

Dear Family:

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), "as many as 1 out of 4 girls and 1 out of 6 boys will experience some form of sexual abuse before the age of 18. However, because child sexual abuse is by its very nature secretive, many of these cases are never reported..." (2005). Victim Services Center of Montgomery County, Inc. (VSC) and your school wants to help protect children and intervene if abuse happens. VSC is a nonprofit sexual assault center trained to respond and support victims/survivors as well as help prevent forms of sexual violence for the county. Visit [www.VictimServicesCenter.org](http://www.VictimServicesCenter.org) to learn more about VSC.

Educators from VSC will be presenting an age-appropriate, child sexual abuse prevention program called Keeping Touches Safe and Healthy (Safe Touches) in your child's classroom. This program teaches children important skills that will help keep them safe from dangerous or abusive situations. It also helps the school be a safe and supportive place. In this lesson, students will learn three types of skills:

- **Personal Safety.** Students will learn ways to help them decide if something is safe or not.
- **Touching Safety.** Students will learn about safe, unsafe, and unwanted touches, and rules about private body parts. The rule is that a person should never touch your private body parts except to keep you healthy. They will also learn to say no to unsafe or unwanted touches, and to tell an adult if someone breaks rules about private body parts.
- **Assertiveness.** Students will practice asking an adult for help, telling an adult about an unsafe situation, and being assertive to get out of unsafe situations.

A key component of child sexual abuse prevention is parents and caregivers talking with their children about sexual abuse. We recognize that parents may be reluctant to educate their children about sexual abuse because it is difficult to discuss. VSC will be including resources and simple, fun activities that will give you and your child a chance to practice skills at home. You can plan to start the conversation by going to the website, [EarlyOpenOften.org](http://EarlyOpenOften.org) created by Committee for Children (2019). Contact the Programs Supervisor at VSC directly at [Education@vscmontcopa.org](mailto:Education@vscmontcopa.org) or 610-277-0932 x232 if needed. Call our 24/7 hotline to speak to a counselor/advocate at 888-521-0983 if you or someone who know is in need of support.

Lastly, we invite you to the *Safe Touches: Family Meeting* to give you the opportunity to learn about child sexual abuse, how to talk to your kids about it, how you can help prevent it, and receive a preview of the Safe Touches program. This event is scheduled *before* the children's program. Contact your school to find out the date and time of the event. We hope to see you there!

Sincerely,



Jessica Carson

Community Education Programs Supervisor, VSC

