

## Session 5

### Personal safety rules and asking for help

#### Rationale

Children are often not taught personal safety rules clearly and are somehow expected to derive them from what people around them say and do. Adults may have attached shame to certain parts of the body in their attempt to teach children social etiquettes about clothing and touching. Children may have been told that they 'should not allow anyone to touch them in certain parts of the body'. This is difficult to do. We cannot prevent people from touching us –we have no control over their actions. We have control over what we do. We can follow rules and respect ourselves and others. We can resist and report when someone breaks personal safety rules.

Sexual abusers in many cases abuse more than one child. If even one of the targets of abuse develops the confidence to report the matter it could help stop the abuser from abusing other children. Most abusers either threaten or ask the child to keep the act as a special secret from others. It is thus imperative that we teach children that any secret related to personal safety rules and body parts can be harmful and must be reported to a safe adult so that the abuser can be stopped.

#### Materials required

- Marker pen
- Any sticking substance (Blu Tac / double sided sticking tape / cello tape / board pins)
- Session 5 Worksheets
- Charts for body parts

#### Objective of session 5

To impart and help children internalize the following messages:

**Core Message 1: Rules are made for safety**

**Core Message 2: If people enter my personal space without permission, I can tell them not to do so and move away.**

**Core Message 3: We often touch each other while talking/ playing. If I feel uncomfortable with the way a person is touching me, I can tell him/her to stop.**

**Core Message 4: Body Rules are for our safety**

**Core Message 5: People's behavior (including how they touch others) may be safe, unsafe or confusing. I can report unsafe and confusing behaviour to a safe adult who cares for me.**

**Core Message 6: I tell uncomfortable or unsafe 'secrets' to a safe adult who care for me**

Core Message 1: **Rules are made for safety**

Ask Children: Where do we find rules? Why do we need rules?

Discussion: At institutions, at school, at home, traffic rules, games, etc.

Can you name some of the safety rules?

- Do not play with knives or scissors to prevent getting cut.
- Do not run down the stairs to prevent getting injured.
- Do not run across a road

**We have rules so that we can be safe.** Our mind and memory help us remember safety rules. It also helps us understand why we should do some things and not do some other things, why some things are safe for us and why some things are unsafe for us.

**Refer to Annexure 5:1 more examples.**

**Refer to Annexure 5:2 for alternative exercises**

***Material Required***

Marker pen, Blu Tac / Board pins /  
Double sided sticking tape / Cello tape  
Marker pen, Chalk, Duster,  
Blackboard, Charts/flash cards for  
safety Rules

**Tips for Trainers**

- Elicit different commonly known safety rules that children are taught to follow. Include important rules that may not have been stated by the students. Remind them that when people break safety rules, they may cause harm to themselves and others.
- Refer to Annexure 5:1 and 5:2 for additional or alternate activities for this section.

**Core Message 2: If people enter my personal space without permission, I can tell them not to do so and move away.**

**Methodology:**

Personal is something that belongs to you. It is only yours.

Give some examples of things in institution that are personal to you? (Children's eraser, pencil, bag)

Yes, your pencil, eraser, etc. and even some of your clothes like your favourite dress or your favourite t-shirt are your personal. Would you like anyone touching your personal things or taking your personal things without asking you? (No)

Yes, we would not like it if someone takes our personal things without asking us.

In the same manner, Personal Space is the space around us that we consider our own. We feel uncomfortable when others enter our personal space without our permission.

Role play: Facilitator goes closer and closer to a student but does not touch the student. Places her hand in front of the student's face, without touching him. Ask the student if he is feeling comfortable. Why not?

What do you do when your friend/ classmate pulls your hair/ pushes you/pinches you/ pokes you with a pencil/ sits very close to you or 'comes into your part of the desk'?

Discussion: The responses may be - I push them away/ I complain to the teacher / I tell the person to move away / stop doing that/ I do to them what they were doing to me/ I don't do anything/ they stop by themselves etc.

Discuss what they can do which will be safe for them at that time and in the future.

**Advance Preparation**

Note the definition of personal and personal space in a clear print on a chart to put on a flannel board.

