**Hugs and Kisses**

Book and Lyrics by Bruce Craig Miller and Terry Bliss

Music by Richard Giersch

Virginia’s only statewide school-based child sexual abuse prevention and early intervention program

**TEACHER RESOURCES**

*Hugs and Kisses* is produced in support of the teaching of Family Ties, Language, Civics, Music, Prevention, Character Development, and Self-Esteem.

**ON THE WEB**

Virginia Repertory Theatre: Hugs and Kisses
[va-rep.org/tour/hugs.html](http://va-rep.org/tour/hugs.html)

Virginia Department of Social Services
[www.dss.virginia.gov](http://www.dss.virginia.gov)

Families Forward
[familiesforwardva.org/](http://familiesforwardva.org/)

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**Hugs and Kisses**

sensitively introduces “good touch,” “bad touch,” and “secret touch” concepts to K – 5 students.

Debuting in 1983, it was the first educational play in the world designed to speak directly to children about the issue of sexual abuse.

As part of a broader child sexual abuse prevention program, *Hugs and Kisses* teaches strategies for prevention and opens a dialogue in the community about this important topic.

This award-winning musical serves approximately 55,000 students annually throughout Virginia.

*Hugs and Kisses* has toured to every school district in Virginia, and over the last 35 years, more than 1.9 million Virginia students have participated.

Approximately 18,000 students have sought help directly after attending *Hugs and Kisses*.
Play Synopsis

STUDY GUIDE

Our story takes place one summer afternoon at the local community center. Katie, Michael, Jacob, Jemma, and Hugs, Katie’s big fluffy dog, are rehearsing for the annual Summer Follies talent show. Katie tells Michael she’s worried that Jemma, the star in their big musical production of Rapunzel, will mess up the show with her moody, withdrawn behavior. Michael says Jemma probably only acts this way because she is new in town and still a little shy.

The Rapunzel rehearsal goes really well, but Jemma has doubts about Rapunzel’s happy ending. Jemma says not every story has a happy ending. Sometimes people hurt other people, and it is not always a witch or a monster or a stranger. Sometimes you can be hurt by someone you know.

Katie, Michael, and Jacob don’t understand and argue with Jemma. Finally, Katie loses her patience and suggests that Jemma not work on this part of the play, since it seems to upset her. Katie, Michael, and Jacob leave Jemma alone, but Hugs stays behind to comfort her.

Jemma tells Hugs she is sorry the other children are angry with her for saying what she knows is true. With encouragement from Hugs, Jemma relates her experience with her stepfather and expresses her own feelings of confusion, self-doubt, and helplessness.

Just as Jemma finishes her story, Hugs runs off to get help. Jemma feels abandoned by her last friend. Feeling there is something wrong with her, she decides to run away.

Hugs returns bringing Mrs. Crenshaw, Katie’s teacher who also works at the community center in the summer. Mrs. Crenshaw doesn’t understand why Hugs has come for her until the children tell her about Jemma’s behavior and the things Jemma said about touching and life not having happy endings.

Mrs. Crenshaw explains that every child has a right to protect his/her body from secret touching, and has the right to say “No” in these situations. It is especially important to remember that secret touching is never the child’s fault.

With Hugs leading the way, the children and Mrs. Crenshaw find Jemma and apologize for not having been real friends and listening to what she tried to tell them. They tell her running away is wrong and never solves problems. Her new friends promise to stand by and encourage Jemma to break the silence by telling her secret to a trusted adult. Jemma agrees and asks to speak to Mrs. Crenshaw who can and will bring her the help she needs to get secret touching out of her life forever.

The play ends with the actors talking to the audience, recapitulating various lessons from the story, and urging the children in the audience to discuss the subject further with their teachers, parent, or with the actors themselves.
HUGS AND KISSES...

- Sensitively introduces good touch, bad touch, and secret touch concepts to students in grades K-5
- Is an award-winning, enjoyable musical play serving approximately 55,000 students in Virginia annually
- Has been seen by over 1.9 million students in every school district in the state
- Has prompted approximately 18,000 students to seek help directly after the play
- Teaches prevention techniques and provides resources across all elementary grade levels

The usual reactions when faced with the topic of child sexual abuse are:

“That’s just too awful to think about.”

or

“There just isn’t any of that in our community.”

