect people’s boundaries regarding touching
- Recognise emotions and trust body language
- Identify the difference between dangerous secrets and happy surprises
- Prevent gender-based violence
- Prevent female genital mutilation

³Educators can use the poster developed in several languages by Educate2Empower Publishing, available online at: <https://e2epublishing.info/posters>

5. List of activities

	 Activity name	 Target age	 Total duration	 Materials	 Importance ⁴
1	Our Amazing Bodies	6-8 years	45-60 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 simple outlines of children’s bodies, one with vulva and one with penis and testicles• 1 flipchart sheet puzzle with the outline of a gender-neutral body (cut in 9 equal pieces)• 1 A3 paper sheet with a gender-neutral body per group• Colour pencils or markers of 5 different colours per group	★ ★ ★
2	Feelings Game	6-8 years 9-12 years	50 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feelings game• Dice and colour chips• Emotions flash cards• White card• Childrens scissors• Finger paint	★ ★ ★
3	Happy Surprises vs Dangerous Secrets	6-8 years 9-12 years	45 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scenario cards	★ ★ ★


⁴Activities are ranked from one to three stars, in increasing order of importance, i.e. three stars for “highly recommended”.

Section II

ACTIVITIES

Activity I Our Amazing Bodies ★★★

 **Total delivery time**
45 minutes
Preparation: 5
Delivery: 30-45
Follow-up: 10

-  **Materials & Resources**
- ☐ 2 simple outlines of children's bodies, one with vulva and one with penis and testicles⁵
 - ☐ 1 flipchart sheet puzzle with the outline of a gender-neutral body (cut in 9 equal pieces)
 - ☐ 1 A3 paper sheet with a gender-neutral body per group
 - ☐ Colour pencils or markers of 5 different colours per group
 - ☐ Video "Safe touch/Unsafe touch"⁶

optional

 **Target age**
6-8 years

→ BACKGROUND

The aim of the activity is to **help participants learn to integrate the sexual parts of their bodies with the rest of their bodies**, and to **teach them that their body is their own and that no-one can touch it without permission**. At the same time, they learn not to touch anybody's body without an expressed consent.