**Material Required**

Your bag, purse or any other object that can be easily identified as belonging to you; charts, glue/cello tape

**Tips for Trainers**

Please discuss as everybody is special and unique all of us have different understanding of personal space. However, there are specific rules about certain areas and parts of our bodies.

**Making Connections**

Once children understand that they are the boss of their body and they control what they do, they can ask others to also follow body safety rules.

**Core Message 3: We often touch each other while talking/ playing. If I feel uncomfortable with the way a person is touching me, I can tell him/her to stop.**

Discussion: There are many times when we give permission or take permission to enter people's personal space/ touch them.

Ask children which kind of touch they feel is OK and don't mind.

Discussion: Some of us like to hug our mother, hold our friend's hand, sit in our father's lap, hug our friend, sleep with our grandmother etc. However, some children like being hugged. Some don't. Both are ok.

Activity: Use pictures depicting safe and unsafe touches that you have cut from magazines or drawn. Ask the students what the person in the picture may be feeling while receiving the touch. Ask whether that touch then could be a safe (thumbs up) or unsafe touch (thumbs down).

Touches are very important and most touches are safe. But when we feel a touch is unsafe or confusing, we must tell a trusted adult like tell our parents, teacher, older brother or sister, or any person who cares for us. We can always inform our trusted adults if we do not like certain touches.

Remind the students that they are very special and are the boss of their body. Also remind them that they have every right to keep their body safe.

**Tips for Trainers**

- Use the 'thumbs up' and the 'thumbs down' sign while talking about safe and unsafe touches as it gives a memorable visual response to the concept of safe being all ok and unsafe being not ok.
- If any student gives a different answer from the expected response, do not correct the child; rather ask the child to state the reason and use such incidents as points for discussion during the class. Another option is to simply affirm that for one student it is safe but for another is unsafe. Don't coax a child to say that the example given is a safe touch as it may vary with children's experience.

**Key Message to Communicate**

Understanding and recognizing the difference between safe and unsafe touches goes a long way in empowering students to stop any potential form of abuse.

Reiterate that students are the boss of their own body and can report anything that makes them feel unsafe to people who care for them. This will develop in them the confidence to talk about any person whose behaviour they find unsafe/confusing.

#### **Core Message 4: We follow Body Safety Rules**

There are also some body rules we follow when we are with others. Use the charts provided which show a boy and girl in swimwear/undergarments. Draw a stick figure on the board and circle the genitals and buttocks.

Explain that the anatomical names for these parts are penis and scrotum in boys, vulva in girls. Label the anus.

The rules are:

- (1) We keep certain parts covered with clothes in front of others.

If a child asks 'why' we keep these parts covered or how they are different from the other parts, explain that we wear clothes and these are the rules for wearing clothes. Rules are for our safety.

Some people trouble children by breaking their safety rules. Hence it is important to know the rules so that you can report a person who breaks your or anyone else's safety rules.

- (2) We do not touch these parts in front of others
- (3) We talk about these parts only with our safe adults - people we trust and who care for us. We can ask them questions about these parts and tell them about anything that is troubling us. The doctor may have to examine our body (in the presence of a safe adult) to help us and take care of us. That is okay.
- (4) We follow these rules for each other. That is, we do not touch others in these areas (mouth, chest, buttocks and genitals) or uncover them or deliberately try to look at these parts or talk about these parts casually. No one (adult or child) should touch another person's body in unsafe or hurtful ways.

Ask them if there are any other parts of the body where they do not feel comfortable being touched. Mouth is also a private part which we do not cover but we do not touch other people on their mouth.

**Refer to charts for body parts in Annexure 5:2**

#### **Advance Preparation**

Prepare a chart displaying a boy and girl in swimwear/undergarments. The picture of the girl should ideally be in a two-piece swimsuit, so as to avoid students from getting confused.

