

## Comprehensive Sexual Health Education (CSHE)

*Fact-based body science helps children understand bodies, respect boundaries, and make safe choices (World Health Organization, 2018).<sup>1</sup>*

Comprehensive Sexual Health Education (CSHE) teaches age-appropriate, fact-based information about bodies, relationships, consent and well-being. It helps build skills that support physical, emotional and social health throughout life (SIECCAN, 2019).<sup>2</sup>

In the Yukon, CSHE is part of the Kindergarten to Grade 10 school curriculum. From Kindergarten to Grade 3, children learn about their bodies, boundaries and personal safety. These lessons can also work for younger children.

In this guide, you'll find ideas for teaching about:

- ▶ Names for private parts – so children can learn and talk about bodies.
- ▶ Safe (good) touch, unsafe (bad) touch and helping touch – so children know what is okay and what isn't.
- ▶ Trusted adults – so children know who to go to for help or questions.

## Better to Know

Better to Know is Yukon's sexual health education program. It is led by the Health Promotion Unit of the department of Health and Social Services.

Better to Know is implemented by Health Promotion Coordinators. They are trained and certified by Options for Sexual Health.<sup>3</sup> The program follows research-based guidance from trusted organizations, including the Sex Information and Education Council of Canada (SIECCAN),<sup>4</sup> Options for Sexual Health and the World Health Organization<sup>5</sup>.

Better to Know<sup>6</sup> supports schools in teaching sexual health. It also shares health information with families and the public.



Scan here to watch the **K-3 Better to Know: Body Parts and Safe Touch** companion video.

[youtube.com/watch?v=w1shOqRHh0U](https://youtube.com/watch?v=w1shOqRHh0U)

<sup>1</sup> [who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/comprehensive-sexuality-education](https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/comprehensive-sexuality-education)

<sup>2</sup> [sieccan.org/shebenchmarks](https://www.sieccan.org/shebenchmarks)

<sup>3</sup> [optionsforsexualhealth.org/](https://www.optionsforsexualhealth.org/)

<sup>4</sup> [sieccan.org/](https://www.sieccan.org/)

<sup>5</sup> [who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/comprehensive-sexuality-education](https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/comprehensive-sexuality-education)

<sup>6</sup> [Yukon.ca/en/health-and-wellness/comprehensive-sexual-health-education/better-know-comprehensive-sexual-health-education](https://www.yukon.ca/en/health-and-wellness/comprehensive-sexual-health-education/better-know-comprehensive-sexual-health-education)

## Why This Resource

Children are naturally curious about bodies, including private parts. This is normal. They may wonder what body parts look like, what they do and what kinds of touch are okay. Some children may also notice that touching their private parts can feel good.

Because children are still learning about privacy and boundaries, you may sometimes notice behaviours like:

- ▶ Looking at other people's private parts.
- ▶ Letting others look at their private parts.
- ▶ Watching people use the bathroom.
- ▶ Touching their own private parts at times that are not appropriate (for example, during class).
- ▶ Touching others without asking.
- ▶ Letting others touch them without permission.
- ▶ Kissing friends at recess.

These behaviours are usually developmentally normal, but they can sometimes cross boundaries or be unsafe. This resource helps by teaching clear, calm messages about:

- ▶ Names for private parts.
- ▶ Safe (good) touch, unsafe (bad) touch and helping touch.
- ▶ Trust adults and how to ask for help.

Children learn best when they get the same messages about bodies and boundaries at school and at home. It also helps when adults can turn to trained professionals and trusted sexual health education organizations for support (SIECCAN, 2019).<sup>7</sup>

This book is meant to be read together by adults and children. Later, it can also be something a child reaches for on their own.

You and your child may have questions that are not covered here (for example, how babies are made). See "Additional Resources" for book suggestions and other ways to learn more.

**Note:** If you are concerned that behaviours around bodies and boundaries go beyond usual curiosity, talk with a professional (for example, doctor, nurse, counsellor). Sometimes a child may need extra support.

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<sup>7</sup> [sieccan.org/](http://sieccan.org/)

## Trusted Adults: Learning Together

A trusted adult is someone a child feels safe with. They are approachable and willing to help. A trusted adult could be a parent, caregiver, teacher or another safe adult. Being a trusted adult doesn't mean you have all the answers. It means you listen, stay calm and help a child find good information.

### Tips for Trusted Adults

1. Start early and talk often.
  - Talk about bodies, health and boundaries from a young age. This makes learning feel normal (not like a one-time "big talk").
2. Create a safe, supportive learning space.
  - Teach gently and without shame. Example: "In our house, we keep clothes on in shared spaces like the kitchen or living room. If you want privacy, your bedroom or the bathroom are good places."
  - Name feelings if a topic feels awkward. Example: "This can feel a bit funny to talk about. Let's take a deep breath."
3. Use correct body-part words.
  - Using accurate words helps children talk clearly and stay safe. Example: "This part of the body is called the vulva", instead of "down there".
4. Teach about all types of bodies.
  - Learning about all types of bodies helps build respect, comfort and understanding for all bodies – not just the one they were born in.
5. Reflect on personal biases
  - Some adults have biases and discomfort around talking about bodies and health. That's normal. It is important to take time to reflect on these biases to ensure you're delivering the information in a safe and supportive way.
6. It's okay to say: "I don't know."
  - If you're unsure, be honest. Example: "I don't know right now, but I will find out and we can talk again."