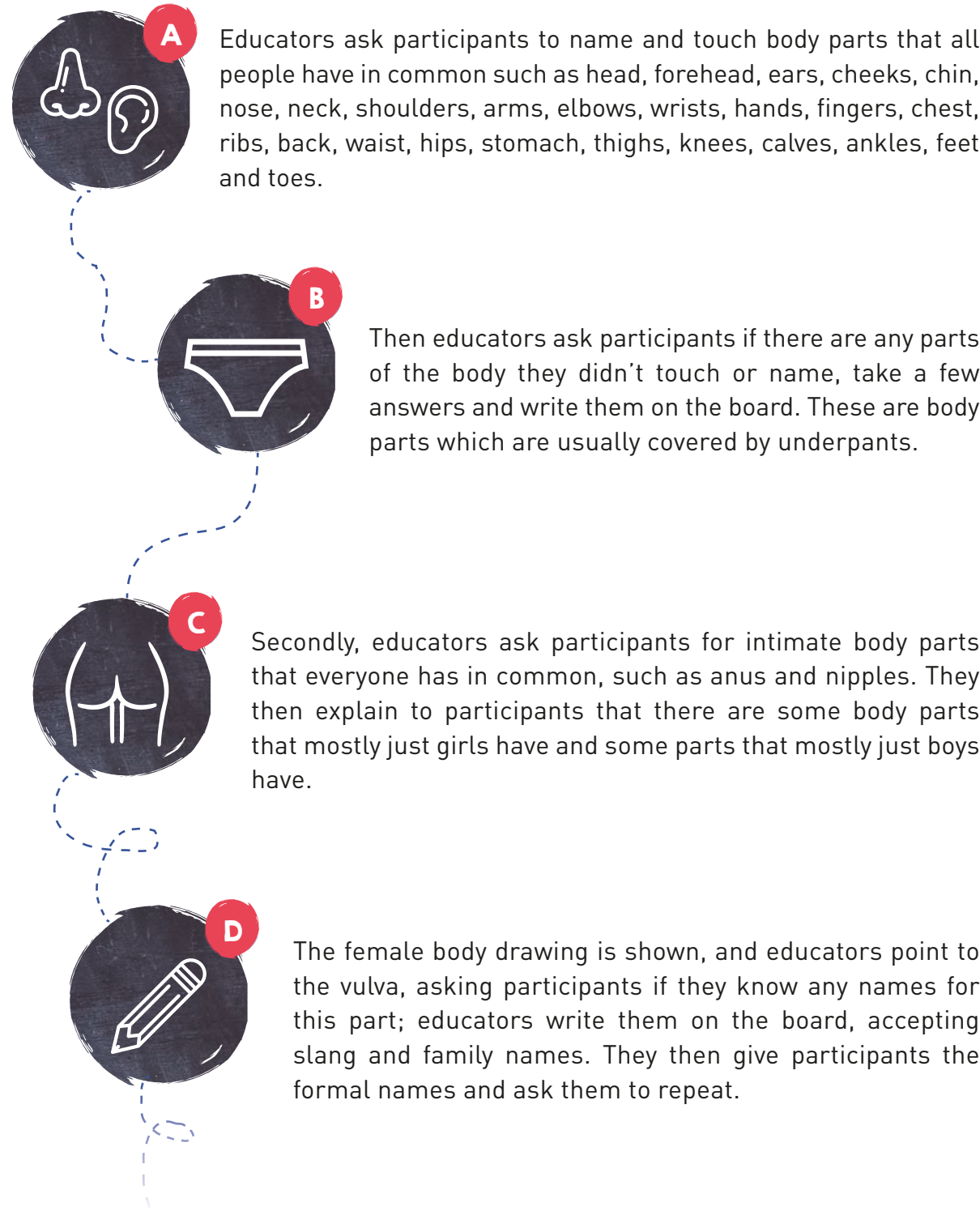
When children know and use the formal terminology for genitals - penis, scrotum, clitoris, vulva, vagina - they are more willing to recognise, communicate and expose embarrassing or abusive behaviour, such as sexual assault and female genital mutilation. On the other hand, when girls and boys feel awkward talking about genitals, they are more likely to feel embarrassed about asking questions, and they are less likely to inform an adult if someone is touching them inappropriately. When they do not know the formal words to name their body parts and do not have the sense of ownership that comes with that knowledge, children are more vulnerable.

⁵ Available at: https://static1.squarespace.com/static/50769910e4b07864e5d07147/t/54726dbfe-4b087a17996e137/1416785343396/BSE_ResourceMasters1-13.pdf

⁶ Fight Child Abuse, *Safe Touch/Unsafe Touch*, available online at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zNTUMNKSXwk>

Exercise 1 – Every Part Deserves a Proper Name⁷

→ SCENARIO



⁷ ReCAPP, Resource Center for Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention, available online at: <http://recapp.etr.org/recapp/index.cfm?fuseaction=pages.LearningActivitiesDetail&PageID=155#introduction>



Next, educators take the male body drawing and repeat the previous step asking participants for names of the intimate parts, providing the formal names, and asking the participants to repeat each word.



Lastly, educators give each participant a piece of paper and ask them to draw their own body with hair, face, nipples, and vulva or penis and testicles and to write the correct name of intimate parts.

Educators could conclude the first part of the activity with the video “Safe Touch/ Unsafe Touch” and work to reinforce the idea of intimate body parts and unsafe touching.

→ BRIEF

Educators need to encourage participants to interiorise the safety rules about intimate parts:

- My intimate parts are the parts of my body under my underwear
- I know how to identify and how to refer to my intimate parts by their formal names
- No one can touch my body without their consent. And I cannot touch somebody’s body without consent
- No one can ask me to touch their intimate parts. No one should show me pictures of intimate parts. If any of these things happen, I must tell a trusted adult in my safety network straight away, even if the perpetrator is someone from my family

Educators ask participants the following questions:

- What did you call your intimate parts before?
- How do you feel talking about your intimate parts?
- What can you do if someone wants to touch your body without your permission?
- Who can touch your intimate parts without your permission?

