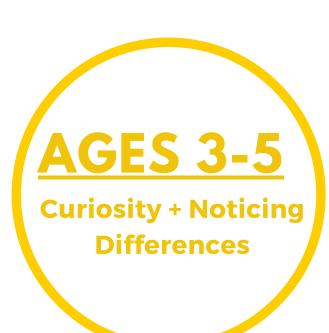# TALKING WITH KIDS ABOUT CONSENT

An age-appropriate timeline to help you and your child discuss bodies, respect, and the building blocks of consent. Open communication is key!

AGES 0-2
Connection + Discovery

- Model healthy relationships. Your child is watching you to learn about love, safety, and trusting others.
- Always use correct words instead of nicknames to refer to your child's body parts.
- Model asking for permission before touching.

AGES 3-5
Curiosity + Noticing Differences

- Respond to your child's exploration of their body in a positive way. Let them know this behavior is okay in private, but not in public.
- Encourage your child to respect all gender identities, including their own.
- Create a safety net of trusted adults with your child.
- Prepare for questions about where babies come from.

AGES 6-8
Reproduction + Privacy

- Discuss body differences in a positive way. Explain that all bodies develop differently.
- Practice respecting personal space.
- Remind your child that body exploration is normal and healthy, but should only be done alone and in private.
- Prepare for more mature questions about reproduction.

To learn more, access the Healthy Relationships toolkit here: **bit.ly/ECRelationshipToolkit**

AGES 9-12
Puberty + Preteen Development

- Continue to promote a healthy body image by explaining that all bodies develop differently and at their own pace.
- Model healthy relationships and boundaries. Discuss how they look and feel by providing examples.
- Discuss your family's values and expectations about dating and sexual activity.
- Start conversations about online safety, privacy, and healthy use of social media.

AGES 13-18
Adolesence + Healthy Relationships

- Talk about the benefits of waiting longer to become sexually active.
- Help your child evaluate their relationships, and explain that healthy relationships are built on trust and equal power.
- Continue having conversations about consent, what it looks like, and why it is important.
- Provide your child with contact information for their doctor and local family planning clinic.
- Discuss birth control and how to prevent STIs (sexually transmitted infections).
- Have in-depth conversations about online safety, privacy, and healthy use of social media.

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