Unfortunately, the highly emotional nature of the first reaction probably contributes to the prevalence of the second. Experts tell us that the incidence of child sexual abuse is too high across the state and across the country not to talk about it and do something about it.

FIVE FACTS ABOUT CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

1. Child sexual abuse cuts across cultural, racial, and economic bounds, and occurs at ALL levels of society.

2. Somewhere between one-in-four and one-in-ten children will be sexually abused by the time they are 18 years old.

3. Sexual abuse usually begins when the child victim is approximately eight and a half years old. Studies have shown that at least 19 percent of victims are less than five years old.

4. In 70-90 percent of all child sexual abuse cases, the abuser is someone known to and trusted by the child, such as a relative, friend, neighbor, etc.

5. Situations of abuse occur, on the average, for three years before they are detected, and continue for an average overall period of three to six years.
The following points dealing with sexual abuse prevention are addressed in *Hugs and Kisses*:

1. The child has a proprietary interest in his/her body.

2. The child has a right to say “No” to adults in situations in which the child feels uncomfortable.

3. It is important that the child tell a trusted adult (parent, teacher, counselor, etc.) when he or she is abused. If the first adult does not respond, the child should tell someone else. It is never too late to report an incident of abuse.

4. Sexual abuse is NEVER the child’s fault.

5. The presentation explains the private parts of the body, and the concept of good, bad, and secret touching.

6. Emphasis is on the fact that the abuser is more often known to and trusted by the child, rather than being a stranger. Abuse can come from anyone, and it can happen to anyone.

7. The importance of not keeping a secret, and of breaking the silence, is addressed.

8. The child’s feelings of confusion, guilt, fear, etc. are addressed.

**Meeting Our Audience’s Needs**

*Hugs and Kisses* was written for a target audience of students in kindergarten through fifth grade. This covers a fairly wide age range. However, while kindergarteners and fifth graders are very different in most ways, their levels of sophistication on these particular topics are alarmingly similar.

To appeal to both ends of this age spectrum, the story line has been kept simple, and the characters identifiable as real children. It was felt that it was important to include a character who was a victim of sexual abuse to more accurately present the feelings of hurt, confusion, self-doubt, etc. that children in this situation experience.

The presence of Hugs, the fluffy dog, as a character is both theatrically useful and thematically correct. Interviews with a number of incest victims revealed that, during the time the incest was occurring, they felt unable to express their feelings to human beings, but often talked to pets or animals.

The characters in the play urge the children in the audience to tell their teachers immediately if they, or someone they know, are victims of secret touching. If a child comes to you with this kind of information, do three things: **LISTEN! BELIEVE! ACT!**

**LISTEN:** This is not the kind of story most young children make up or embellish, even in anger to “get back” at someone. In general, only approximately five percent of all reported abuse cases are fictitious.

**BELIEVE:** In actual cases of child sexual abuse, the child often will back down on his/her story when questioned, even by a friendly adult, as a result of fear of blame, rejection, punishment, etc.

**ACT:** If we are to make a difference to these children whose lives are being “locked away” in this vicious manner, it is vital that all complaints be investigated. We must send the message that no longer will silence be tolerated concerning this problem. Know the policy of your school division relative to reporting incidents of child abuse and/or neglect, and act on it. This may involve going to your principal, school nurse, or other school personnel. Remember: you may be the child’s only link to a world where there are caring, believing, protecting adults!

It is anticipated that there will be some amount of nervous laughter during the performance, particularly among fifth grade students. Teachers of these older students are urged to include in their preparation some discussion of these students being “school leaders,” “setting an example for younger children,” and “acting like grown-ups in the audience.”