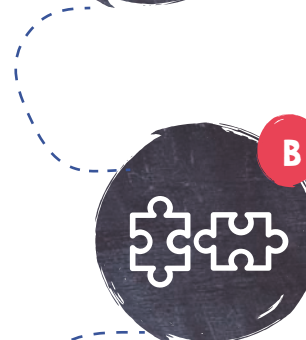


Exercise 2 – Bodily Integrity

→ SCENARIO



For the material, educators make use of one flipchart sheet and draw the outline of a gender-neutral body (such as shown in the example at the end of this exercise).



Educators cut the drawing in 9 equally sized pieces (3x3 rectangles) in order to create a puzzle, making sure 1 piece includes the entire head, 1 piece includes an entire hand, 1 piece includes an entire foot, and (most importantly) 1 piece includes the entire pelvic area (i.e. belly and genitals, in order to be able to include uterus and vulva).



To start the activity, educators invite participants to sit in a circle, and ask a volunteer to do the puzzle.



Educators then take away one piece of the puzzle and ask the group:

- If someone takes away this part of your body, what happens to you? (e.g. without “head piece” = “I may stop thinking”; without “hand piece” = “I may stop writing”; without “foot piece” = “I may stop walking”; without “pelvic piece” = “I may be unable to have children when I grow up”)



E Then, educators put that piece back into the puzzle, remove another one, and repeat the process. Pieces such as head, legs and/or arms are to be removed first, and then the piece of the pelvic area can follow.

Educators ask:

- Is it different if you are a boy or a girl?
- What happens if you're a boy?
- What happens if you're a girl?



F Educators address the consequences and the scenarios that can lead to the removal of the body part and prevention behaviours by asking three questions:

1. What happens to a person if we remove this part of her/his body?
2. In which scenario can this happen?
3. How can we prevent it?

E.g. 1: "What happens to a person if I remove her/his leg?" (the person risks not being able to walk properly); "What happens to a person if I remove her/his head?" (the person risks not being able to think properly); "What happens to a person if I remove her/his genitals?" (the person risks not being able to urinate properly, not being able to reproduce properly, not being able to give birth to a child).

E.g. 2: "In which situation could this person lose her/his leg? (car accident); "In which situation could this person lose her/his head/mind?" (mental health condition); "In which situation could this person lose her intimate parts?" (FGM for girls).

E.g. 3: "How could this person prevent being seriously injured in a car accident?" (safety-belt); "How could this person prevent losing her/his mind?" (stress management, mental health care support); "If a girl is from a community affected by FGM, how could this girl prevent losing her intimate parts?" (contact support services, talk to community leaders who are committed to put an end to FGM, call the police).

→ BRIEF

Educators ask participants the following questions:



