



No Good Secrets



Reflection

One of the most common strategies predators use when seeking a child for sexual relationship is to ask them to keep the relationship secret. The predator may establish secret jokes, secret gifts, secret conversations, or code words.

In this context it is important to teach our children that there are no good secrets. Encourage kids to tell their parents if someone tells them a secret.

There *are* times when telling parents secrets can be difficult, such as when family members are the abusers or when parents truly are not able to deal with important topics maturely and lovingly. In these cases, it is helpful to have parent-approved trusted adults.

*Proverbs 12:22 says,
"Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord,
but those who are truthful, his delight."*

***"The face is the mirror of the mind,
and eyes without speaking
confess the secrets of the heart."***

- St. Jerome

Top Five Secrets a Child Won't Tell

There are a few secrets children keep within themselves. These secrets can be life-threatening and compromise a child's physical, emotional, and psychological well-being. The list below encompasses the most prevalent secrets, but there may be others.

- Rape/Sexual Abuse
- Alcohol, drug use, and smoking
- Eating disorders
- Bullying/Cyberbullying
- Sexting

Why Children Keep Secrets

Today's children face more challenges and obstacles than ever before.

- Technology and the ease of secrecy gives rise to secret-keeping behavior among children who may also take advantage of their parents' lack of "expertise" in navigating areas of tech.
- Shame and guilt provide motives for keeping secrets.
- Fear brought on by doubt is common and leads to low self-esteem, insecurity, and secret keeping.

As a parent you need to develop and maintain a constant connection with your child so that they feel confident to tell you anything, no matter how bad.

"The child keeps the secret for a number of reasons. The child may feel that no one will believe him. The offender may have verbally threatened him or subtly let him know that harm might come to him or his family if he tells. In many cases, the child feels guilty and doesn't want to get the offender in trouble."

-Community Pathways Volume XX11, Portage Path Behavioral Health