



Primary, secondary or tertiary

Ref

My Body is My Body

Target population

The My Body is My Body Musical Prevention Programme is targeted at children from age three to four years-old, to children in primary school.

Delivery organisation

My Body is My Body is not a charity or a non-government organisation, it is just a free programme available to communities to help spread awareness about child abuse prevention and show people that through music and simple songs we can teach children to be safer. Individuals cannot raise money for this programme or charge for the videos as everything is freely available on the website and YouTube. The intellectual property rights of all videos and content provided to you belongs to My Body is My Body and cannot be copied, renamed, reused, translated or sold by anyone without the express written consent of My Body is My Body.

My Body is My Body was born out of the 'Kimberley Project'; which involved Chrissy Sykes, a popular South African country singer, talking to children in schools and giving general public presentations about child abuse prevention. Whilst Chrissy was not a professional in this area, it is reported that many children and adults disclosed their abuse experiences for the first time ever at a rate of 15% per presentation. Chrissy's main mode of communication was music, and through writing her thoughts into songs, the 'My Body is My Body' program began. The materials also had input from Departments of Education and parents.

The program was approved by the Department of Human Services in Texas, in the United States. When Chrissy moved to Tennessee the program was referred to the Nashville Coalition on Child Abuse and Neglect by the Department of Human Services, and the project became the Coalition's first Major undertaking.

The My Body Is My Body Ambassadors are an integral part of our programme, as without Ambassadors children and parents would not know about our important message. There Ambassadors around the world and the number is growing every day.

Mode and context of delivery

This animated musical prevention programme can be shared with children in schools, nursery schools and homes around the world. It can be utilised as both a prevention tool and a tool to assist with child disclosures. It can be used one-to-one with a child, or to facilitate a discussion within a group context.

Level/Nature of staff expertise required

No prior expertise is necessary however My Body is My Body recommends that schools and other organisations complete the following four steps prior to showing the resources to children:

- (1) Find out what procedures are in place for reporting abuse
- (2) Find out who they need to report to
- (3) Find out what associations are available to help them
- (4) Find out if there is anyone available if a child discloses abuse to them

Intensity/extent of engagement with target group(s)

There are six songs in total for children to watch, which collectively are approximately 20 minutes long. For younger children, there are shorter versions of each song. Whilst watching the videos, children should be encouraged to clap hands, snap fingers and be silly. Songs should be followed up with a discussion of the themes and a chance for children to ask questions and, if applicable, offer disclosures.

Description of intervention

My Body is My Body is a musical child abuse prevention programme. The creators believe that it is important to keep children safe and to maintain children's innocence, and that the earlier you can talk to children the better. The main objectives of the programme are to empower children to be positive about their bodies, feel safe in the knowledge that they have someone to talk to, and to know that they are not alone. The simple rules for children are that:

- (1) Nobody should be hurting you
- (2) Nobody should be touching your private parts
- (3) Nobody should take photos of your private parts
- (4) If you have a problem tell somebody
- (5) Don't keep secrets if someone is hurting you or touching your private parts – tell somebody
- (6) Tell someone if you are being bullied

The songs are fun and feature a character called Cynthie, who delivers a simple yet powerful messages to the children. The six songs and their messages are as follows:

- (1) My Body is My Body: Their bodies are their own and no one has the right to hurt them or touch their private parts
- (2) If it don't feel right, don't do it!: To teach children to listen to their feelings, to talk about peer pressure, and to help people with body empowerment
- (3) The 'What If' Game: To teach children to say no with authority, giving answers to difficult situations that they might not know how to get out of safely
- (4) If you've got a problem: Reinforces the learning of telling someone if there is a problem and if that person doesn't listen keep telling until someone does listen
- (5) Love is gentle: To teach children that love is gentle and kind and is all about caring, sharing and trust
- (6) Say No to Secrets: To teach children not to keep secrets

There are also a number of PDF downloads available, and tutorials available for teaches to accompany each song. Content has been translated into 19 different languages: Arabic, Bengali, Chinese Mandarin, Dutch, Farsi, French, German, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Setswana, Spanish, Swahili, Swedish, Urdu, Xhosa, Tamil, Turkish, Zulu

Evaluation

My Body is My Body has been presented to over 350,000 children and has been described as one of the most successful, positive and fun-filled musical body safety programmes around. The Nashville Coalition feels that this program is a valuable instrument in Child Abuse Prevention, for both awareness and prevention.

An earlier research study published in the Journal of Music Therapy which involved children, showed that music, and typically group singing activities like the My Body Is My Body program found an increase in trust and group cohesiveness and cooperation. In addition, singing and developing music skills (like learning new songs) relate to increasing a more positive self-concept and development of self-esteem - helping kids feel better about themselves.

Positive feedback:

“As commissioner of the Department of Human Services I would like to thank you on behalf of the State of Tennessee and the many school children of Tennessee who have benefited from your efforts. The program is on the largest child sexual abuse prevention programs delivered within the Tennessee public school system. Your program is entertaining, non-threatening and effective.”

“The message in ‘My Body is My Body’ is vital to our students who often face threats of sexual and physical abuse. Your music was delightful and set the tone for a candid and non-threatening atmosphere or learning.”

“Fantastic! Great! Moving! I set here with my hands shaking and tears in my eyes. I have been teaching and had to report my first sexual abuse case. It was a little boy and I was the first one he told. His case is pending and I made eye contact with him through your program. You reinforced everything I had told him. He was smiling – thank you!”

References

No references to date.

Contact Details

<https://www.mybodyismybody.com/>