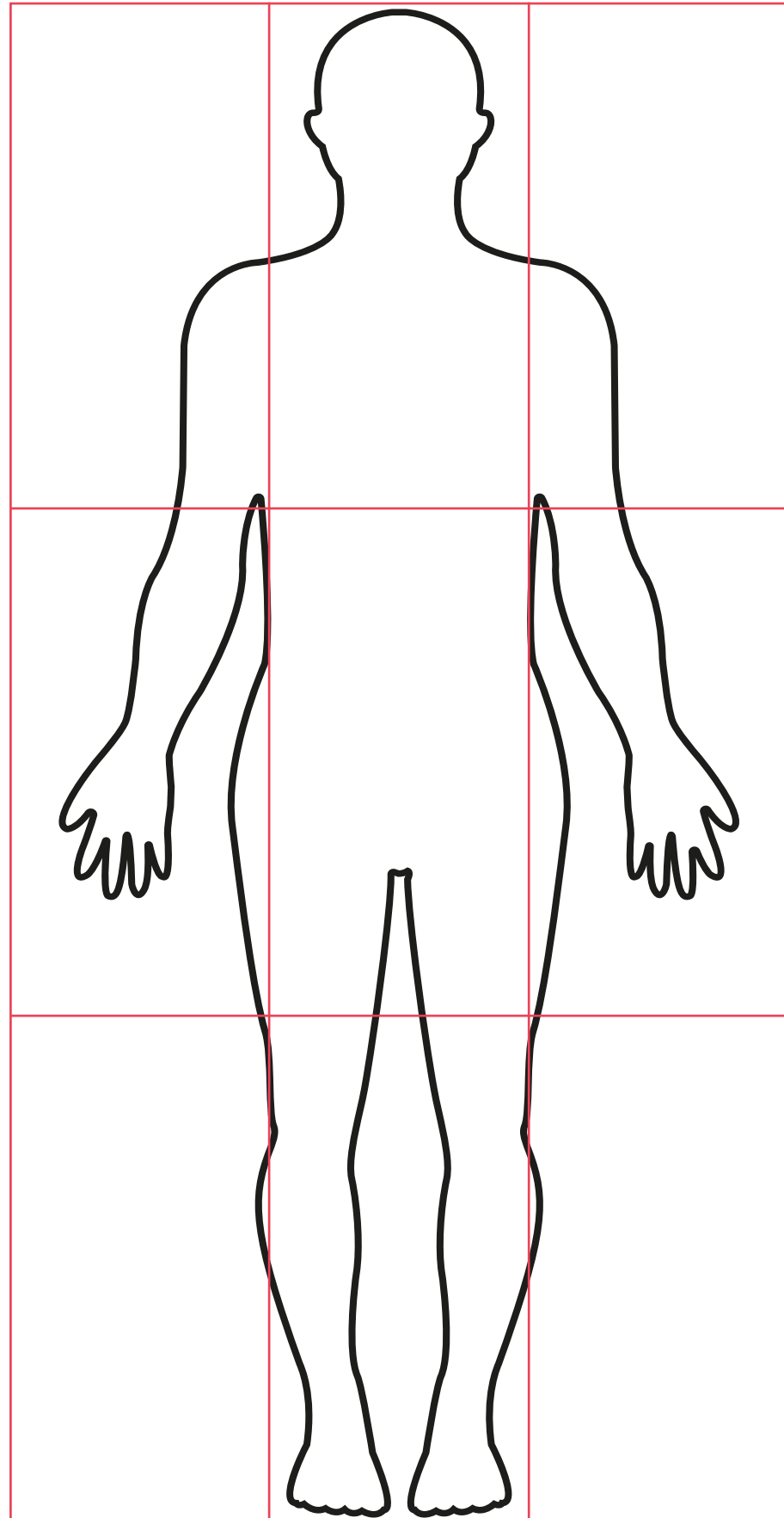
- What parts of your body can you remove without jeopardising your health? (e.g. I can have my hair cut; I can have my nails cut)
- What parts of your body can't be removed without jeopardising your health? (e.g. I can't have my arm removed; I can't have my leg removed; I can't have my intimate parts removed or cut)

Educators need to encourage participants to interiorise safety rules about bodily integrity and prevention of FGM, such as the following:

Unless I'm sick and need a surgery, no one can cut or remove my intimate parts; and if such a procedure needs to happen, it must be performed in a hospital by a doctor; it is not a ritual nor a party.

The discussion on topics such as intimate body parts, bodily integrity, the right to self-preservation and the right to self-determination can provide an opportunity to address the issue of FGM, leading to a discussion on the harmful practices which can be done on girls' bodies. FGM needs to be introduced as a form of gender-based violence and a human rights violation of women and girls. Informing girls on FGM, the risk of FGM, the prohibition of the practice and how to prevent it is a way to empower them and raise awareness on the issue.

Educators highlight the importance for girls – as well as their friends and their male siblings – to seek help if they think they could be at risk or if they know someone else at risk.

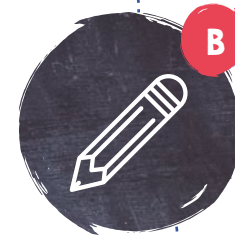


Exercise 3 – Body Contact

→ SCENARIO



Educators ask participants to create groups of 4 people. They have one gender-neutral body printed on an A3 piece of paper and educators give them coloured pencils or markers.



