



Talking to Children About Needles

Because children are curious, you can expect they will have questions if they find sharps in the community. How you respond depends on your child's age and the information you feel comfortable giving to them. It is important to answer questions if you can. This may be a great opportunity to give your child valuable information for their safety and give them some understanding about an issue people may face in the community around them.

Teaching your kids about needle safety:

Show your child a picture of a syringe so they know what a needle looks like in case they find one.

If they find a needle, tell them:

- » Do not touch it. Needles can be sharp and may hurt you and they can have germs on them.
- » If you are playing with friends, tell them not to touch it while you get an adult.
- » Tell an adult you trust about the needle. It's the adult's job to make sure the needle is thrown away properly.



This information has been adapted with permission from Lauri Watkins, www.seeneedle.com

When a child asks: Why are there needles on the ground?

For young children, keep it simple:

“People throw things away incorrectly all the time. People throw their cigarettes on the ground and coffee cups too.”

Additional Information:

- » Needles are used to put a medicine or a drug inside a person’s body. When a needle has been used, it will have the person’s germs on it. Because needles are sharp, they might cut/poke you if you touch them which would hurt and would expose you to their germs.
- » People who have left a needle behind, likely did not leave it there to hurt anyone. Sometimes things are dropped by accident, and sometimes things are thrown away improperly because people do not know where to put them. We know it isn’t safe to leave needles on the ground, so it is important to know how to clean them up and how to throw them away.

