

# Protective Behaviours Workbook

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Parents and Carers  
Keeping Kids Safe



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## Overview

Protective Behaviours is a living skills program, which develops children’s resilience, increases self-esteem, problem solving skills when challenging situations arise and encourages children to develop a network of supportive adults who take action to keep kids safe. This program provides practical strategies to empower parents and carers to implement in the home environment with their children.

**The Protective Behaviours program is based on two main themes:**

1. We all have the right to feel safe at all times
2. We can talk to someone about anything, no matter what it is

**These themes consist of three core concepts:**

1. Early Warning signs
2. Safety
3. Networks

**Look out for these symbols:**



Tips



Pause and Think



Discuss with your child  
(Develop common language)



Complete activity  
with your child

## Language of Safety

Using language of safety means being aware of our language and behaviour and choosing to communicate in ways that respect everyone's right to feel safe. Children and young people learn by example – we can all role model empowering, clear and respectful verbal and non-verbal communication. Consider the language that you and your family use.

### Is it empowering?

Racist, sexist or abusive language is unsafe. Labels, insults and putdowns make us feel small and powerless. For example, telling a child 'you're too small to do that' may make them want to give up. We can build children up with praise and reflecting on their strengths and growth – 'wow, you're so close to getting it – if you keep trying I know you can do it'.



### Are you being clear?

Expecting others to read our minds is unrealistic and can leave us feeling frustrated and undervalued. It's important that we talk about our feelings and needs with clarity.

Children are very skilled at picking up when our words and feelings don't match – telling a child 'I'm fine' with an angry face and tone sends mixed messages and can be confusing. If we model to our kids that it's okay to name and express our feelings, it will help them learn that they can do the same.



## Language of Safety

### Can everyone understand?

Some words or phrases may be difficult for others to understand. Children may not understand common slang or phrases. For example telling a child 'your bedroom looks like a tip' may not make sense to them. Asking a child to put their toys on the shelf, or put their clothes in the laundry basket helps make sure they understand what is being asked of them.



### Do you own your stuff?

Do I blame others for how I feel? Simply re-framing 'you make me feel \_\_\_' or 'you're so annoying' to 'I feel frustrated when \_\_\_'. No one can make you feel anything.



### Thoughts

What we think affects how we feel and act.



### Behaviour

What we do affects how we think and feel.



### Emotions

How we feel affects what we think and do.



# Theme 1:

**We all have the right to feel safe all the time.**



Start a discussion with your child, use the colours to see what each section of Theme 1 means.

**All of us have rights, every single person.**

**A right is something we are born with and it cannot be taken away. We need rights to help us grow up happy, healthy, and safe.**

**Everyone has their own individual experience of physical and emotional safety**

**24 hours a day, morning, during the day and night, in your home and all the places that you visit.**



- Use the word 'safe' as part of everyday conversation
- Talk about what it feels like to feel 'safe' and 'unsafe'
- Remember that with the right to feel safe, comes the responsibility to keep other people safe.

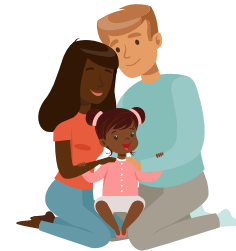


Discuss some examples with your child to help them understand with every right, there is a responsibility.

Have a look at some of the examples below:



We have the right to receive a good education and we also have the responsibility to try our best.



We have the right to feel safe and we also have the responsibility to behave in a way that will keep myself and others safe.



We have the right to go to the dentist and we have the responsibility to look after our teeth. How can we look after our teeth?



Teach your child that if they don't feel safe, they have the right to do something about it!

# Body Awareness

Every child is the boss of their body, and no one should touch them without permission.

Protective Behaviours encourages the use of accurate and correct terminology of all body parts.

Here are some reasons why:

- It promotes self-confidence and positive body image.
- Enhances parent-child communication
- In the event of abuse, it assists children to communicate with a trusted adult about what has happened.

It is important we teach children the difference between the words private and public. The private parts of our body are covered by our bathers and also include our mouths.

Private = Only for me

Public parts of our body are not covered by our bathers and public places can be visited by many people at the same time.

Public = for everyone

## “I am the boss of my body”

Everyone has a personal space bubble and the right to say what goes.