Educators then explain that each group should colour the body parts, applying the following rules:

- **Green:** everybody can touch this part of my body/it is ok for people to touch me here
- **Purple:** people can touch this part of my body if I give my consent
- **Blue:** my parents/friends can touch this part of my body and I won't feel uncomfortable
- **Orange:** my partner can touch this part of my body if I give my consent
- **Red:** nobody can touch this part of my body if I don't give my consent



Educators ask the participants to draw circles on the part of their bodies they think they are the only one in control of.

→ BRIEF

Educators ask participants the following questions:

- What can you do if someone touches the red parts of your body?
- How can you ask a person for her/his consent?
- How can you show you don't consent to someone touching you?
- Can you change your mind even if you said yes at first?



Activity 2 Feelings Game ★★



Total delivery time

50 minutes
Preparation: 5
Delivery: 35
Follow-up: 10



Materials

- Feelings game
- Dice and colour chip
- Emotions flash cards
- White card
- Childrens scissors
- Finger paint



Target age

6-8 years
9-12 years

→ BACKGROUND

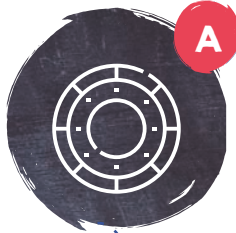
Feelings and emotions play an important role in a child’s life. They serve as an indicator for what they are experiencing and children should therefore recognise their feelings and understand their own body language. For instance, unpleasant emotions warn and help children act when they are at risk.

With this activity, **participants are challenged to talk about feelings and emotions:** how they react to certain emotions, what causes them and how to deal with them. It is also an opportunity to reflect on emotions and to prevent gender-based violence. **Participants learn that there are no emotions exclusive to just boys or girls.**

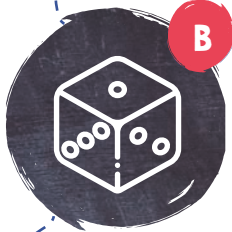
The aims of the activity are to:

- Help participants recognise their own and others’ emotions through facial expressions and body language
- Connect experiences with the emotions they cause
- Identify body signs that inform them about unsafe situations
- Prevent gender-based violence

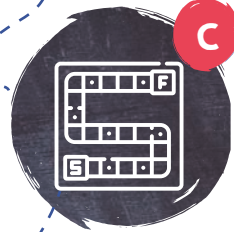
→ SCENARIO



Educators ask participants to create groups of 5 members and they all receive one coloured chip. Each round is played by one group member, who rotates each round.



All groups throw the dice and the group with the highest number rolled starts the game. The turn order is clockwise.



The starter group throws the dice and moves forward on the game-board. Then if it doesn’t reach green or yellow squares, the player takes a flash card and follows the instructions on it. The group that reaches the finish square first wins the game.



Once finished, participants paint a piece of paper with an imprint of their hand. Once the paint is dry, they write the name of 5 adults they trust to talk to in case they are in an unsafe situation and/or feel unpleasant feelings.

Game board⁸:



Flash cards:

Share the story of a moment you felt like this at home	Name a story character that you think felt like this	Make a face showing the emotion	Share the story of a moment you felt like this at school
What colour does this emotion make you think of?	Act it out. Choose another player to help you act out a moment you felt like this	Name an opposite emotion	Describe how your body feels when you feel this emotion
How would you support a friend if he/she was feeling like this?	When was the last time you felt like this?	What makes you feel like this?	What can you do if you feel like this?

→ BRIEF

While participants are playing, educators discuss what it feels like to be happy, sad, angry, etc. Educators ask participants if they believe there are boys' and girls' emotions, and ask them to reflect on it. It is important for the participants to understand that both pleasant and unpleasant feeling are common and both girls and boys experience them.

Educators help all participants build a list together of what to do with unpleasant feelings and how to support friends in similar situations, together with the body signs (early warning signs) that inform them when they are feeling unsafe. At first, educators let participants come up with some ideas of their own, and then they help them.

Educators make sure participants have a clear understanding of "safe" vs. "unsafe" situations. It is important for the participants to understand the different emotions that come with feeling "safe" and "unsafe".

