



SungateKids SafeKids (SK²) is a school-based child abuse prevention program designed for elementary-aged students. Geared toward 3rd, 4th and 5th graders, this unique program allows students to meet and watch life-sized puppet “kids” discuss their personal experiences with child abuse and how they got help and could prevent abuse in the future. Throughout the 45-minute program, students have multiple opportunities to interact with the “kids” who are sharing their stories. The effectiveness of SK² lies in the fact that it is “kids” talking to kids about child abuse. The program curriculum covers both physical and sexual abuse in an age appropriate, engaging and informative manner.

The SK² “Kids” and Their Stories



Nam, Derek, and Joanne are the puppet “kids” of SK². The “kids” begin the discussion of abuse when Nam learns that his classmate, Derek, was a victim of physical abuse. The “kids” discuss what happened to Derek and he explains that he got help by telling a trusted grown-up.

The presentation then transitions from a discussion of physical abuse to one of sexual abuse when Derrick learns that his friend, Joanne, was sexually abused by her mom’s boyfriend. Joanne tells Derrick about her experience when they re-enact how she listened to the “uh-oh” feeling, told an adult, and how she is doing much better now.

Throughout the program the student audience is given the opportunity to answer questions, as well as ask questions, of the “kids”. Allowing the opportunity for Nam, Derek, and Joanne to talk directly to the students encourages a less threatening and stigmatizing approach to these sensitive topics.

Following the presentation students are invited to stay to ask any questions or talk more about what they have learned in a more private setting. The teachers have been trained to address questions following the presentation and have received activities they can do in class throughout the year to reinforce the message of the presentation.

SK² strongly encourages parents to reinforce the messages given during the puppet presentation. Our hope is that talking about body safety is as common as talking about fire safety.