

Discussion Questions and Boot Points for Ana's Song

Information every adult needs to know.

Before you begin:

A Note to Parents and Caregivers: Although I use the swimsuit as a reference point for children in the story, I urge you to use the proper names of the body parts (chest, breasts, penis, and vagina) and be specific with your children as you discuss the story. You will increase your children's knowledge and give them clarity. Sexual abuse is confusing to us all and especially to children. Clear and accurate information from you, the parent or trusted adult, is the best protective defense for any challenge your child may face.

Suggested questions:

What was your favorite part of the story? Tell me about it.

(Engage your child in conversation based on his response, and weave the following questions into your conversation as naturally as possible)

There are two intentionally scary characters in the story. Who are they? (The dragon and Billy)

Were the dragon and Billy scary at first? (No, the dragon was dazzling, and Billy was fun)



Adult and teen perpetrators know how to lure and attract children. They are from every race, religion, and socio-economic background. We need to teach our children that sometimes "fun" people can do bad things, and that we want them to tell us if someone asks them to do anything that makes them feel uncomfortable.

What did the dragon want Ana to do? (Play a secret game)

What did Billy want Ana to do? (Play a game of tag that would be their secret)



Sexual abuse relies on secrets. Perpetrators depend on children to keep secrets. Consider making secrets bad and surprises good in your family. You might say, "We have surprise parties and surprise gifts. Surprises are good. Secrets are not good. In our family, we are free to tell each other everything. We don't keep secrets. If anyone wants you to keep secrets, come and tell us – like Ana told her father about the dragon and Billy."

How did Ana feel when the dragon wanted her to play a secret game? (A little sick in her stomach)

How did Ana feel when she and Billy played tag and Billy touched her where her swimsuit covers? (Her tummy ached)

There are two nice characters in the story that help Ana. Who are they? (Her father and her mother)

How do you think Ana felt when she curled up in her daddy's arms? (Safe, Loved, Cared for, etc.)

How do you think Ana felt in her mother's arms? (Safe, Warm, Loved, etc.)



Touching can be confusing to children and especially to victims of sexual abuse. Victims can feel shame if their body responds to the abuse. Their mind tells them one thing – this feels uncomfortable, and their body tells them another – this feels good. Our children need to be taught that touches should feel safe and should not make them feel funny or sick in their stomachs. If someone makes them feel unsafe, uncomfortable, or sick in their stomachs, we want them to yell NO and to run away. Just like Ana did, they need to come to us as quickly as they can.

How did Bobby feel when the alien wanted him to go away with him and play a secret game?

How did Bobby feel when Uncle Ralph showed him the video?



Children need to know if someone makes them feel unsafe, uncomfortable, or sick in their stomachs, they can tell us. Kids may not be able to describe why someone makes them feel unsafe, nor should they have to tell us why. We need to respect their instincts.

In the story, Ana tells the dragon "No!" and tells him that she is "the ruler of the castle in the hay." Just like Ana is the ruler of the castle, you are the ruler of your body. Is it okay for you to tell people NO who want to play games that make you feel uncomfortable like the dragon's game made Ana feel uncomfortable? (Yes!)

Is it okay to tell a person NO who wants to touch your body where your swimsuit covers like Billy did to Ana? (Absolutely)

Ana's daddy tells her that no one is ever supposed to touch her where her swimsuit covers. Is it ever okay for someone to touch you where your swimsuit covers? (No, it is not, unless it is a doctor during a checkup with your parent's permission or it is your parent who is making sure you are clean and healthy. Touches should never make you feel uncomfortable, sad, or confused.)

Is it ever okay to touch someone else where their swimsuit covers? (No, those body parts are private and special.)



As parents and caregivers, we must be intentional about teaching our children that they can say NO to uncomfortable conversation and touch. So much of our child rearing involves teaching them to be obedient. "Now listen to grandma and grandpa, and do what they say." Or, "Do what the babysitter tells you to do." This can be confusing. Children must understand they are allowed to protect their minds and bodies from inappropriate words and touches – they are allowed to yell NO!

What did the dragon tell Ana would happen to her if she didn't play with him? (He would steal her dreams and she would die.)

What did Billy tell Ana that would make her want to play the game? (He told her that all the big kids play the game.)



People who violate often use tricks and threaten children to get them to do what they want. Children must understand that we (the parent or caregiver) are capable of handling any threat a perpetrator makes, and that perpetrators lie. The best possible defense for any challenge our children may face is to reassure them that we are here to protect them, that we will believe them, and that they can tell us anything.

Did Ana know Billy or was he a stranger?(Ana knew him. She called him "Billy.")



We need to be prepared should a child disclose abuse to us. 90% of violated children are violated by someone they know, trust, and often love. Chances are we will know, trust, and love the perpetrator as well. We must remain calm, listen to our child, and reassure him/her, just as Ana's father did in the story. There will be time to react and take action later. Our child's physical and emotional care must be our first priority.

Who did Ana run to when she ran away from Billy? If I am not around to tell who else could you tell? If this happened at church, school, or at soccer camp, who would you tell? (Please make questions applicable to your child's life.)

Was Ana's father mad at her when she told him about the secret game that Billy wanted to play? (No, he was happy that she told him. He was proud of her.)

When Ana snuggled in her mother's arms, what did her mother whisper to her? (What Billy did wasn't Ana's fault and that her mommy and daddy love her. She also thanked Ana for telling.)



Survivors of sexual abuse blame themselves. It is estimated only 1 out of every 10 survivors ever tell. When we build a bridge of communication by addressing sexual abuse with our children, we take a proactive step toward giving them the freedom to tell.

What will you do if someone speaks to you in a way that makes you feel funny, touches you where your swimsuit covers, or asks you to touch them where their swimsuit covers? (Yell NO and run away as soon as you can. Then tell a trusted adult. If the adult doesn't listen to you, keep telling until you find someone who listens to you and believes you.)

Thank you for sharing our message. You are brave. You are strong.



equipping parents. protecting kids.