

Facilitator's Guide

It Happened to Me

(Cub Scout Version 2007 rev.)

Introduction

It Happened to Me is a video presentation produced by the Boy Scouts of America for viewing by Cub Scouts and their parents. Parents who have viewed the video gave it high marks for addressing personal safety issues in a very non-threatening manner. The situations of possible peril presented in the video are intended to be ambiguous, allowing parents to be as specific as they wish in discussing personal safety rules with their children.

The intent of the video is to develop communication between parent and child about personal safety decisions made by the child—but with help from parents or other trusted adults.

The core message for children is contained within the “Four Rules of Personal Safety,” presented in the video. These rules are:

- ② **Check first** with a parent or other trusted adult before I change plans, go anywhere, or accept anything from anyone.
- ② **Go with a friend** in order to be safer and to have more fun. For Cub Scouts, the friend should be a parent, other trusted adult, or older child approved by the parents.
- ② **It is my body** and I have the right to say no to anyone who tries to touch me in places covered by my swimming suit or to do things that I think are wrong.
- ② **Tell a trusted adult** anytime I am hurt, scared, or made to feel uncomfortable.

While these rules are specifically intended to protect children from sexual abuse, the advice to seek help from trusted adults is applicable to many problems that children confront.

Preparation for Viewing

It Happened to Me is designed for a viewing audience of children from 6 to 9 years of age. When used in the Cub Scout program, parents should be present to view and discuss the video with their child. Some units will want to preview the video with the Cub Scout pack committee or invite parents to preview the video before watching it with their children.

We strongly encourage individuals who will facilitate the discussion of *It Happened to Me* to view the video in its entirety before presenting it to a group. There are several pauses during the video to allow for discussion of the applicable rule. To accomplish the objective of strengthening communication between parent and child, the discussions are intended to be family-specific with parents and their children discussing how the rules would apply in their family. Your role as discussion facilitator is to suggest discussion topics and move the program along.

Cub Scout leaders who viewed the video suggested that it would be most effective when used as a special pack meeting, or even at a special den meeting with a smaller group of participants.

Other Resources

Before showing *It Happened to Me* at a unit meeting, a letter should be sent to the parents of each Cub Scout to inform them of the planned presentation and to encourage them to attend with their children. A sample letter is included as part of this guide.

To help reinforce the “Four Rules of Personal Safety” presented in *It Happened to Me*, you are strongly encouraged to distribute copies of the *Power Pack Pals: 4 Rules for Safety* comic book, No. 46-34750, and *Power Pack Pals: 4 Rules for Safety (Spanish)* comic book, No. 46-34465 which features these important rules. The *Power Pack Pals* comic books are available in English and Spanish from your local council service center.

Viewing the Video

The video consists of a set of scenarios demonstrating the application of the “Four Rules of Personal Safety.” As discussion facilitator, you manage the meeting and introduce the discussion periods using the guides below. After each discussion period, the video will also review the key points of the rule.

Discussion Guides

Check First

INTRODUCTION: In this situation, Jonathon was befriended by a teenage youth aide, Sam, who encouraged Jonathon to violate one of the rules. Despite wanting to go with Sam, Jonathon checked first with Mr. Anderson.

Discussion Questions:

- Why did Jonathon do the right thing by checking first with the adult in charge?
- Why was this rule a good idea?
- What are some situations that you have been in to which the check first rules applies?
- Who are some of the adults in your life with whom you need check first?
- Does your family have any rules like check first?

Go With a Friend

INTRODUCTION: In this situation, Tim and his brother Steve visit the raceway to see a champion race car driver and his car. Tim’s mother approved the trip and Steve served as Tim’s “friend” for the outing. On the way to see the driver and his car, they encounter Greg,

a young adult who hangs out at the youth center where Tim spends time. Greg attempts to join Tim and Steve but is politely, but firmly, told by Steve that his presence would not be welcome. Shortly after they arrive at the raceway, they notice Greg is there and acting somewhat strange.

Discussion Questions:

- ❑ What does this rule really say? (*The meaning of the rule: Go with someone who is approved by your parents or caregivers and who can help you be safer. In this situation, Steve was Tim's friend and was able to help protect Tim.*)
- ❑ Why is it safer to be with others rather than be by yourself when you go places?
- ❑ Who are some friends who can help you be safer when you go places?
- ❑ Does your family use this rule?

It's Your Body and You Can Say NO!

INTRODUCTION: In this situation, Kelli, the daughter of the after-school caregiver, touched Chris in a way that made Chris feel very uncomfortable. It may have been an accident—we don't know—but it really bothered Chris and he let Kelli know that he didn't like it.

Discussion Questions:

- ❑ Was Chris over-reacting when he told Kelli to stop and accused her of touching him the way she did?
- ❑ If the touching was an accident, why did Kelli want it to be kept a secret?
- ❑ If someone touched you in the same way that Kelli touched Chris, what would you do?

Tell Your Parents or Another Adult You Trust

INTRODUCTION: In this situation, Chris attempted to tell his mother what happened to him at aftercare. With everything else that his mother was doing, she did not stop to listen to Chris's concerns. He was able to get help by going to his school counselor.

Discussion Questions:

- ❑ What lessons did you learn by viewing this situation?
- ❑ Who are some of the trusted adults you could go to for help?
- ❑ If you had something really important to tell your parents, how would you get their attention?

After Viewing the Video

Distribute copies of the *Power Pack Pals* comic book to each Cub Scout.

Sample Letter to Parents

Dear Parents:

Children growing up in our society are faced with many problems which they need adult help to resolve. Threats to their personal safety are serious problems that require parents and other adults to help make decisions that will help children be safer. Hardly a day goes by that the media fails to report sexual abuse of children, bullying in America's schoolyards, or, most recently, predators seeking access to children through the Internet.

To respond to these growing social problems, the Boy Scouts of America developed comprehensive Youth Protection training that addresses the problem of child abuse and at the same time helps Scouting continue to provide a safer environment and meet high standards of leadership for our youth members.

You and your son are invited to a special (pack/den) meeting on (date, place, and time) when we will show the video, *It Happened to Me*. This video was produced by the Boy Scouts of America to help Cub Scout-age boys develop personal safety skills. This presentation focuses on four simple rules for children to follow as they rely on parents and other trusted adults to help them make personal safety decisions.

It Happened to Me is an important part of the BSA's Youth Protection training. Each Cub Scout pack is encouraged to present the video to its members and their parents once a year. The video portrays common situations that demonstrate the application of the "Four Rules of Personal Safety." The content of the video has been reviewed by parents, Cub Scout leaders and educators. The review panels found it suitable for viewing by children as young as 6 years old.

Child development professionals unanimously agree that open communication between parent and child is vital to the child's personal safety. Viewing this video together will help to provide a common point of reference for subsequent conversations you may have on this topic. We urge you to bring your son to the viewing of *It Happened to Me* so that you can watch and discuss it together.

I hope that you will be able to join us on (date).

Sincerely,

Cubmaster/Den leader