

Good Secrets and Bad Secrets

This lesson teaches children that there is a difference between a **Good Secret and a Bad Secret**. A Good Secret makes you feel good, excited and comfortable and it has an end date. The person asking the child to keep a Good Secret knows that it is okay for the child to share the secret when the time comes. For example, your child picks out a birthday present for their sibling and they get to keep the secret until they give the gift to their sibling. A Good Secret will not make a child feel uncomfortable, confused, or unsafe. A **Bad Secret** makes the child feel uncomfortable or confused. It has no end date. The child feels afraid, worried, and/or scared to tell. The person asking the child to keep a Bad Secret never ever wants the child to tell anyone. For example, if an adult tells a child not tell Mom or Dad about time spent together or about a gift that was given to the child from that adult, it is a Bad Secret. Sometimes, the child is not told directly that they can't tell – it is a feeling they have so they keep the secret. The children learned to **NEVER** keep a Bad Secret and to **ALWAYS** tell someone in their **Circle of Safe Adults** if they ever receive a Bad Secret. It is never tattling to talk with a Grown-up in their Circle of Safe Adults about any secret that makes them feel confused, uncomfortable, afraid, or unsafe. It is always called **Reporting**. We discussed how to Report a Bad Secret to a Grown-up in their Circle of Safe Adults.

The children played a game in which different scenarios regarding keeping secrets were shared. The children had to determine if the secret was a **Good Secret or a Bad Secret**. These scenarios included:

- Your uncle wants you to help him pick out a present for your cousin's birthday, but says to keep it a secret until the birthday. (Good Secret)
- Your friend tells you that her brother hits her, but asks you to keep it a secret and not tell anyone. (Bad Secret)
- Your dance teacher/coach tells you that you are so pretty/handsome that they want to take "special" pictures of you, but they tell you not to tell anyone. (Bad Secret)

Continue the KidSafe Conversation at Home

- Talk with your children about **Good Secrets and Bad Secrets**.
- Ask your children to describe the difference between a Good Secret and a Bad Secret.
- Play the **"What if?"** game. Ask, "What would you do if someone asked you to keep a secret from us? What would you **say?**" Allow time for your children to answer. (If you have never had a conversation with them about secrets, they may not give you the answer you want. Keep a straight face, remain calm, and listen to what they have to say.)
- Help your child make a plan of action of what to do and what to say if someone asks them to keep a secret. Remind them to **Report** to you as soon as they can, even if they are unsure if the secret is a Good Secret or a Bad Secret.
- Read ***My Body Is Special and Belongs to Me!*** and ***Jack Teaches His Friends to Be KidSafe!*** with your children. Using these award-winning books will help to reinforce all of the safety concepts that your children are learning in the KidSafe for Kids program.