Finally, this study guide is meant to be just that — a guide, not the only resource you should consult in addressing this problem. With this in mind, it is hoped that you will find the included activities and lists of resources useful as you approach this subject with your class.
INDICATORS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

For more information, please reference A Guide for Mandated Reporters in Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect, Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Social Services, Child Protective Services

Behavioral Indicators

1. **Regressive Behavior**: Molested children (especially young children) may withdraw into fantasy worlds. Sometimes these children give the impression of being intellectually disabled when, in fact, they are not.

2. **Delinquent or Aggressive Behavior**: Molested children (especially pre-teen and teen) often act out their anger and hostility on others.

3. **Sexual Promiscuity**: The sexually molested adolescent may be sexually promiscuous, and their behavior may become very apparent not only to the school, but to the entire neighborhood. For the younger victims of sexual abuse, age-inappropriate sexual language and actions (particularly those which imitate adult sexual behavior) are generally more common indicators.

4. **Confiding in Someone**: A molested child may confide in a special friend or teacher. These confidences may not take the form of direct information about being molested, but may involve such statements as “I’m afraid to go home tonight,” “I want to come and live with you,” “I want to go live in a foster home.”

5. **Poor Peer Relationships**: Molested children (if molestation has occurred over a long period of time) may not have social skills or are too emotionally disturbed to form peer relationships. The abuser has a vested interest in keeping them emotionally isolated. The child may have such a poor self-image (the “bad-me” concept) that it overshadows his or her whole existence.

6. **Prostitution**: The middle to older molested teenager may turn to prostitution.

7. **Extremely Protective Relative**: In incestuous relationships, the abuser involved may become extremely jealous of allowing the child any social contact. The abuser is afraid of losing the child to others. A father, for example, may pick his teenage daughter up at school every day and become furious if he sees her talking to anyone.

8. **Unwillingness to Participate in Physical/Recreational Activities**: Young children who have been forced to have sexual intercourse with an adult may find it painful to sit in chairs in school or to play games which require a great deal of movement.

9. **Runaways**: Teenagers who have been molested sometimes resort to escape and run away from home.

10. **Drugs**: Teenagers who have been molested may resort to escape through the use of alcohol or other drugs.

11. **Confession**: The child who has been molested may seek to report the offense. A thorough investigation should be made to determine the validity of the statement.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signs that an adult may be at risk:</th>
<th>Signs that a child may be at risk:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Misses or ignores social cues about others’ personal or sexual limits and boundaries.</td>
<td>• Seeks out the company of younger children and spends an unusual amount of time with them rather than with peers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Often has a “special” child friend, maybe a different one from year to year.</td>
<td>• Takes younger children to “secret” places or hideaways or plays “special” games with them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Makes fun of children’s body parts and/or engages frequently in inappropriate conversation about the sexual activities of children or teens.</td>
<td>• Insists on physical contact with a child when the child resists the attention.</td>
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FUN FACTS

Plays that include songs are called musicals. In a musical, both the dialogue, or words spoken by the characters, and the songs are used to tell the story. Read the song lyrics to the right. Then complete the activities on the next page.

DEFINITIONS

Fill in the word that matches each definition.

- **dialogue**
- **lyrics**
- **musical**

Plays that include songs:

Words spoken by a character in a story:

Words of a song:

THINK ABOUT IT

Can you think of a time when you really loved getting a kiss, and a time when you really hated it?

Hugs and Kisses

Hug, a verb, to comfort, console,
To put the arms around and hold closely;
An act of love for the young and old
And everybody else in between.

Kiss, a noun, a touch with the lips,
Often as a sign of affection;
Or blown to somebody just like this—
A kiss is such a nice thing to give.

To cling to, to cherish, to clasp another closely;
A noun, a loving embrace;
An act of affection, a chocolate confection;
A verb, gently to touch.

Hugs and kisses, hugs and kisses,
Usually so wonderful, occasionally delicious!
Hugs and kisses, hugs and kisses,
A lovely way to say,
“I am your friend!”

It’s Your Right to Say “No”

It’s your right to say “No.”
It’s your right to say “Leave me alone.”
When somebody is touching you
in a way that you don’t like,
Just ask them to go.
’Cause it’s your right to say “No.”