There are many different examples in your daily activities where you can start a conversation with your child to develop their understanding of body awareness and the concepts of public and private clothing, places, body parts and belongings:

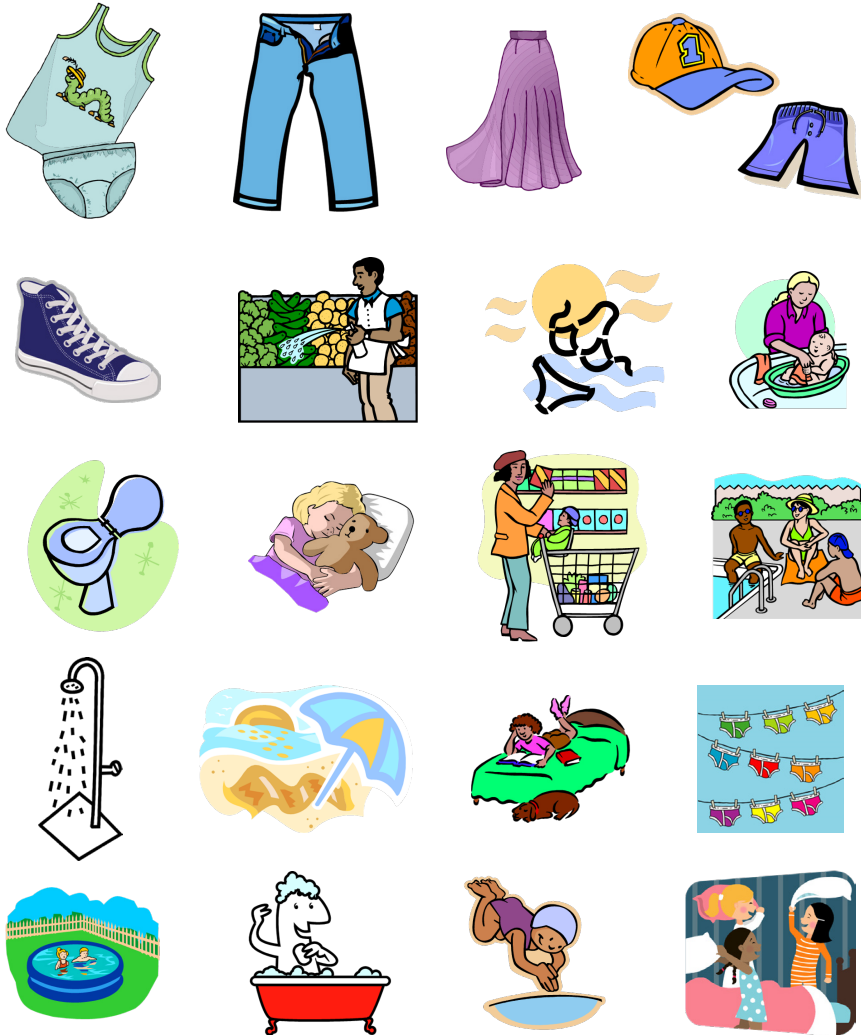
- Bath-time (an opportunity to talk with children about the importance of washing our bodies and private parts to stay healthy – you can use this to teach and remind children of the names of their private parts and that their whole body belongs to them)
- When choosing what clothes to wear (Is it private or public clothing?)
- Places you visit (Is it a private or public place?)
- When learning manners? (Is it a private or public behaviour?)
- Private or public belongings
- When making new friends? (What information is private and what is public information) What information can I share online? (Please refer to cyber safety information on kids booklet)



# Private and Public

## Activity 1.1

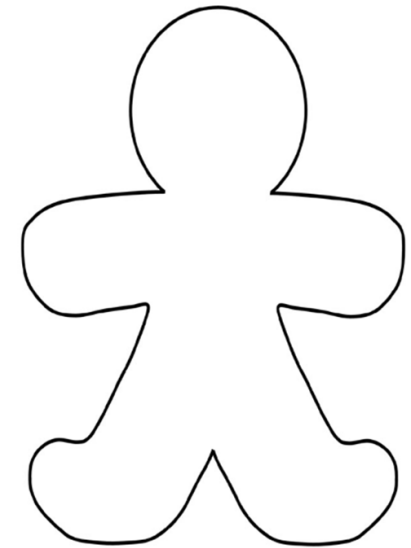
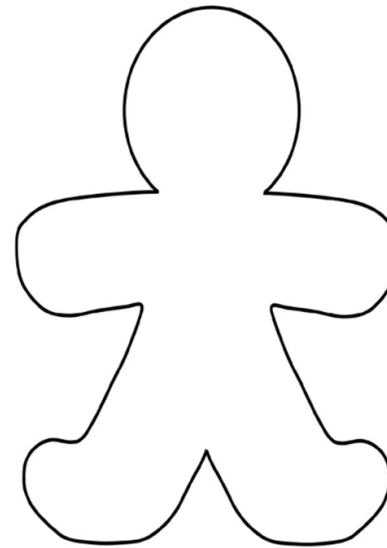
Can your child identify what is private (just for me) and what is public (for everyone to share) from the images below?