#### **Tips for Trainers**

**It is important for care takers and adults to become comfortable with words like genitals and anus. They may sound alien at first, but it is useful to normalize the nomenclature.**

**In most cases, while discussing the names of certain body parts and while showing them the diagrams, students will feel shy, awkward and embarrassed. This will in most cases result in giggling or covering their eyes, etc. At such a time please realize that it is a natural way for the students to react in this manner. It would be advisable to let the students vent out their initial reaction before moving on to talk about private body parts. Students can sense non-verbal cues very well and hence you need to be comfortable and confident when doing this session. Prior practice/mock session would help.**

**The concept is not that we can prevent people from touching you but we don't touch others in unsafe or hurtful ways. Children should also know that nobody should touch another person in unsafe/hurtful ways.**

**Core Message 4: We follow Body Safety Rules Continued.....**

Emphasize that these rules are for safety, and not because there is any shame in any part of our body.

In most cases, while discussing the names of certain body parts and while showing them the diagrams, students will feel shy, awkward and embarrassed. This will in most cases result in giggling or covering their eyes, etc. At such a time please realize that it is a natural way for the students to react in this manner. It would be advisable to let the students vent out their initial reaction before moving on to talk about private body parts.

Students can sense non-verbal cues very well and hence you need to be confident and fluent while displaying the diagrams and naming private body parts.

**Tips for Trainers**

- Have the students repeat the rules as many times as possible and with actions to help embed the rules in their minds.

**Core Message 5: People’s behavior (including how they touch) may be safe, unsafe or confusing. I can report unsafe and confusing behaviour to a safe adult who cares for me.**

Safe behaviour: When people follow each other’s body safety rules.

Unsafe behavior: is when someone deliberately breaks body safety rules.

If someone deliberately breaks our safety rules, we feel uncomfortable and unsafe.

The person who breaks safety rules deliberately is doing something shameful. His or her behavior is unsafe. We can tell the person to stop and we can report such behavior to our safe adults. Then people can stop the trouble maker from troubling us and other children.

Ask children to enact the following role plays:

1. Child goes to a shop. The shop keeper pats the child on the head.
2. Child goes to a shop. The shop keeper hugs the child and tries to pull the child into the shop.
3. Child playing alone in a park. A person comes and starts playing with the child
4. Child lost in a market. A woman offers to take the child home.
5. Child lost on a street.
6. An older person/ boy/girl you know wants you to be dress up like ‘Superman’ - in your undergarments and wants to take your photo

Ask children what they would do in these situations.

What will they say?

Whom will they ask for help?

Discuss different options vis a vis safety.

Emphasize: It is never all right for someone to touch, look at or talk in ways that break body safety rules, except to keep you clean and healthy. It is never all right for someone to ask you to touch, look at or talk in ways that break body safety rules.

Sometimes we may accidentally break another person’s body safety rules. Since we did not plan and do it purposely, we can look/ move away and say ‘sorry/ excuse me.’

**Material Required**

Charts from the previous sessions

Blu Tac / Board pins / Double sided sticking tape

Worksheet on safe and unsafe touch for all children

**Tips for Trainers**

- The part “Except to keep them clean and healthy” in Safety Rules may cause some confusion among students. Provide ample examples to help students understand the clause. For example, doctor giving injection in the buttock or caregiver giving a bath when you are unwell.

Refer to the Annexure 5:3 for worksheet on Safe and Unsafe Touch. The worksheet can either be done in the session or as a homework depending on the time span of the session.

**Key messages to communicate**

I am the boss of my own body and I have the right to keep it safe.

It is not all right for someone to touch, look at or talk in ways that break body safety rules, except to keep you clean and healthy. **It is never all right for someone to ask you to touch, look at or talk in ways that break their body safety rules.**

**Core Message 6: I can tell uncomfortable or unsafe 'secrets' to a safe adult who cares for me**

Tell a story about a happy secret:

For example, Last week, it was my relative's birthday. We decided to surprise her with a home-made gift! We worked without telling her, and kept it a secret for a whole week till her birthday! Do you also sometimes keep secrets?

Tell a story about unsafe secret

This is one more story about a child who had just got back from the dentist. She was told not to eat any sweets / chocolates for two days. An older cousin came home with the child's favourite chocolate and gave it to the child. When the child refused, the cousin said, 'Have just one bite, let this be a secret between you and me, I brought this for you because you are my favourite cousin. I won't tell anyone you had a chocolate'. The child felt uncomfortable with this secret.