It’s my right to say “Wrong.”
I won’t be afraid to stand up for myself.
When somebody is going too far,
doesn’t matter who they are,
I won’t let it go on.
’Cause it’s my right to say “Wrong.”

Each of us has the right to say
“Don’t touch me that way.”
Have you ever known that,
even though we are children yet,
We can not forget, our bodies are our own,
Our bodies are our own!

It’s our right to say “No!”
Don’t let secret touching get out of hand.
It’s never too late to say “Stop right now,
that’s one thing I can’t allow.
So please let me go.”
’Cause it’s our right to say “No!”
Student Activities

STUDY GUIDE

Using the song lyrics from the previous page, write or discuss answers to the questions below.

The teacher in the play leads the children in the song “It’s Your Right To Say No.” Why did the playwright choose this character?

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

What message is the playwright trying to get across in the song “It’s Your Right to Say No”?

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

How do you think these songs affect the mood and message of the play?

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

As children, what important safety lessons must we always remember?

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________
DEFINITION

trust (noun): A firm belief in the character, ability, strength, or truth of someone or something.

APPLY IT!

In each block to the right, draw and label a picture of an adult in your life that you can trust.

CHALLENGE

Who are other trusted adults that you know? Create a list of your trusted adults, and where you could find them if you would ever want to talk.

Name: Where to Find:

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

RESOURCES FOR YOU

If you have a problem with secret touching or bad touching, you can call this number and talk with someone who can help. Make sure you use this number only as a last resort, okay? It’s always best to talk to a trusted adult face-to-face so you can get the help you need immediately.

Virginia Child Abuse Hotline
800-552-7096
Listen for these important lines in the play. Then, discuss them as a class, and answer the questions below.

Read the second quote, by Mrs. Crenshaw. Can you think of a time when it would be hard to say “No”?

________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________

Why should adults never ask children to keep secrets about touching?

________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________

What does Michael mean when he says, “Secret touching is NEVER the child’s fault”?

________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________
THINK ABOUT IT: A Trip to the Beach

“Secret touching usually involves adults or teenagers touching areas of our bodies that we consider private. If you are a girl, these areas would be covered by a two-piece swimsuit. If you are a boy, this area would be covered by a one-piece swimsuit.” - Jacob

Jacob’s quote is a lesson on the areas of the body that are covered by a swimsuit. Pretend Jacob and Katie are at the beach. Draw them on this page to the right, coloring an appropriate one-piece swimsuit for Jacob, and a two-piece swimsuit for Katie. Be creative and have fun coloring!

A DAY AT THE BEACH

Hugs loves the beach. What items might Hugs want for a great day at the beach? Circle the items below that might be found at the beach. Cross out the items you would not like to find or use at the beach.

WRITE ABOUT IT

Pretend you are at the beach. Write a postcard to a friend telling him or her about your trip. What would you do during a trip to the beach? What sights, smells, feelings, sounds, and tastes do you associate with the beach?
When you are in an audience at *Hugs and Kisses* or any play, pay attention to the following:

**Cue**
1) Command given by stage management to the technical departments.
2) Any signal (spoken line, action or count) that indicates another action should follow.

**House Lights**
The auditorium lighting, which is commonly faded out when the performance starts.

**Blackout**
The act of turning off (or fading out) stage lighting.

**Curtain Call**
At the end of a performance, the acknowledgment of applause by actors — the bows.

**Build / Check**
Build is a smooth increase in sound or light level; check is the opposite — a smooth diminishment of light or sound.

**Fade**
An increase, decrease, or change in lighting or sound.

Don’t Forget!
Secret touching is NEVER, ever the child’s fault! Secret touching can happen to anyone, boy or girl. It’s your right to say “No!” to any touching you don’t like. There should never be secrets about touching between an adult and a child or a teenager and a child.

**Talk to Your Trusted Adult**
If you have any questions about touching or the way you’re being touched, talk to your trusted adult—your school counselor, your teacher, your parent, or anyone you think is trustworthy. As a last resort, you can call 1-800-552-7096, the Virginia Child Abuse Hotline (language line available) but remember that this is a last resort. It’s better to talk to a trusted adult face-to-face.

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