Special Learning

SOCIAL STORY PREVIEW

Finding My Way Through Dating & Relationships

Two story pages from the current book. The six Consent & Safety pages come first.

A trusted adult

Trusted adult: someone who listens to me, believes me, and does not tell me to keep it secret. If the person who hurt me is the one I usually go to, I can tell someone else instead.

Sample excerpt. The complete resource is available separately.

Sex is something I choose

Sex, or intercourse, is a very intimate act between me and someone else. It is something I choose. No one else can choose it for me.

First, I should know whether or not I am ready. It is very important to know if I am ready. If I am not ready to have sex, that is okay. I do not have to explain why. I can talk to a safe person about how I feel.

Being ready can change. Even if I said yes before, I can say no now. I am allowed to change my mind at any time, including after we have started.

My partner chooses too

If I want to have sex with my partner, I should ask them. I should ask every time.

I need to listen to my partner no matter what they decide. If my partner is not ready, this is okay, and I should respect their decision.

I must never pressure my partner. Pressure means asking over and over, begging, guilting, getting angry, or making them feel afraid to say no.

If my partner says nothing, or seems unsure, or is asleep, or has been drinking, that is not a yes. Only yes means yes. A yes should be free, awake, and sure.

What a yes and a no sound like

Ways to say no: "No." "I don't want to." "Stop." "Not right now." "I changed my mind."

All of these are complete answers. I do not owe anyone a reason.

Ways to say yes: "Yes, I want to." "Yes, I'm ready."

If I say no and the person keeps going, they are doing something wrong. It is not my fault.

My body is private

My body belongs to me. The parts of my body covered by a bathing suit are private.

No one is allowed to touch my private parts without my permission - not a friend, not a partner, not a family member, not a caregiver, not a teacher, not a doctor doing anything I have not agreed to.

No one is allowed to ask me to touch them, or to show me or photograph private parts, without my permission.

No one is allowed to tell me to keep touching a secret. A person who says "don't tell anyone" about touching is not being safe with me.

If something happens that I did not agree to

If someone touches me in a way I did not agree to, it is not my fault - even if I did not say no out loud, I did not fight, I was scared and froze, I said yes before and changed my mind, I had been drinking, I know the person, I like the person, or it happened before.

I should tell a safe person. A safe person is someone who listens to me, believes me, and does not tell me to keep it secret. This might be a parent, a teacher, a support worker, a doctor, or a nurse.

If the person who hurt me is the person I usually go to, I can tell someone else instead. I can keep telling people until somebody helps me. I am allowed to tell more than one person.

Who can help me

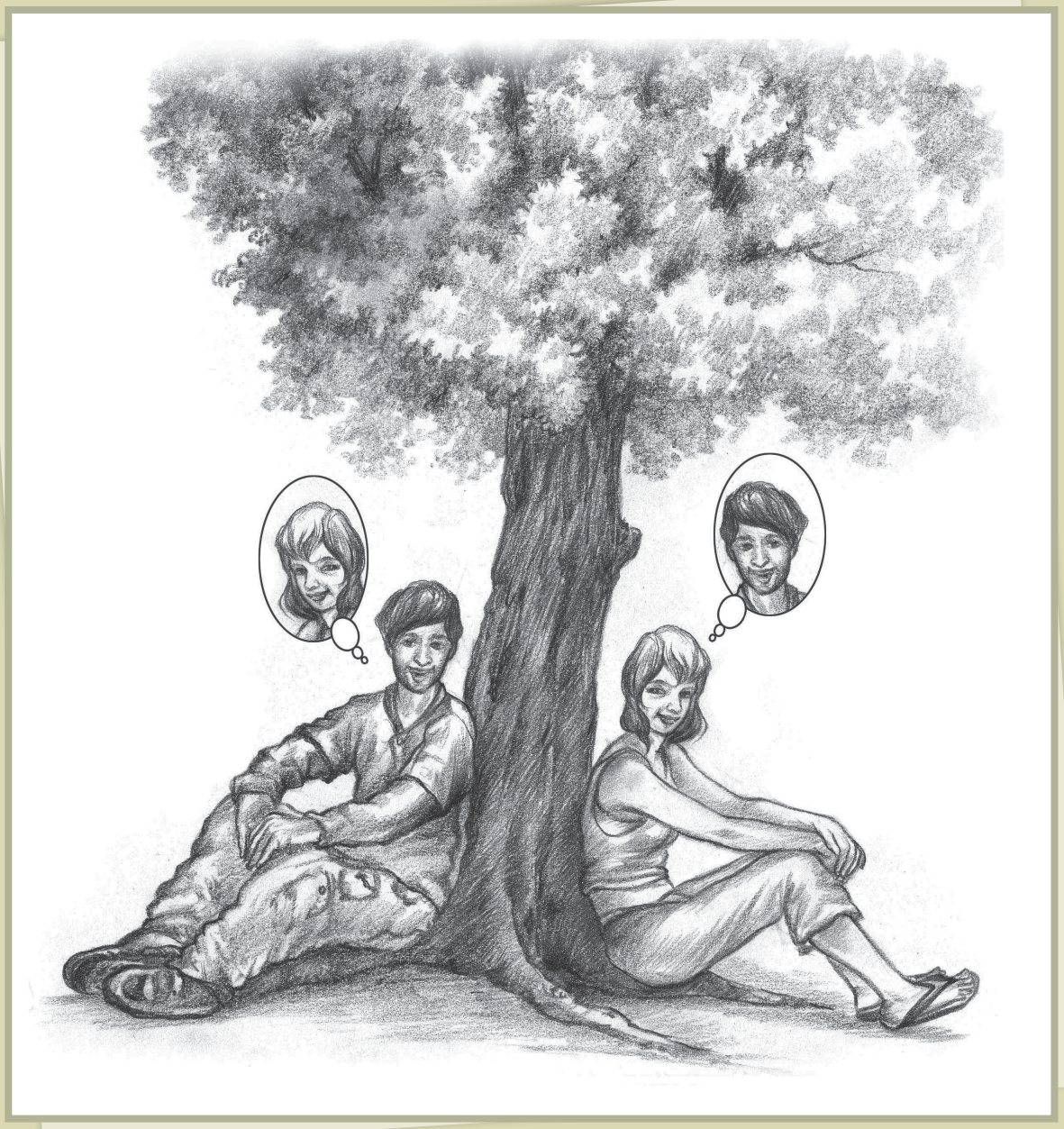
If I am in danger right now, I can call 911 (in the US; outside the US, my local emergency number).

If someone has touched me in a way I did not want, I can tell someone about it. In the US I can:

- call Childhelp at 800-422-4453
- text the word GO to 800-422-4453 — I have to send GO first, then they will write back
- chat with someone online at childhelphotline.org

It is free, and someone is there any hour of the day or night. I can call about something that happened to me. Outside the US, a trusted adult can help me find my country's child help line. If I cannot find one, I can keep telling people until somebody helps me.

Telling is never tattling. Telling is how I stay safe.



As I grow up, I may start to like someone as more than a friend. I might to start to have strong emotional feelings for another person. If I am a boy, I might start to have strong feelings for a girl. If I am a girl, I might start to have strong feelings for a boy. When I have strong feelings for someone, I can tell that person or I can keep it to myself. I can talk to a trusted adult if I am unsure about what to do.

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If I tell the other person that person might not feel the same way about me. This is okay and normal. Sometimes, we will still end up being friends. But sometimes the other person might not want to be friends because they may feel uncomfortable. I might feel sad or depressed if the other person doesn't have the same feelings as I do. I should respect their choice to not like me in that way. I can talk to a trusted adult to help me understand better.

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