

# Ontario Dress Purple Day: Lesson 2



## Activity: Safety in the Community – Touch Bags

**Grade Range:** JK – Grade 2

**Task Time:** 30-40 minutes

**Activity Objective:**

The purpose of this activity is to help children become aware of different kinds of touch (i.e., different physical textures), and how these might make them feel. Emphasis is placed on getting help from an adult when certain kinds of touch make children feel uncomfortable or give them the “uh-oh” feeling.

**Materials Needed:**

- 3-5 small bags or pouches
- 3-5 different objects representing different physical textures, each placed in a bag or pouch
  - Hard object (e.g., plastic toy, block, etc.)
  - Soft object (e.g., stuffed animal, blanket, etc.)
  - Smooth object (e.g., smooth stone, glass pebble, marble)
  - Scratchy object (e.g., plastic pot scrubber, sandpaper, etc.)
  - An object that is both hard and soft (e.g. a toy with plastic and stuffed parts, etc.)
- Chart paper and markers

**Activity Description:**

1. Introduce the idea to children that different touches can make us feel different things. For example, some touches make us feel happy and others make us feel uncomfortable.
2. Remind the children that their bodies belong to them and only they get to decide how a touch makes them feel.
3. Tell the children that they will be playing a game where they will touch different objects and talk about how each object makes them feel.
4. You can give the children an example by taking a small object from the classroom and modelling using different adjectives to describe it and how it makes you feel.
5. Pass around the first bag. Give each child time to feel the object and remind them not to peek. Give each child time to describe what the object feels like.



- *Children may use some of the same words to describe the object and their feelings about it. Encourage them to be creative and think of different words. Assist them in this process by writing down some of the words they think of and providing synonyms for these words.*

6. Write down the descriptions that children have for each object being passed around and some of the feelings they expressed while touching the objects. Once each object is passed around, reveal the object to the class. Point out to the children that each individual may have different experiences and feelings around touch. There is no incorrect answer.

7. Using the descriptors that the children came up with, ask them the following questions:

- *(Hold up soft object) What if someone touches you in a soft and gentle way, but asked you to keep it a secret, what would you do? Give children an opportunity to offer their comments, but make sure to emphasize this answer below.*
  - Example answer: Get help from an adult. No one should ask you to keep a secret about any kind of touch.
- *(Hold up hard object) What if someone touched you in a hard or rough way and said they would beat up your best friend if you told someone about the touch? Give children an opportunity to offer their comments, but make sure to emphasize the answer below.*
  - Example answer: Get help from an adult. Only you get to decide how you want to be touched. If someone threatens you, get help from an adult.
- *(Hold up hard and soft or squishy object) What if someone touched you in a way that felt yucky or squishy, but told you they will buy you a gift if you didn't tell? Give children an opportunity to offer their comments, but make sure to emphasize the answer below.*
  - Example answer: Get help from an adult. No one should ask you to keep a secret about any kind of touch. If someone gives you a gift and asks you to keep their touching you a secret in return, tell an adult.

8. At the end of the discussion, emphasize the key messages that only the individual can decide how a touch makes them feel, all kinds of touch can be talked about, and there are no secrets about touch. When you get an “uh-oh” feeling about a touch, get help from an adult.

#### **Adaptations:**

- For English language learners, you may want to provide a vocabulary list of descriptor words on chart paper that the children can refer to.
- Touch can be a sensitive topic. Not all children will feel comfortable participating in the discussion. Ensure that participation is voluntary and no individual is put on the spot to respond.

#### **Comments and/or Additional Resources:**

- Reminder: Facilitator has a legal duty to report suspected child abuse and neglect. Please refer to “Guide for Education Professionals” for in-depth information on identifying signs of abuse and neglect, and Duty to Report.