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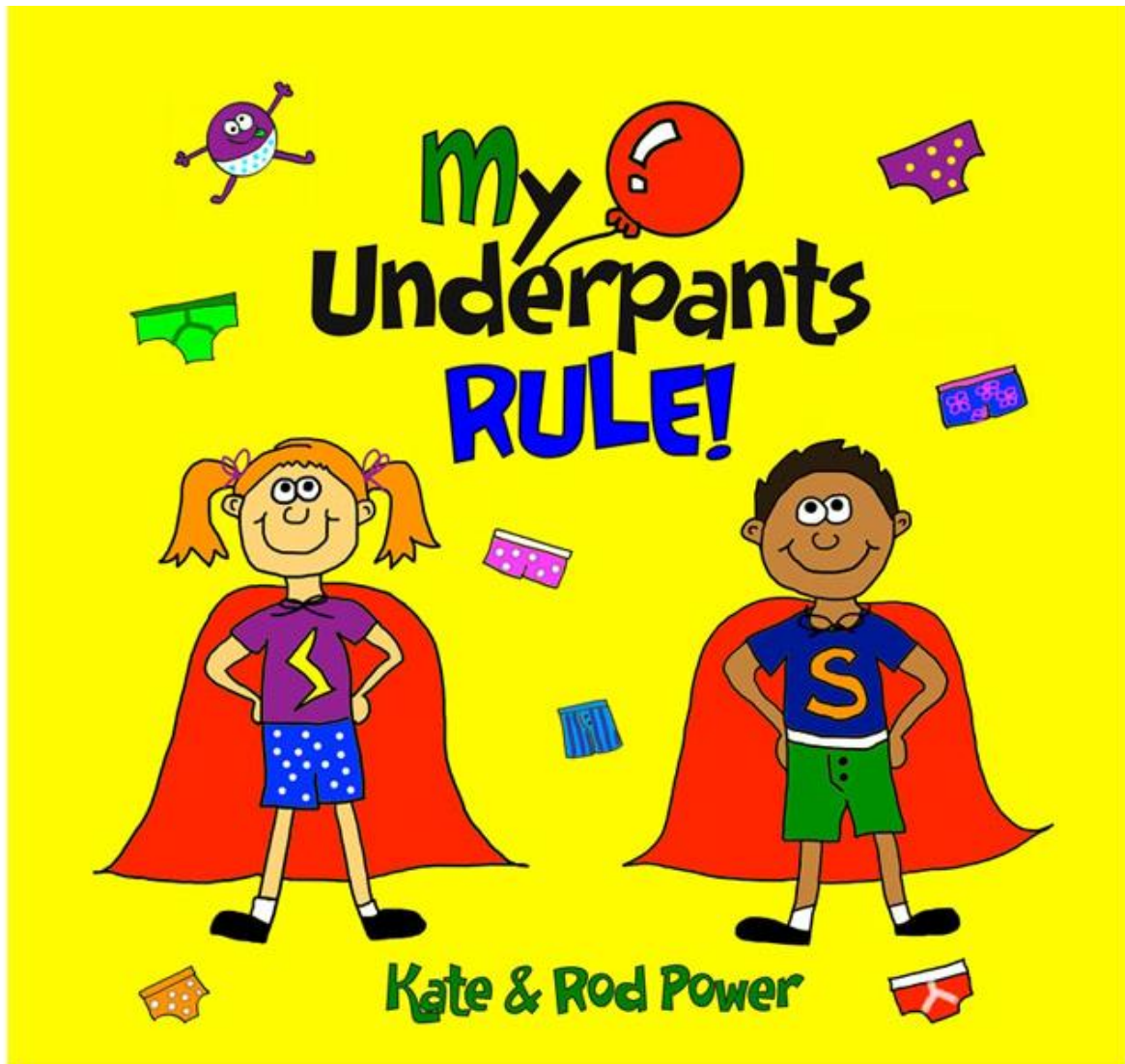
## The book that can help protect children from sexual abuse



A new kids' book aims to empower young children, and help them understand their rights over their own bodies.

The author, a former police officer, hopes that the book will help prevent sexual abuse. A children's book that aims to help parents and teachers tackle the sensitive topic of sexual abuse has been published.

My Underpants RULE! has been written by former police officer and mother-of-three Kate Power and her husband Rod.



The 26-page illustrated book features kid-pleasing rhymes, which aim to inform children of their rights over their bodies:

“ What’s under my pants belongs only to me  
And others can’t touch there or ask me to see  
But safe grown-up or doctor when I’m not healthy  
What’s under my pants belongs **ONLY** to ME ”

Kate, who's from New South Wales in Australia, was inspired to write the book while living in London.

Her stay in the UK coincided with a three-year period when prominent sex abuse cases were in the headlines, such as the police's Operation Yewtree, which targeted child abusers.

It got Kate thinking. What could parents do to protect their children? She said:

“ As a former police officer, my experience was that ignorance is the biggest danger for any child when it comes to sexual assault, since perpetrators often use a child’s innocence against them.

As a mother, I also realised how difficult it can be to talk to children about serious topics without scaring them. ”

The colourful book is aimed at children aged between three and eight, and will make them smile.

Emblazoned on the cover are two children in superhero outfits – and pictures of a variety of underpants.

The book isn't explicit, but does provide children with lots of the different words that might be used for genitals and private parts - think foo foo, bum and balls.

It uses playful, child-friendly humour to help children stay safe. Kate commented:

“ We decided to write *My Underpants RULE!* to give parents, carers and educators a new tool to easily open discussions around sexual abuse with their children.

The response from readers has been incredible and we hope families in the UK will find the book useful in turning the tide against child sexual abuse. ”

Kate wrote the book two years ago, and asked her son – who was six at the time – to read it, and give feedback.

When she returned to Australia a year ago, she took the book to child abuse experts, and sought out the opinion of child abuse survivors. In an interview about *My Underpants RULE!* in *The Irish News*, she said:

“ This book is a prevention book, but we garnered views from survivors to see if a book like this would have helped them.

One gentleman who had been sexually abused for years said to me: 'Boys don't talk about that sort of stuff. I just didn't know it was wrong.' Sadly, like many, he thought it was a normal and he had no idea he was being abused. ”

It made Kate realise just how vital the book is – and how it can empower children, without frightening them.

“ We think we've come up with something that's engaging for children and gives parents an easy way to talk to children in a way they understand. So they get the message, without being scared by it, and, in fact, can even be empowered by it. ”

Kate says the book – which has already been published in the US and Australia – has proved popular with parents, judging from the feedback she has received.

It has also recently been selected by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) and the Northern Ireland Department of Education for use in a landmark study designed to improve education, and combat child sexual abuse.

Would you like your child to read My Underpants RULE!? Let us know your views on educating children about sexual abuse in this way.

My Underpants RULE! is available as a paperback (£9.99) or hardback (£12.99) including delivery. Visit [myunderpantsrule.com](http://myunderpantsrule.com). It is also available in eBook format via Amazon.

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