

Keeping Hands to Myself

A free printable social story for ages 3-8

Grabbing, poking, and surprise hugs are among the most common social challenges in early childhood classrooms. This story teaches safe hands with positive alternatives instead of shame, which is what actually changes behavior. It supports classroom behavior goals and pairs well with a fidget or pockets strategy.

My hands are amazing. They can build, draw, wave, and clap.

My hands belong to me. Other people's bodies belong to them.

Keeping my hands to myself means touching my own things and my own body.

Sometimes I feel like grabbing or touching someone. Lots of kids feel that way.

Instead of grabbing, I can use my words: "Can I see that, please?"

If I want a hug, I can ask first: "Can I have a hug?"

Some people say yes to hugs. Some people say no. Both answers are okay.

If my hands feel wiggly, I can squeeze a fidget or put them in my pockets.

I can press my palms together, like a hand sandwich, while I wait.

Gentle hands keep my friends safe and happy.

When I keep my hands to myself, other kids feel comfortable near me.

My teachers and grown-ups notice my safe hands.

I can be proud of my kind, safe hands.

Tips for Reading This Story Together

- Give wiggly hands a job: a pocket fidget, a stress ball, or classroom tasks like carrying books.
- Catch and praise safe hands frequently, since attention for the positive beats correction for the negative.
- Teach the ask-first hug rule to the whole family so consent language is consistent everywhere.
- If touching spikes at specific times, like lining up, pre-teach with a quick reread right before that moment.

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