

Supporting Healthy Bodies & Strong Feelings

A Conversation Guide for You and Your Young Child

Body Awareness

- Use **accurate names** for all body parts, including genitals
- **Normalize** body functions (peeing, pooping, burping) as natural—not “gross”
- Avoid **shame-based language** such as “Don’t touch that—yuck!”
- Help them learn who helps with **private parts** (e.g. caregiver, doctor with parent present)



Parent Reflection:

How many of these words can you say out loud in a calm, confident voice without whispering or laughing?

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arm | <input type="checkbox"/> Ear | <input type="checkbox"/> Scrotum |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nipple | <input type="checkbox"/> Breast | <input type="checkbox"/> Vulva |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Penis | <input type="checkbox"/> Anus | |

How many did you get?

Helpful Resource:



Identifying Feelings

- **Label** your own emotions rather than dismissing them. For example, “I’m feeling frustrated right now.”
- Ask **open-ended** questions about your child’s feelings, such as “How did that make you feel?”
- Be **responsive** to your child’s emotions, practicing awareness and acceptance
- **Role play** to practice emotional regulation

Scan me!



Book Recommendations:

THE SCIENCE OF BABIES: A LITTLE BOOK FOR BIG QUESTIONS ABOUT BODIES, BIRTH, AND FAMILIES,

WILLIAM J. TAVERNER, 2025

LET’S TALK ABOUT BODY BOUNDARIES, CONSENT, & RESPECT,

JAYNEEN SANDERS, 2018

WE ASK PERMISSION (WE SAY WHAT’S OKAY), LYDIA BOWERS & ISABEL MUÑOZ, 2022

THIS IS MY BODY, LIL CARLE & LIUBA SYROTIUK, 2020

MY VULVA, COURTNEY J. ANGERMEIER, 2021

Consent & Safety

- Even young children can learn their **body belongs to them**
- Model consent & **ask your child** before you help with touch
- Let your **child decide** how to greet others (hug, high-five, wave, fist bump, etc.)
- **Support them** if they say no to touch, even with relatives
- **Speak up** when others assume touch is okay

What can you say?

- ♥ “Can I wipe your face?”
- ♥ “We’re practicing asking before touching. Please ask first.”
- ♥ “You can say yes or no to touch.”

References:

- Carnagey, M. P. (2020). Sex positive talks to have with your kids: A guide to raising sexually healthy, informed, empowered young people.
- Castro, V. L., Halberstadt, A. G., Lozada, F. T., & Craig, A. B. (2016). Parents’ emotion-related beliefs, behaviors, and skills predict children’s recognition of emotion. *Infant and Child Development*, 24(1), 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1002/icd.1868>
- Holman, A. et al. (2026). Let’s change the talk: Starting the conversation workbook. Self-published.
- Weir, K. (2023, April 21). How to help kids understand and manage their emotions. <https://www.apa.org/topics/parenting/emotion-regulation>