

STEPS TO SAFETY

Your Child's Right to Safety, Respect, Identity, a Voice, and a Childhood

We all, even kids, have rights, including the right to make choices and decisions that keep us safe.

Your child has the following rights:

- The right to Safety. No one has the right to hurt them or make them feel afraid or do something wrong, dangerous, or scary to them. They have the right to feel comfortable and secure in their surroundings.
- The right to a Voice. Their voice means that they have a say; the right to be heard; to voice their opinions, their hopes, and their fears. They have the right to let others know if something is not okay. Their voice has power.
- The right to Respect. They should be treated like they are important and valuable. They have the right to have their body boundaries respected.
- The right to their Identity. They have the right to express all of their ideas, beliefs, and the other things that make them who they are. Their likes and dislikes, and even their faults, make them unique.
- The right to a Childhood. Your child's entitlement to each of these rights protects their childhood and enables them to play, go to school, have friends, and be safe. Your child can protect their childhood by telling a trusted adult and asking for help when it is needed.

Helping Your Child to Understand Their Rights

Step 1

Discuss each of your child's rights with them and define what each right means to them.

Step 2

Help your child to understand how each of these rights helps to keep them safe and enables them to make safe choices. Show your child that they have the responsibility to exercise these rights.

Step 3

Discuss that rights come with responsibilities. Explain that while they have the right to safety, they also have the responsibility to make safe decisions. Their right to have a voice also gives them the responsibility to use that voice to tell a trusted adult when they need help. Their right to respect means that they have the right to be treated like they are important and valuable, and to have their body boundaries respected. They also have the responsibility to treat others as they are important and valuable and to respect the body boundaries of others. The right to their identity means that they can be who they are, but they have the responsibility to respect that others have the right to be who they are as well.

Step 4

Brainstorm some situations with your child in which they can exercise their rights. Help them apply these rights and responsibilities to each of the situations.

For information on the *Safer, Smarter Kids* curriculum, visit www.SaferSmarterKids.org.
For additional resources, visit LaurensKids.org. To report abuse, call the ChildHelp National Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-422-4453, and you will be referred to your local abuse reporting agency.