# You are the Boss of your body!

Private

Public



Cover the private part of the body with bathers.  
(Remember, the mouth is a private part too)

Cover the body with public clothes.

# Safe and Unsafe Touch

Protective Behaviours aims to help children understand the different levels of emotional trust and physical touch with people in their lives. The Circle of Intimacy helps children develop their personal boundaries and assertiveness skills.



Have you ever found yourself lining up at an ATM and the person behind you stands too close? How does this make you feel?

It is important for every child to know their own personal space boundaries and be able to identify safe and unsafe touch.



Discuss with your child what people they would place in each circle:

**Me** - The innermost circle. This is your personal and private space. No one is allowed to touch you unless you want to be touched and you feel comfortable and safe. No one is allowed to touch the private parts of your body.

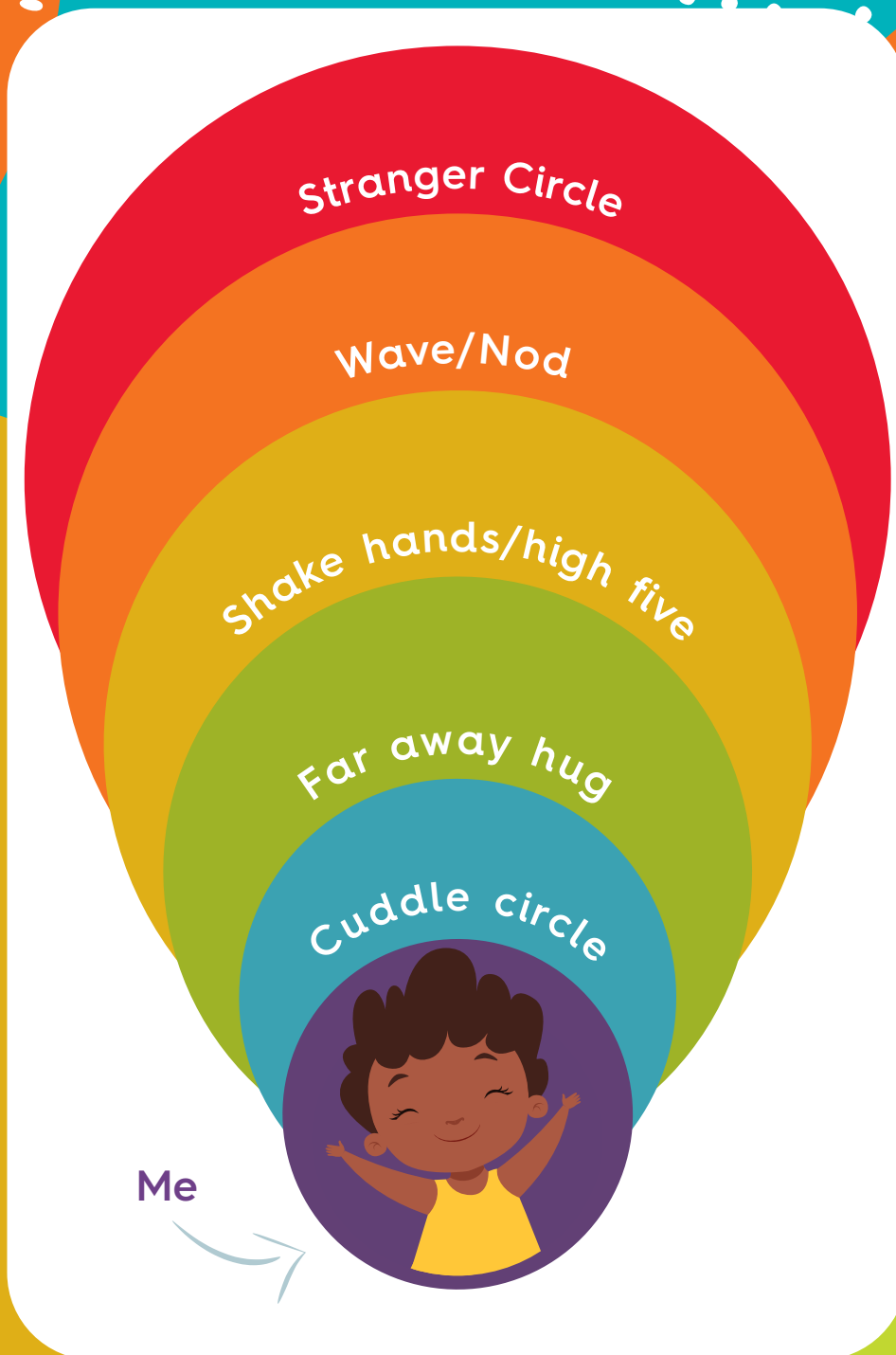
**Cuddle circle** - People we love a lot and feel safe to cuddle.

