# **Good Touch or Bad Touch, how to make your children understand the difference**

**Source: Akhila Das Blah, Storyteller & Content Writer**

In light of recent events occurring in the country, a reader reached out and asked me to write a column on “Good Touch/Bad Touch” and how to go about introducing the topic to their young ones. While it breaks my heart that this is a topic that merits discussion, the fact remains that it is an unsafe world and we need to prepare our children in order to keep them safe. Conversations like these are hard to have and most of us, feel uncomfortable discussing it with our children. Some feel that their children are too young to have the discussion. Others don’t know where to begin having the conversation.

As with everything else, start young. Teach your child the names of their body parts. They must know what to call their private parts. Do not associate any shame to it. It is just another part of their body like a hand or an elbow. When a child says, “I’m not feeling well.” The parent asks, “What happened?” The child replies “My stomach is hurting.” The child is able to pinpoint the exact location of the pain and is able to use the correct terminology to highlight the issue. She must be able to do the same for her other body parts.

When children are toddlers, they tend to run around without their clothes on. Do not make them feel shameful of the same. Instead, explain gently that some parts of their body are private and belong only to them. They are not for public viewing. Only their parents are allowed to touch them and only while giving them a bath. A doctor might touch them but only in the presence of their parent.

As they get a little older, talk to them about the difference between a good touch and bad touch. A good touch like a hug from your parents or grandparents, a kiss on the cheek from your sibling, your parent tickling you until you burst out laughing, anything that makes you feel happy, loved and comfortable is a good touch. But, if anybody hurts you or harms you, makes you feel uncomfortable in any way, it’s a bad touch.

Teach them to say, “No” as loudly as they can. Encourage them to voice their opinion about their feelings. Even when the children are playing, we have a “Stop it! I don’t like it” rule. It empowers them to use it the minute play-wrestling becomes rougher than they bargain for. And the other child learns to respect the fact that the other person does not like it and has to stop immediately. Reinforcing this rule on a consistent basis empowers your child to say “No” and stand up for himself in case of an incident.

The most important thing to remember is that this is not a one-time conversation. Make sure that you use opportunities in casual conversation to regularly reinforce the discussion.