Discussion: There are different types of secrets. Some are happy secrets. Some other secrets may not be happy / maybe happy but confusing / may not be comfortable.

You do not have to keep uncomfortable, unhappy, yucky secrets.

For your safety, it is good to go and tell such secret to an adult for you.

**Making Connections**

Most abusers either threaten the child or ask the child to keep the act as a special secret. It is thus imperative that we teach children that any secret pertaining to breaking safety rules is harmful and needs to be reported to a safe adult or adults so that the abuser can be stopped.

## Concluding the session

### Game / fun activity:

Simon says: Ask students to decide what they would do or not do as you call out different safe and unsafe things that 'Simon' is saying. If the children think it is safe to do that activity then they should mime it. If they think it is unsafe, they should stand still and say "No!"

Summarize and review the key messages:

### Activity:

Ask children to complete the **Worksheet on 'Safe and Unsafe situations/touches'**. It can be either done as part of the session or as homework. For the Worksheet, Refer to **Annexure 5:4**

What did you learn today?

Reiterate

**Core Message 1: Rules are made for safety**

**Core Message 2: If people enter my personal space without permission, I can tell them not to do so and move away.**

**Core Message 3: We often touch each other while talking/ playing. If I feel uncomfortable with the way a person is touching me, I can tell him/her to stop.**

**Core Message 4: Body Rules are for our safety**

**Core Message 5: People's behavior (including how they touch others) may be safe, unsafe or confusing. I can report unsafe and confusing behaviour to a safe adult who cares for me.**

**Core Message 6: I tell uncomfortable or unsafe 'secrets' to a safe adult who care for me**

I came here to help you learn more about yourself, how to take care of yourself and be safe. I will come again and we will learn some more things.

## Annexure 5:1 Additional / Alternate Stories

**Safety:** State a few situations or show pictures of the same and ask students to clap their hands if the situation follows a rule and bang the desk twice if it does not. For example, if you find a pencil in your ear.

You can also ask students to give their reasons for following the rules.

### Safety Rules:

- Stay away from fire.
- Do not put your hands out of a moving vehicle.
- Never eat anything given by a stranger.
- Do not touch electric socket with wet hands.
- Do not use electrical objects when your adults are not present.
- Do not go out alone.
- Do not put sharp objects in your ear.
- Do not play on the road (as you may get hit by a vehicle).
- When going up the stairs you must go slowly and use the handrail.
- When children /people are playing cricket do not play in the middle of the road.
- If you do not know how to swim you should not go near the water.
- When someone is on the swing do not stand in front of it.
- Do not tease or disturb a street dog or hit it with a stick.
- Do not go to isolated places like parking areas in the evening.
- Always keep the telephone numbers of your trusted persons handy.

## Annexure 5:2 Additional / Alternate Activities

### Keeping Myself Safe

**Guess & Say How** – Fill a box / bag with a few articles / pictures. Blindfold one student at a time and ask him or her to pick up any one of the objects and then state the safety rule connected to it.