**Far away hug** - Friendly and warm but not intimate – hug and release.

**Shake hands/high five** - We know them personally but are not very close.

**Wave/Nod** - Familiar faces (e.g. neighbours, professionals).

**Stranger circle** - we don't know these people and wouldn't touch them or let them touch us.







Revise with your child Theme 1: We all have the right to feel safe at all times.

We all have the right to feel safe at all times.

You can introduce the word consent to your child to support child developing their body awareness and assertiveness skills. Consent means to ask someone for permission.

Three things to remember when talking about consent:

1. **Ask** (e.g., Do you want a hug)
2. **Listen/Observe** (Yes, No, shrugging shoulders)
3. **Act** (e.g., Yes=Hug, No=No hug, Shrugging shoulders=No hug)



"Can I give you a hug? I don't feel like a hug today. Could I have a high five instead?"



"I noticed you looked uncomfortable giving your Grandma a hug today.

I noticed your body tightened up and you were looking down at your feet.

Do you want to talk to me about it?

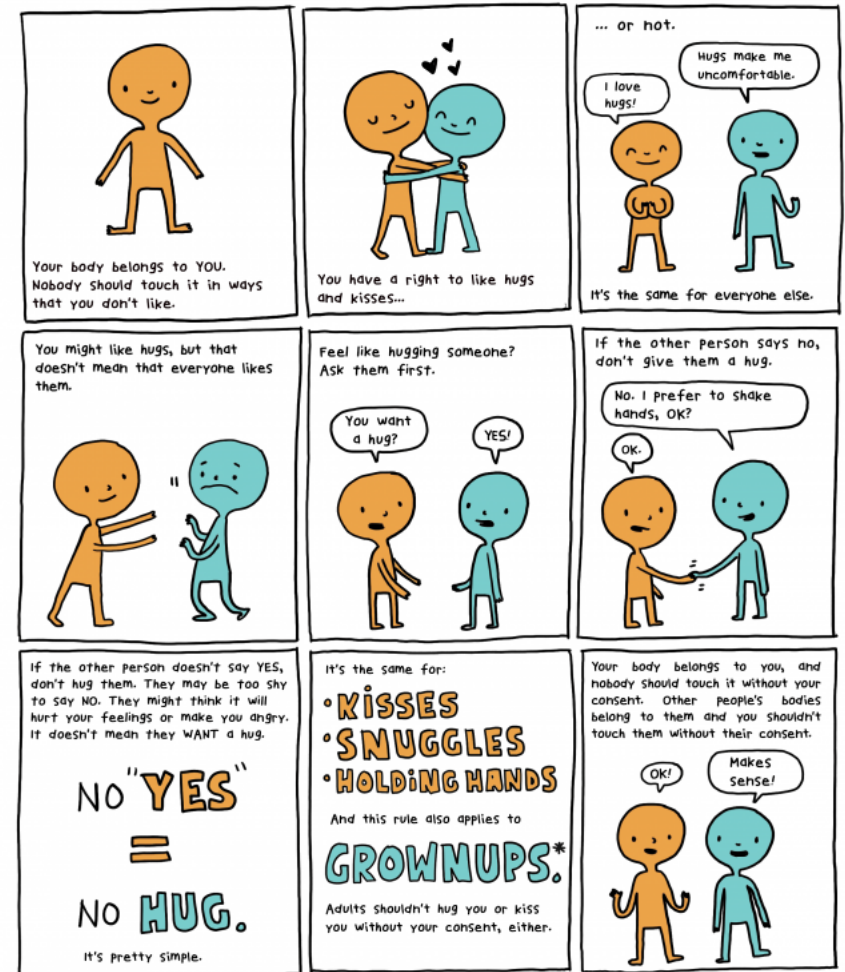
Its ok if you don't want to give someone a hug, you could ask them for a high five or elbow bump instead."

