



## Teaching Children About Body Boundaries During the Holidays

Author: [one tough job](#) »

The holidays are a time when families and friends come together in celebration. Seeing family members and friends again is a joyous time and greetings may include a hug or a kiss. As adults, it's our job to allow children to opt-in and out of physical affection.

Here are a few ways you can instill a sense of body autonomy and control in your child:

1. Remind them they do not have to give their aunt a hug or kiss if they do not want to.
2. Tell them it's perfectly acceptable to tell grandpa if they do not want a kiss from him.
3. Talk to them about other ways they can greet someone if they want to, such as with a fist bump or high-five.

It is also important to remind family members that children are not obligated to reciprocate any sort of physical affection. One simple way to do so is to let them know that your child greets other with handshakes, high-fives, or fist bumps. You can also ask for their help. Let them know you are teaching your children good boundaries and ask that they model this by respecting your child's space.

Your child should never feel pressured to show or receive physical affection from anyone, even if they are close friends or family members. Now is a great time to talk to your child about alternatives to being affectionate with others and remind them that they are in control of their own bodies.

It's also a good time to review [other safety rules](#), and to let your child know that if anyone makes them feel uncomfortable, they should let you or another trusted adult know immediately. This conversation will ensure that both you and your child will feel comfortable seeing others around the holidays.

For more information on this topic, please click [here](#).

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