

SURPRISES VS. SECRETS



OVERVIEW

In this lesson students will review the rule: “Tell a Trusted Adult” and learn about why secrets may make them less safe, and that there is a difference between a *surprise* and a *secret*.



OBJECTIVES

After completing this lesson, students will be able to:

- Differentiate between a surprise and a secret
- Identify trusted adults to whom they could reveal a secret



PROCEDURE

1. **Tell** students: *Today we are going to be talking about surprises and secrets. Ask: What does the word “Surprise” mean? You may choose to emphasize and joyfully say “Surprise!” like someone might say at a birthday party in order to set up surprises as light and fun, which will later be contrasted with secrets which are more mysterious and less safe. Tell* students: *Surprises are fun and usually make everyone who knows about them happy! They also get to be revealed after a short time. For example, it’s someone’s birthday next weekend, and your family wants to have a surprise party for that person, so your family asks you not to tell about the birthday party. Ask* students:

- *How do you think the person will feel when he/she finds out about this?* (Happy, excited)
- *Is someone asking you never to talk about what you know?* (No)
- *Does knowing this information make you sad, scared or confused?* (No)

After answering these questions, explain to students that in this case, it’s OK not to tell the person about what they know, because they’ll soon find out and be happy, this is not something they have to keep to themselves forever, and knowing about it doesn’t make them feel sad, scared, or confused.

2. Elicit student examples of other types of surprises. Begin a list of “Surprises!” on the board. Examples could include:

- Surprise visitor (friend or family member)
- Unexpected gift
- Surprise prank/joke
- Surprise dinner, snack or treat

3. Next, **ask** students: *Has anyone heard the saying “Secrets, secrets, are no fun. Secrets, secrets hurt someone”?* If they have heard the expression, probe their understanding of the saying with questions like:

- *How can a secret hurt someone?* (It can hurt their feelings; it can prevent someone from getting help)



MATERIALS

- Attachment 7- Surprises and Secrets
- Colored pencils or crayons
- Computer connected to an LCD Projector
- Chart paper or Whiteboard
- Markers
- “Tell a Trusted Adult” video



PREPARATION

- Print copies of Attachment 7- Surprises and Secrets for each student.
- Prepare colored pencils or crayons for each student or group of students.



NOTE

Many dangerous situations for children involve some element of secrecy. For example, sexual perpetrators use many ploys to keep the activity secret. This lesson presents an opportunity to teach students to recognize “let’s keep this a secret” as a signal to go get help from a trusted adult.

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