Also remember the importance of your child learning about other people's personal space boundaries.



## Activity 1.2: Consent

EXPLAINED TO KIDS AND THEIR GROWNUPS



\* Except for your safety or for your health.

©elisegravel

It is important for children to recognise when something is making them feel uncomfortable and empower them to use their voice confidently to say "No." If a child is not feeling safe it is important to teach them to say no, walk away and tell a trusted adult.



# 5 Ways of Saying No

Teaching children the different ways of saying no will develop their assertiveness. Every day we use different types of nos.



Pause and think about all the different Nos you might use throughout your day? Notice how the tone of your voice might change? Does your body language and facial expressions change too?

Let me explain how many No's there are:

1. **No** – **Playful no**. e.g. No Way (Laughing)
2. **No** – **Manners no**. e.g. No thank you
3. **No** – **Firm and Assertive no**. e.g. No you can't!
4. **NO** – **Angry No**. e.g. No, I don't want to!
5. **NO** – **EMERGENCY/DANGER NO**. e.g. NO! Leave me alone!



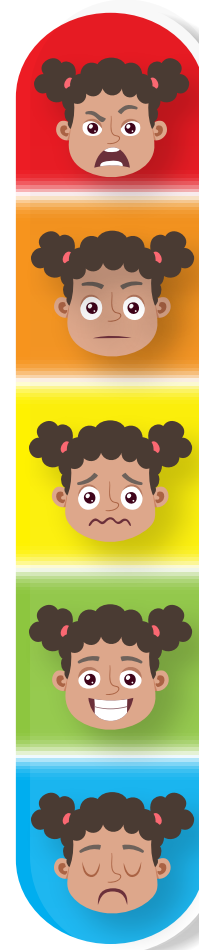
Encourage your child to practice the different types of No's.

What do I need to remember about Body Awareness:

- **Talk early** about body parts and teach your child the correct name for their private parts.
- **Respect** your child's right to say "No!" to touch
- **Encourage** your child to tell a safe adult if they feel unsafe

# Feelings

Everyone has the right to be able to express how they feel. It is important for children to name and trust in their feelings. This helps them stay safe!



## FURIOUS

I need help to stay safe

## MAD

I need to take a break and use a calming strategy

## WORRIED OR SCARED

I need to stop and breathe. I can also use a sensory strategy to relax

## HAPPY

I am feeling good!

## SAD OR TIRED

I can ask for help, a hug, or a break

Children, like adults experience a range of emotions. Talking about, naming and expressing your own feelings can help children learn to identify and express their own feelings. Use the chart on the previous page to talk with your child about times they have felt the feelings on those faces.

Example: I feel \_\_\_\_\_ when \_\_\_\_\_

I feel sad when my friends don't play with me.

I feel scared when it is dark outside.



Practice some examples with your child.

It is important when our child is experiencing different emotions, we validate their feelings.

#### Tips:

- Listen and accept your child's feelings.
- Ensure the child knows you are there to help.
- Help your children name their feelings when they feel happy, sad, scared, angry etc.
- Remember there's no good, bad, or stupid feelings. We all have the right to feel, listened to and be heard.
- Talking about your feelings will help your child talk about theirs
- You can model to your child that all feelings are okay, but not all behaviours

E.g. I can see you're feeling frustrated because your brother took your toy. It's okay to feel frustrated, but it's not okay to hit or hurt your brother. Let's take some deep breaths and see if we can find a solution.



## Activity 1.3

Play charades with your child, write, or cut out emotions. Take turns to act out different emotions and see if the other person can guess what emotion it is!



Read a book with your child. Ask your child to identify what emotion each character in the book may be feeling.

Please refer to resource page for more ideas.

## Calming Strategies

It can be helpful to identify things that help your child feel calm when they are experiencing strong emotions. Some common strategies are:

- Counting to 10
- Taking big breaths by blowing bubbles
- Listening to music
- Going for a walk
- Playing with slime or playdough
- Having a drink of water
- Cuddling their favourite toy
- Moving to a safe space



Think about some strategies that work for your child?