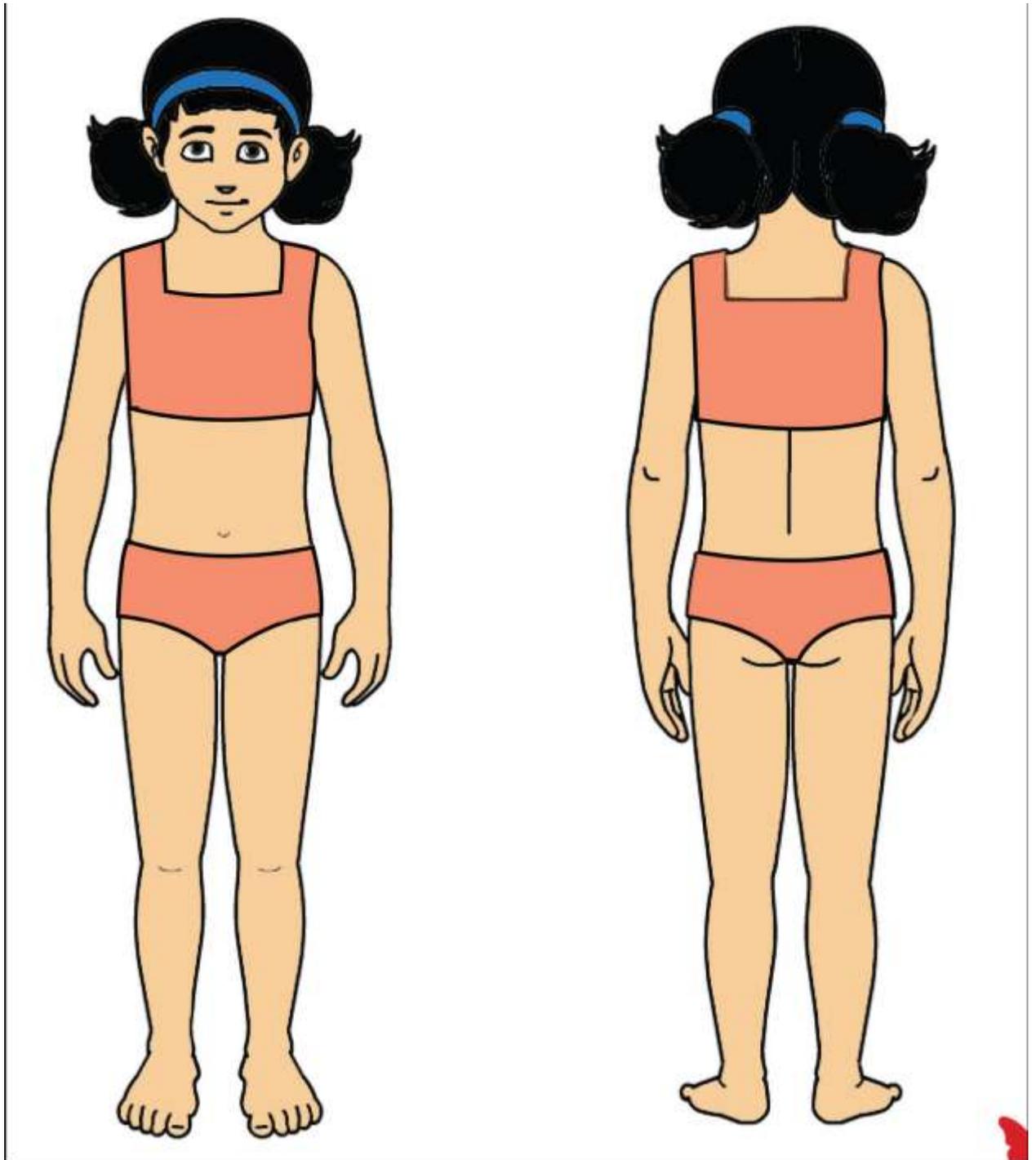
E.g.: Picture of a scissor – Do not play with scissors

