

# Teaching Family Homes of Upper Michigan



**YOUTH SAFETY GUIDE**

# The Basics

While you are at Teaching Family Homes of Upper Michigan (TFH), it is important to us that you remain safe and free from people touching you and talking to you in bad and/or inappropriate ways. We want to help all youth become successful in an environment that is safe.

## WHAT'S INSIDE:

**This book will help you learn how to stay safe at TFH:**

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This home is required to comply with Federal PREA standards. This booklet is designed to help you understand your rights under PREA standards and give you important information about your safety. Youth and staff safety is one of the most important values of TFH.

*It also tells you how to:*

- ◇ **Be safe at TFH facilities**
- ◇ **Get help if someone touches or talks to you in a bad way.**
- ◇ **Take the right steps to report if you are touched or talked to in a bad way.**

### **TFH Does Not Want Anyone To Get Hurt by Bad Touch or Bad Talk.**

This means if any youth or staff member is using bad touch or bad talk with you, TFH will investigate what you tell them. The investigation will follow laws and rules in accordance with the state of Michigan and Federal PREA standards.

# Definitions

**Bad touch and bad talk includes any of the following things that someone may do to you:**

- (1) Someone touching you in any of your private places with any part of their body.
- (2) Someone touching you in any of your private places with something such as a stick or a pencil.
- (3) Someone asking you if they can touch your private parts.
- (4) Someone asking you to touch their private parts.
- (5) Someone telling you that they will hurt you or someone else if you don't let them touch you in your private parts.
- (6) Someone asking you to show you their private parts.
- (7) Someone showing you their private parts.
- (8) Someone peeking at you through a window or door.
- (9) Someone asking you or making you watch TV or Movies that show people touching each other or talking to each other in a bad way.
- (10) Someone taking pictures of your private parts or showing you pictures of private parts

# Definitions

**Voyeurism** — Someone peeking at you through a door or window to try and see your private parts, or asking you to show them your private parts. This also means someone taking pictures or videos of your private parts.

**Sexual Assault** — Anyone touching you in your private parts with any part of their body, including hands, feet, or with anything else like a stick, pencil, toy, or doll.

**Sexual Harassment** — includes:

- (1) When someone asks or keeps asking you to let them touch you, or asks you to touch them in their private areas..
- (2) When someone keeps telling you that you look nice and they would like to touch you in your private areas, or that they would like you to touch them in their private areas.
- (3) If someone keeps making fun of you because you are a girl or a boy and it makes you mad or uncomfortable.

## The Problem of Bad Touch and Bad Talk:

Whether you are living in a group home or back in your home town, the possibility always exists that another person may use bad touch or bad talk with you.

It is wrong for anyone to threaten or hurt another person. Everyone deserves to be safe.

Bad touch, bad talk, and bad pictures are against the law and need to be investigated by the police. People who hurt you this way need to have consequences for their inappropriate behaviors.

### Bad Touch/Bad Talk

All bad touch and bad talk between staff members, volunteers, contractors, and youth is prohibited and may be against the law. Also, bad touch and bad talk between youth and other youth is prohibited and in some cases is against the law.

# TFH Works Hard to Keep You SAFE

Staff members will do everything they can to prevent bad touch or bad talk.

The actions they will take include:

- **Supervise you closely.**
- **Create and enforce rules to keep everyone safe.**
- **Hold a person accountable (no matter who they are) if they use bad touch or bad talk with someone else. This means staff members will report bad touch or bad talk so it can be investigated.**

# Staying Safe

Promoting safety is not only what staff members do, but what you, as a youth must do. Here are some things you can do to remain safe.

## PAY ATTENTION TO:



- \* **Where you are -**

Don't be alone and away from staff members so that they can see you and make sure you are safe.

- \* **Situations that make you feel uncomfortable -**

Trust your feelings. If you feel funny or uncomfortable about something or someone, report it to a staff member or another adult that you trust.

- \* **Special attention someone may be giving just to you -**

This may be favors, romantic or sexual advances, gestures or talk. This includes sharing secrets. You need to report this to a staff member or another adult that you trust.

- \* **Who you tell private information to -**

Report information only to staff or another adult that you trust, such as a parent, foster parent, your legal guardian, or case worker.



# Be Safe!

- ◇ **Do Not: Accept any offer of protection**  
Someone offering to protect you from consequences or harm from anyone else will want something from you in return
- ◇ **Do Not: Accept a loan or gift**  
Do not borrow, or trade anything. Avoid owing anything to anyone.
- ◇ **Do Not: Don't let manners get in the way of keeping yourself safe**  
Do not be afraid to shout "NO" or "STOP IT NOW"!

