

INFORMATION SERIES

Explaining Privacy

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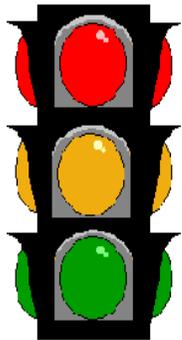
Your children need to understand about privacy. It helps to discuss privacy by talking about the colours that can be used to signify various stages of privacy - ranging from private to public.

Think about the colours of the traffic signals - green, red and yellow.

You may use coloured cards as you talk about each concept.

You may have your child colour in pictures using the three colours.

Ensure your child understands the traffic signals concept before you start.



- Red stands for things that are private.
- Yellow stands for Be Careful.
- Green stands for things that are public.

Places

CHARACTERISTICS OF A PUBLIC PLACE (OR A GREEN PLACE)

- Anyone can go there.
- There is usually no doorbell and you would not need to knock or ask permission to enter.
- Some rooms in our homes are public. There is not usually a door on these rooms.
- There may be strangers in these places.

- When we are in a public place, we need to behave in a way that is okay to strangers.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A PRIVATE PLACE (OR A RED PLACE)

- There are very few private places in our lives.
- Usually they are just found in our homes - our bedroom and our bathroom.
- We need to do things to make our private areas very private. We would shut the door and close the curtains.
- If someone wants to enter another person's private places, they must knock on the door and wait to be invited in.
- When we are in our private places, we can do anything we want.

- These things would be none of anyone else's business.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A CAREFUL PLACE (OR A YELLOW PLACE)

- These are found in public places, but are there to allow us to do something that is private. An example is a changing room in the store.
- We need to be careful when we use these places.

For example, if we are trying on a new garment, we would be certain the door or curtain is closed. We would also only remove those clothes that were absolutely necessary for us to see how the new item looks.



Important things about places

A question that helps clarify whether a place is Public/Private or Be Careful is "Could you ever change your clothes in this place?"

If the answer is "No! Never!" then the place would be a "Public" place.

If the answer is "Yes", then the place could be a "Private or Careful" place.

HOW TO BEHAVE IN DIFFERENT PLACES

Characteristics of Public Behaviour

- These can be done in front of strangers.
- They are okay in most places.



Characteristics of Private Behaviour

- These are done in a private place with the door shut, and the curtains (or blinds) closed.
- There is nothing wrong with these behaviours -they are special and we save them for our personal, private times.
- If another person is involved, they must already have a private relationship like a husband or wife.
- If another person is involved, that person must be okay with what is happening.
- Other people would feel embarrassed to see us doing things that are private.

Characteristics of Be Careful Behaviour

- It is not quite as personal as a private behaviour, but we often want privacy to do it. (Grooming and adjustment underclothing would be a Be Careful Behaviour).
- Some Be Careful Behaviour can be done in public, but only if it is okay to do it in that situation. An example is dancing - okay at a dance, but not in a grocery store!
 - We need to think about whether other people will be upset if they see us doing these things. Some displays of

affection might be "Be Careful" while others would be considered to be private.

WHAT TO WEAR IN DIFFERENT PLACES

Characteristics of Public Clothing.

- You can wear it just about anywhere.
- It's okay if strangers see you wearing it.

Characteristics of Private Clothing

- It can never be shown in public.
- It must always be covered - including underwear bands not showing above jeans, bra straps not falling out of sleeves and top of knee high hose not showing above hem.
- Strangers are never allowed to see it.

Characteristics of Be Careful Clothing

- You can wear in some situations but not in others.
- You can wear to some places but not to others.
- Examples are clothes worn for sports, Halloween costumes, swimsuits, etc.
- You have to think about whether Be Careful clothing would be seen as okay. For example, would other people be wearing a swimsuit to work?
- Different families have different beliefs about certain items of clothing.

WHAT BODY PARTS DO YOU COVER?

Characteristics of Public Body Parts

- They may be seen by anyone, including strangers.
- They may be considered to be Public in Ireland, but Private in other countries. For example, hair may need to be covered in other countries and cultures.

Characteristics of Private Body Parts

- They must be kept covered at all times when we are in public.

- If they must be uncovered in a Be Careful place, we must be careful to keep them as covered as we can.
- They are the body parts that are usually covered by our underwear and bathing suit.
- We need to think about whether it is okay to show this body part in certain circumstances.
- Different families have different beliefs about which body parts are Be Careful and which are best kept private.

Characteristics of Be Careful Body Parts

- They may be shown in public some of the time. Examples are the beach, backyard, and fancy eveningwear for women.

Remember: We do not have the right to touch another person - even on a public body part without his or her permission.

Susan Ludwig works as a consultant for "SexualHealth.com." She has facilitated workshops in Ontario and in the United States for Clients, Teachers, Social Workers, Parents and Care Providers.

Sexuality Resources at CDSS:

Check out our website at www.cdss.ca go to resources-newsletter articles-sexuality

→ Sexuality, Relationships and Adolescents with Down Syndrome

CDSS 1996 cost: \$2.50 each

This booklet is a candid and thorough guide for parents of adolescents with Down syndrome.

→ Sexuality, Relationships and Me

CDSS 1999 cost: \$20.00

A series of eight illustrated booklets that deal with

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|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Being with others | Intimacy and marriage |
| Changes in your body for girls | Facts on sexual hurting |
| Changes in your body for boys | Masturbation and privacy for girls |
| Pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases | Masturbation and privacy for boys |

→ I Openers: Parents Ask Questions about Sexuality and Children with Developmental Disabilities

David Hingsburger 1993 cost: \$15.00

David offers real life answers to questions your children may ask you.

→ Sexuality: Your Sons and Daughters with Intellectual Disabilities

K. Melberg Schwier & D. Hingsburger 2000 cost: \$45.00

This book is a collection of parent stories mixed with advice and suggestions. Adults with developmental disabilities also share their thoughts and feelings about sexuality in this book.

WEBSITES RELATED TO SEXUALITY AND DISABILITY:

www.fromgirltowoman.wmb.org.au An information package for families, carers, people with a disability and service providers regarding health issues for girls and women with a disability.

www.nas.com/downsyn/menman.html This is a general guideline to assist women with an intellectual disability to manage their menstruation.

www.dsa.org.mt/magazine_jun03.htm An excellent article related to sexuality and young people with Down syndrome.

www.teachingsexualhealth.ca/pages/diversity.html A web site that offers a number of adapted educational units for teaching about sexuality.

www.sexualhealth.com Provides access to sexuality information for people with disabilities.

www.our-kids.org/Books/sexed.htm Contains lists of resources and facts related to sexuality and developmental disabilities

www.diverse-city.com Contains a number of resources created for people who have cognitive challenges.

www.stnafield.com/sexed-1.html Link to a wide range of teaching materials and teacher's guides. Includes the video :Janet's Got Her Period.

www.canadian-health-network.ca/faq/sexuality_reproductive Articles about talking with your child about sex, links to other resources.

www.teachingsexualhealth.ca Based upon the Alberta Learning Curriculum, developed for teachers. Includes sections for parents and students of all grade levels.

www.innerbody.com Colorful anatomy pictures and text.

www.etr.org/recapp/practice/edskills200110.htm A teacher based website with a section for students with developmental disabilities.