7. Use books and trusted resources.
  - Share age-appropriate books openly. Let children look at them again later to support independent learning.
8. Home learning can go beyond school lessons.
  - School teachers follow grade-specific curriculum. At home, you can add family values and beliefs while still being clear about the facts.
9. Answer questions simply and calmly.
  - Sharing body facts does not “put bad ideas in kids’ heads”. Clear answers can reduce confusion, misinformation and unsafe behaviour.

It can be hard to know why a child is asking a question. A good rule is to answer the question calmly every time – even the “silly” ones. This helps children feel safe talking with you. It also makes it less likely they will look for answers from unsafe or incorrect places (like the internet or other kids).

Keep it simple. Trusted adults sometimes worry about not saying the right things or “getting it wrong”. But if you give too many details or make it complicated, kids will often tune out.

### A SIMPLE QUESTION-AND-ANSWER FORMULA

- ▶ Normalize the question.

**Child:** “What is a vagina?”

**Adult:** “That’s a good question.”

- ▶ Share the facts and keep it simple.

**Adult:** “The vagina is an opening, in the vulva, where babies can come out of a grown-up’s body.”

- ▶ Check in.

**Adult:** “Did that answer your question?”

## Questions and Answers

Kids ask questions about bodies and health for different reasons. They might be:

- ▶ Curious (example: “How does a baby leave the body?”)
- ▶ Trying to be funny or get a reaction (example: “What are nuts?”)
- ▶ Asking for help (example: “I don’t want to bathe with my sibling anymore.”)

### Mistakes happen

Talking about bodies can feel awkward sometimes. Mistakes are normal. What really matters is noticing it and fixing it. If you brushed off a question or reacted strongly, you can say: “I’m sorry I didn’t answer your question earlier. I was surprised. Can we talk about it now?”

When adults repair mistakes, kids learn two important things:

- ▶ it’s okay to mess up, and
- ▶ they can still come to you with questions or worries.

# Additional Resources

## GOVERNMENT OF YUKON AND NGOS

### Health Promotion – Better to Know: Comprehensive Sexual Health Education

- ▶ K to 3 Body Parts and Safe Touch – Teaching Guide: [Yukon.ca/en/comprehensive-sexual-health-education-kindergarten-grade-3](https://www.yukon.ca/en/comprehensive-sexual-health-education-kindergarten-grade-3)
- ▶ Better to Know – Resource Collection: [Yukon.ca/en/health-and-wellness/comprehensive-sexual-health-education/better-know-comprehensive-sexual-health-education](https://www.yukon.ca/en/health-and-wellness/comprehensive-sexual-health-education/better-know-comprehensive-sexual-health-education)
- ▶ Contact info: [bettertoknow@yukon.ca](mailto:bettertoknow@yukon.ca)

### Family and Children's Services:

- ▶ Ensures that children are protected from abuse and receive care essential for their well-being.
- ▶ Call: 867-667-3002  
or Toll-free: 1-800-661-0408 ext. 6

### The Child, Youth and Family Therapeutics Team (CYFTT):

- ▶ Offers a range of free counselling and support services for Yukon school-aged children, youth and families.
- ▶ Call: 867-667-5885  
[Yukon.ca/en/health-and-wellness/mental-wellness/get-counselling-and-support-families-youth-and-children](https://www.yukon.ca/en/health-and-wellness/mental-wellness/get-counselling-and-support-families-youth-and-children)

### Yukon's Child Development Centre:

- ▶ Provides therapies and support for all Yukon children from birth to Kindergarten.  
[cdcyukon.ca/](https://www.cdcyukon.ca/)

### Queer Yukon:

- ▶ Provides supports for the 2S/LGBTQIA+ community and allies.  
[queeryukon.com/](https://www.queeryukon.com/)

### Trusted Websites and Organizations

- ▶ AMAZE Jr. – Short videos and resources to help caregivers talk about bodies, boundaries and safety:  
[amaze.org/jr/](https://www.amaze.org/jr/)
- ▶ B.C. Physical and Health Education Curriculum – Yukon school learning goals and topics by grade:  
[curriculum.gov.bc.ca/curriculum/physical-health-education](https://www.curriculum.gov.bc.ca/curriculum/physical-health-education)
- ▶ Options For Sexual Health – Sexual health information and education resources:  
[optionsforsexualhealth.org/](https://www.optionsforsexualhealth.org/)
- ▶ SIECCAN (Sex Information & Education Council of Canada) – Research and guidance on sexual health education: [sieccan.org/](https://www.sieccan.org/)
- ▶ World Health Organization – Information about comprehensive sexuality education:  
[who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/comprehensive-sexuality-education](https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/comprehensive-sexuality-education)
- ▶ Cybertip.ca – Canada's tip line for reporting online sexual exploitation of children: [cybertip.ca](https://www.cybertip.ca)

### Body Science Books (Preschool and Up)

- ▶ The Family Book by Todd Parr  
  
A warm, inclusive look at different kinds of families.
- ▶ What Makes a Baby? by Cory Silverberg  
  
Explains how babies are made using simple, inclusive language.
- ▶ What's the Big Secret? by Laurie Krasny Brown and Marc Brown  
  
Explains basic body science with clear explanations and playful illustrations.
- ▶ It's Not the Stork by Robie Harris  
  
A child-friendly book about bodies, where babies come from and personal safety.
- ▶ Boys, Girls & Body Science by Meg Hickling  
  
Explains in a simple, straightforward way how bodies grow and change.

**Note:** Some books use older, gendered language. They may still explain body science well, but you can review them first to see if they're right for your child and your family.