## TAKE ACTION!!

- ◇ Tell a staff member immediately if someone tried to isolate you, singles you out, gives you anything special, wants to trade or loan an item, or offers you protection.
- ◇ It is very important that you report these things to a staff member. Because they can stop it right away.
- ◇ If the staff member doesn't take you seriously or does not believe you, tell another staff member about it.

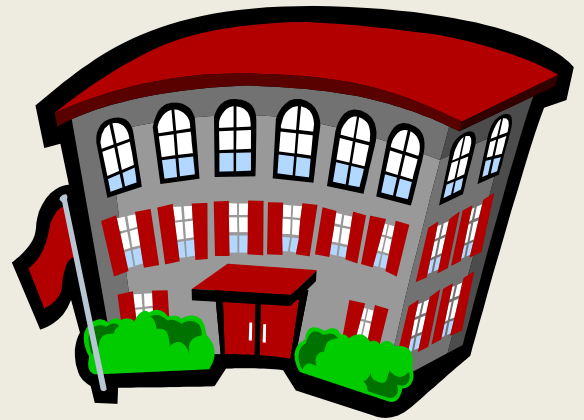
# Your Rights

You have the right to be free from anyone hurting you with bad touching or bad talking. You also have the right to be free from receiving negative consequences for reporting incidents of bad touch or bad talk. If someone uses bad touch or bad talk with you or know of someone that this has happened to you need to report it to a staff member immediately. Reporting can be hard to do but it will make sure that you and others are safe from harm. It also means that the person who caused the harm may not harm you or others any more. This is a very important way to make sure where you live is safe.

# How to Report Bad Touch/Talk:

Talk to or send a letter or note to any of the following:

- Direct Care Staff
- Counselors
- Consultant/Supervisor
- Social Worker
- Teachers
- Other staff members at your facility



Or, you can make a report by:

- Filing a grievance and putting it in the locked grievance box in the home.
- Calling your attorney
- Asking a staff member to help you research available legal services
- **Contact your PREA Compliance Manager, or**
- **Contact your PREA Coordinator**

# If Bad Touch or Bad Talk Occurs:

## What are the steps I should take if someone uses bad touch with you?

If this happens it is important that you do the following:

- \* Report what happened to a staff member
- \* The staff member will separate you from the person who hurt you and ensure that you get medical attention immediately. You will also be able to talk to a counselor.

The following steps help preserve evidence so TFH can take action against the person who is alleged to have touched you. It is important that you avoid the following until you get medical attention:

**DO NOT:**

Shower or wash  
Use the bathroom  
Eat or drink  
Brush your teeth

## What are the steps I should take if someone uses bad talk with you?

If this happens it is important that you do the following:

- Report the bad talk to a staff member.
- The staff member will separate you from the alleged harasser and you will be able to talk to a counselor as soon as possible.

## **What will happen if I use bad touch or bad talk with someone?**

We will investigate what happened and will report it to your guardians, case worker, and counselor. If you are found guilty you could have legal consequences. If you have trouble controlling your actions, seek help so that you don't harm anyone.

## **What should I do if I witness bad touch or bad talk or even just suspect I witnessed bad touch or bad talk?**

You need to report any bad talk or bad touch that you saw or think you saw. An investigation will take place to find the truth. You won't get in trouble if you make an honest report.

## **What will happen if I make a false report?**

TFH takes reports of bad touch or bad talk very seriously. If you choose to make a false report against anyone, it will be discovered. Anyone making a false report will receive some negative consequences. This includes loss of privileges, intensive treatment planning, and possible criminal charges. Our goal is to provide the safest environment possible. Being honest in what you say and do is important in keeping everyone safe.

# Resources

Children's Protective Services:  
1 (888) 444-3911

Women's Center Crisis Line:  
(906) 226-6611

PREA Coordinator  
(906) 249-5437

## Limits to Confidentiality:

TFH must report all incidents of alleged bad touch and/or bad talk to the appropriate Children Services Agency and other mandatory sources, even if you report an incident in confidence.

# Statement of Understanding

I have read the Youth Safety Guide or have had someone explain it to me. I understand the procedures in this guide, and any questions I had were answered. By signing below, I am agreeing that I know the following things:

- ⇒ How to be safe in TFH facilities.
- ⇒ What kind of things staff will do to help keep me safe.
- ⇒ My rights in regards to bad touch, bad talk, privacy, and confidentiality.
- ⇒ What to do and what not to do if bad touch or bad talk occurs.
- ⇒ How to report bad touch and bad talk..
- ⇒ What things are available to help me if bad touch or bad talk occurs..

## **SIGNATURES:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Youth Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Staff Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date