

House Safety Rules: The Safest Approaches When Caring for Children Who Have Been Sexually Abused

**Please note: These are general guidelines and suggestions. Please discuss them with your foster child's caseworker and therapist.*

Sleeping arrangements

1. Children should not share a bed or bedroom.
2. Children older than one year should not share a bedroom with a parent.
3. Children should not sleep with parents.

Clothing

1. Modest dress is important.
2. Undressing should be done in private with the door closed.
3. No one should expose his or her private parts in front of others.

Touching

1. No one should touch his or her private parts in front of others.
2. Parents should ask permission before touching the child.
3. Touching another person's private parts is unacceptable except for washing a small child or ministering to health issues.
4. Parents should encourage children to take responsibility for washing themselves as soon as they are capable.
5. Playful wrestling and tickling should be avoided altogether.

The child alone with one other person

1. Children should not be together in an unsupervised twosome.
2. To create a safe environment for a child who is at high risk of seductive or aggressive sexual behavior towards an adult, it is best to have a second adult present at all times.
3. When #2 is not feasible, the parent should document all instances of when he or she must care for the child with no one else present.

Communication around the house

1. Do not allow inappropriate, crude sexual language or talk about body parts or sexual activity.
2. Do not allow sexual gestures, sexualized acting out, or mimicking of sexual acts.
3. Do not allow a child to surf the Internet for sexual materials.
4. Do not allow children to have in their possession non-educational, sexually oriented materials.

Adapted from the "Family Sexual Safety Plan," Barker Adoption Foundation (<http://www.barkeradoptionfoundation.org>).