Encourage your child to pick their top 5 calming strategies. Create a poster to display in your home to encourage your child to use their calming strategies.

# Early Warning Signs

Just like road signs tell us important information on the road, our bodies have signs that tell us when we are feeling worried or unsafe. We call these our Early Warning Signs.



When I'm doing something **exciting**, or I feel **scared**, **challenged** or **unsafe**, my body has some signs that will let me know.

We call these **early warning signs**.

What early warning signs do you have?



Reflect on a time when you felt challenged or unsafe. What changed in your body? Did you feel any of the above Early Warning Signs?

Here are some examples:

- Sweating
- Red cheeks
- Neck hair stands up
- Headache
- Eyebrows go up
- Red ears
- Throwing up
- Shoulders go up
- Arm hair stands up
- Goosebumps
- Soil pants
- Jelly legs
- Jump up
- Wide eyes
- Dry mouth
- Dry Throat
- Heart beating fast
- Crying
- Round mouth
- Clenched fists
- Sweaty armpits
- 'Butterflies' in tummy
- Sweaty palms
- Wet pants
- Shake all over
- Curled up toes

You can help your child recognise their early warning signs too.



Be responsive, warm, and caring  
Talk about and validate their feelings  
Brainstorm ways to feel safe again

# Early Warning Signs

Your child may need your support to feel calm again if they...

Appear overly worried, restless, or tense.



Experience feelings of panic or dread.

Can't catch their breath.



Shake all over or become very weak.

Complain of chest pains or a sore tummy.



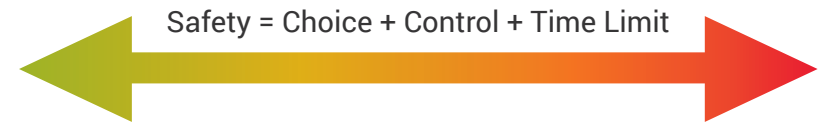
Are crying, vomiting, or have soiled/wet their pants.

Are unable to calm themselves down.



Seem to have zoned out for a long time.

# Safety Continuum:



Safe

Fun to feel scared

Risking on Purpose

Unsafe

Safe = I have choice, I have control and there is a time limit (I know when it is going to end).

Unsafe = I don't have choice, I don't have control, and there is no time limit (I don't know when it is going to end).

## Ever been on a roller coaster?

Think about what early warning signs are happening in your body (Can you feel your heart increasing in speed, are you sweating, are you feeling butterflies in your stomach).

Ask yourself the following questions:

- Did you have choice?
- Did you have control?
- Is there a time limit?

Now think about where you would place this experience on the safety continuum above.

Discuss the following examples below:



- Going skydiving
- Being bullied
- Giving someone a hug
- Neighbours arguing
- Riding bike down a steep hill

## Theme 2:

### We can talk with someone about anything.

Help your child to identify trusted adults they can talk to about everything that is happening in their lives.



Who are the someone's in your child's life? Chat with your children about who they feel safe with.



Encourage your child to complete their own safety team. Have a look at the safety team rules below:

1. Are they an Adult?
2. Do they listen to me?
3. Do they believe me?
4. Are they available for me?
5. Will they take action to help me feel safe again?



Think about who is on your safety team and who you would reach out to for support. If you need further supports, please review the resources section at the end of this booklet.

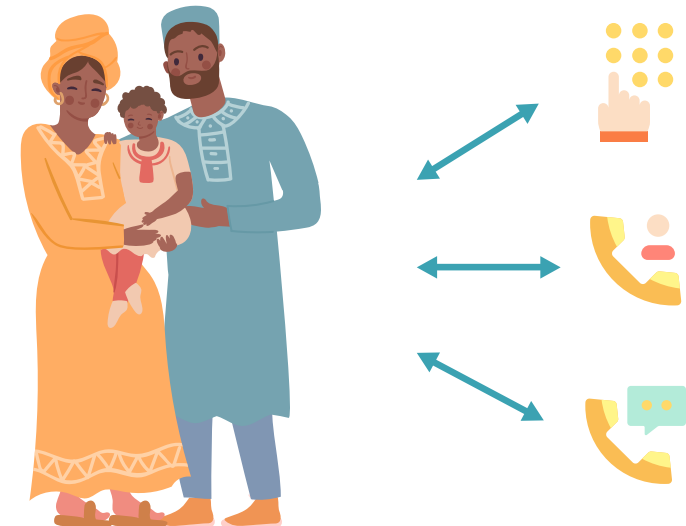
## Helpful Hints

- Reassure your child that you will always listen and believe them, and they can tell you anything
- Encourage your child to share good news with their trusted adults
- Encourage your child to keep asking for help if they are feeling unsafe



Teach your child their address and phone number, how to call 000 and roleplay how to speak with emergency services.