By the end, participants will understand the feelings from the game and the early warning signs to unsafe situation, and have identified their trust adult network:

!!! EARLY WARNING SIGNS OF UNSAFE SITUATIONS:

- Hair feels like it is standing on end
- Sweaty brow
- Start to cry
- Heart beats fast
- Feel sick in the tummy
- Goosebumps
- Sweaty palms
- Need to go to the toilet
- Shaky all over
- Wobbly legs

⁸ https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1Q9uMZfvcvVPe8LC4ek7pF_H6sfEE2-AqKCr7HivnQU/edit#slide=id.g57ffc8dee2_0_103

Activity 3 Happy Surprises vs Dangerous Secrets⁹ ★★☆☆



Total delivery time

40 minutes

Preparation: 5

Delivery: 25

Follow-up: 10



Materials & Resources

Scenario cards

optional

Video "Secrets"¹⁰



Target age

6-8 years

9-12 years

→ BACKGROUND

One of the most powerful weapons child abusers have is to get children to keep secrets. They often start with small secrets to see if the child keeps them and then the predator will slowly progress onto deeper secrets after earning a child's trust.

The aim of the activity is threefold:

- Discourage participants from **keeping dangerous secret**
- Help participants **learn the difference** between "happy surprises" and "dangerous secrets"
- Encourage participants to **reveal dangerous secrets to adults they trust**

→ SCENARIO



Educators ask participants to define or explain the expression "happy surprise" and collect their responses until the closest definition is created. Then, educators explain the deep and real meaning of the expression.

Happy surprise is something fun and it usually makes everyone who knows about them joyful! It also gets to be revealed after a short time, and there's no threat or negative consequence if you do not tell anyone about it. For example, it's a family member's birthday next weekend, and there is a surprise party planned, so your family asks you not to tell anyone about the birthday party.



Secondly, educators ask participants the following questions:

- How do you think your family member will feel when s/he finds out about the party? (Happy, excited)
- Is someone asking you to never talk about what you know? (No)
- Does knowing this information make you sad, scared or confused? (No)
- Is someone threatening you with something bad if you tell someone about it? (No)



After answering these questions, educators explain to participants that in this case, it's OK not to tell the family member about what they know, because s/he will soon find out and be happy. This is not something they have to keep to themselves forever and knowing about it doesn't make them feel sad, scared or confused.



Educators ask participants to mention some examples of other types of surprises, to create a list of "happy surprises" on the board. Examples could include:

- Surprise visitor (friend or family member)
- Surprise prank/joke
- Surprise gift/surprise treat we can talk about
- Surprise dinner, snack or treat



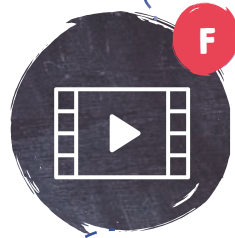
Educators ask participants to define or explain the expression "dangerous secret" and take their responses until a proper definition is created. Then, they facilitate the explanation with questions like:

- How can a dangerous secret hurt someone? (It can hurt their feelings; it can prevent someone from getting help; it can lead to someone else getting hurt)
- What do you think is the difference between a "happy surprise" and a "dangerous secret"? (Happy surprises make people happy, they are short-term and knowing about them doesn't make you uncomfortable. Dangerous secrets are meant to exclude others, often because the information would make others feel angry or upset. Dangerous secrets may involve threatening information to harm you or harm others in case the secret is revealed. Dangerous secrets often make you feel confused and upset, and they have no set end-date)

⁹ Adapted from *Kid Smart*, available online at:

https://www.kidsmart.org/~media/KidSmart/ResourceDocuments/Grades_3_5_Surprises_vs_Secrets_EN.pdf

¹⁰ Fight Child Abuse, *Secrets*, available online at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uAD17zMgjHc>



Educators show the video “Secrets” and then explain the difference between “dangerous secrets” and “happy surprises”.

Dangerous secrets are meant to stop someone from learning about something, usually because if other people found out, they would be mad or sad. Sometimes, a person might ask you to keep a secret forever. Some dangerous secrets can make you feel sad, scared, confused or uncomfortable. Sometimes someone will threaten to hurt you or people you care about if you tell a dangerous secret. Those are warning signs that this could be a dangerous situation.