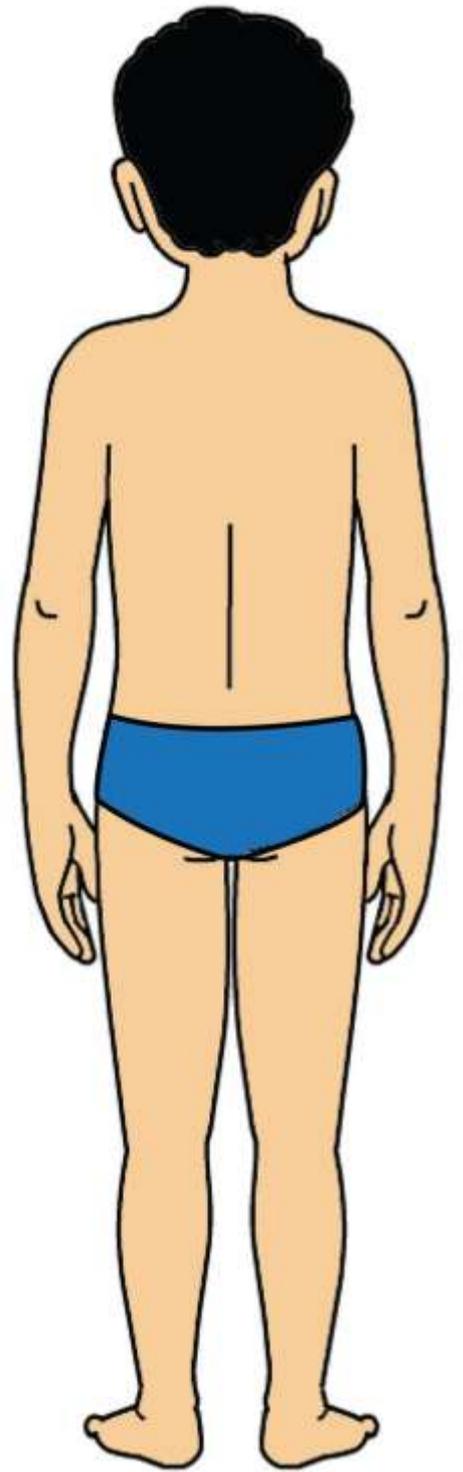
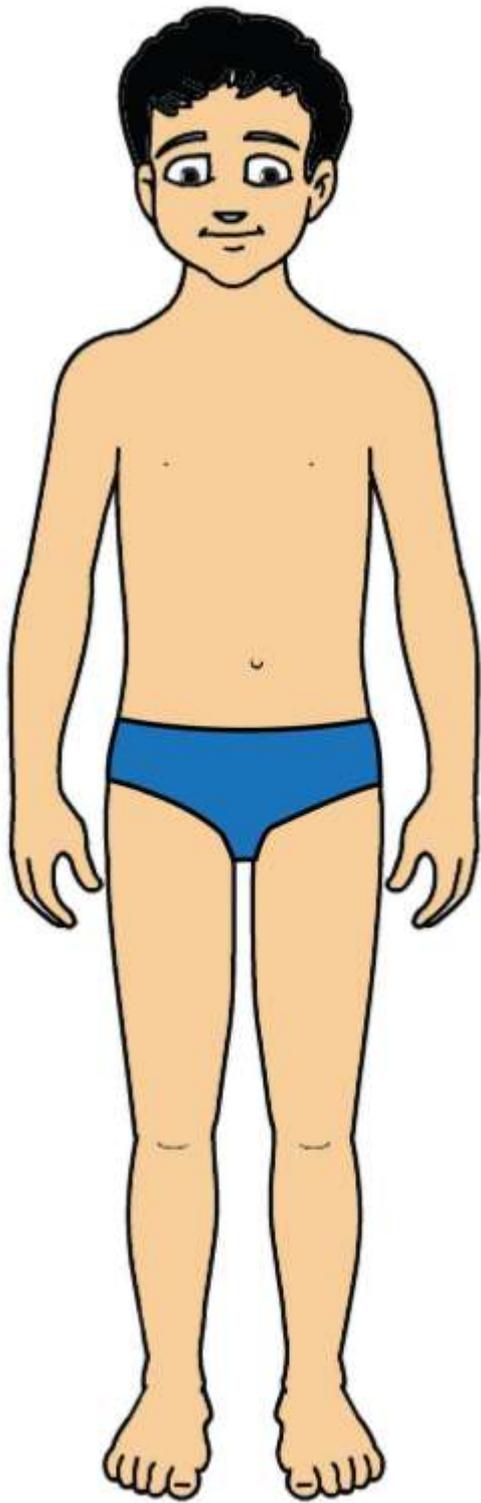
Pencil – Do not put the pencil into your ears / Do not poke others with a pencil.

Picture of a staircase – Walk up / down the staircase. Do not run.

**Annexure 1:3**

**Charts to be used for introducing names of genitals/Body parts**





Worksheet on Safe and Unsafe situations

On this page, there are some examples of safe & unsafe situations/touches. Look at the pictures and put a (Tick) if the situation/touch is safe and put a (Cross) if the situation/touch is unsafe.