Next to the list of “happy surprises” on the board, educators create a list called “dangerous secrets that you should TELL” and ask participants to provide examples of situations where a secret should be told to a trusted adult.

Examples may include:

- Someone is being bullied
- Someone feels uncomfortable
- Someone is scared
- Someone is getting/will be hurt
- Someone is being touched inappropriately



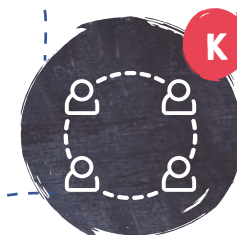
Educators explain to participants that if they know a dangerous secret and they realise they should TELL someone about it, it is never too late to tell a trusted adult about what happened. Educators need to insist on the fact that the participants aren’t responsible for adults’ behaviours and that they are not to be blamed for the secret adults want them to keep.



Educators ask participants to mention some trusted adults and write their names on the board too.



Participants are then divided into groups of 4 and educators give them the scenario cards. Each group is asked to read through each scenario card and place it into the best category (Dangerous secrets that you should TELL / Happy surprises that are OK to keep).



Once finished, all the groups share in plenary why they categorised each card the way they did.



Educators then ask 8 volunteers to enact a role play with each of the situations categorised in the “Dangerous secrets that you should TELL” category. In pairs they practice calmly and confidently revealing this dangerous secret to the “trusted adult” partner.

Dangerous secrets you should TELL

Your babysitter's boyfriend visited her at your house. You are not supposed to have visitors when your parents are not at home. Your babysitter asked you not to tell your parents about her boyfriend's visit.

Your parents have instructed you not to speak with strangers. When you walk home from school you often meet a man walking a cute puppy and you both started to talk. Recently the man has taken you to the corner store to buy you some gifts and asked you not to say anything to your parents.

Your friend says that her mom's new boyfriend is always rubbing her arm, giving her hugs and kissing her on the cheek. Your friend isn't comfortable with it but hasn't said anything to an adult about what's happening.

You are going away for holidays and you heard everybody's talking about throwing a big party for you. But your birthday isn't in summer and you don't feel comfortable with your family not giving you more information and keeping secrets from you about the party.

Your parents will take your little sister on a holiday trip abroad. You have overheard your parents talking and you realise this trip is meant to submit your sister to a ritual that implies harming her (by cutting parts of her body) in order for her to be accepted in the community. You've also learned that this ritual can't be performed in the country you live in because it's illegal. Your parents know you have overheard them, and tell you not to tell anyone.

You know this party is not a birthday party, it is a party only done for girls. You are very curious and want to know more about this party, but your family doesn't want to talk about it and tells you it is a surprise. Every time you insist, your family doesn't look amused but rather serious. Your parents know you have overheard them, and tell you not to tell anyone.

Your friend's brother says he knows a fun "touching game" that he wants to play with you, but it's only for kids, and no adults can know about it.

Happy surprises that are OK to Keep

You are at the mall with your father. He buys a necklace for your mother that he wants to give to her on her birthday. He asks you not to tell your mom about it.

Your parents have bought a family trip abroad: you will go to Disneyland during the summer holidays. They ask you not to tell your little sister about it until summer arrives.

Your soccer team is planning a big party for the coach after your last game, and no one is supposed to mention it in front of her.

Your friend tells you that he really likes a girl in your class. He asks you not to tell anyone else.

→ BRIEF

It is important for the participants to understand what kind of surprises they can keep secret, and that these can be fun things, such as presents, surprise parties, surprising someone with something nice, family holidays, etc. Educators should also underline that surprises make everyone happy when they are revealed. Participants also learn that there are other types of "safe" secrets – these can be the things you can share with your friends and you don't want to share with other people.

On the other hand, educators could highlight the "unsafe" and dangerous secrets children should immediately TELL – such as someone touching their body without consent and asking them not to say it to anyone, someone offering them treats or gifts and asking them not to tell anyone, or someone (such as a close family member) planning to perform a ritual for the girls to become women and wanting to be secretive about it.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



A project by:



End FGM
EUROPEAN NETWORK



ASSOCIAÇÃO PARA O PLANEAMENTO DA FAMÍLIA



AIDOS
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This project is co-funded by
the European Union