Hearing or speech impairment user dial 106 – connects to text-based relay service.





## How do we have open conversations?

Children need one on one time and space where the adult is present to listen to a child's experiences throughout their day. We can create opportunities and space to talk about what is happening in our lives through conversations at dinner time, whilst driving in the car and whilst getting ready for bed.



What goal could you make this week to provide your child with time and space to reflect on their day and create open conversations.

**It's important to talk to your child about tough topics.**

- Practice what you want to say
- Choose a safe and private place to talk
- Find out what they know and how they feel
- Listen!
- Share your feelings and be honest
- Be ready to comfort your child and keep them safe

**If your needing further assistance with having challenging conversations.**

- Talk to your own support network
- Speak with a professional – further supports provided in resource section
- Utilising books and videos provided in resource section to support discussion.

## Keeping Safe Online

Technology and the online space are always changing, which is why it is important to keep ourselves up to date with current information.

Technology is an important part of our lives and children are engaging in the online space from a young age.

**This may expose children to some online dangers such as:**

- Viewing or sharing inappropriate content
- Unwanted contact and grooming
- Cyber bullying.



If you notice your child showing some of the signs below after being online refer to our resource list for further support.

**Warning Signs:**

- Becomes upset after using the internet or their mobile phone
- Is secretive about their online use
- Sudden change in friendship groups
- Becoming withdrawn, anxious, sad, or angry
- Avoiding school, friends, or activities

## Keeping Safe Online

### Helpful Hints:

- **Supervise:** check in regularly with your child to see what they are viewing.
- **Explore** the online world with your child.
- **Create rules** or a technology agreement. Include your child in the process.
- **Consider** if your child is ready for social media.
- **Parental controls** can help you manage the type of content your child can access.
- **Encourage** your child to make safe online choices.
- **Resist** the urge to confiscate their device. This can make things worse and may make children reluctant to tell an adult the next time something goes wrong online.
- **Model** safe behaviour online and healthy boundaries with technology use.
- **Report** any online abuse at [www.esafety.gov.au](http://www.esafety.gov.au).

### For more information:

- eSafety - [www.esafety.gov.au](http://www.esafety.gov.au)
- ThinkUKnow - [www.thinkuknow.org.au](http://www.thinkuknow.org.au)
- Common Sense Media - [www.commonsensemedia.org](http://www.commonsensemedia.org)
- Beacon (App store)

### Technology Agreements:

- eSafety - Our Family Tech Agreement
- Panda Security - General Family Media Contract

## Parental Controls



### PC/Windows

Filter online content and set screen limits using Microsoft Family

<https://account.microsoft.com/family/about>



### Mac IOS

Set profiles for each child to limit content and screen time.

<https://support.apple.com/en-au/guide/mac-help/welcome/mac>



### Mobile Phone (Android)

Filter online content and set screen limits using the Family Link app.

<https://families.google.com/familylink/>



### Mobile Phone (iPhone)

iPhone users can monitor content and set limits using inbuilt settings. Go to:



Settings >



Screen Time

## Phone Support



1800 55 1800 - Kids Help Line

Provides free 24/7 telephone support for children and parents.



Metro - 9368 9368 | Regional – 1800 111 546

Parent Helpline – Provides free telephone support service for parents and caregivers of children aged 0 to 18 years who live in WA.

8am - 8pm, 7 days a week, including public holidays.



13 11 14 - Lifeline WA

Provides 24 hour crisis support and suicide prevention services to individuals experiencing emotional distress.



1300 224 636 - Beyond Blue

Provides brief support, information, and advice from a trained mental health professional.

## Helpful Resources/Apps



Local Child Parenting Centres

Day for Daniel – Keeping kids safe Day for Daniel  
The Daniel Morcombe Foundation



Educate2Empower –  
Free posters/resources



Blue Knot Supporting adult survivors  
of childhood trauma & abuse



Wellmob - Social, emotional and  
cultural wellbeing online resources



## Helpful Resources/Apps



**Smiling Mind**

Meditation and  
calming strategies for  
all ages.



**The Bears**

Identifying  
emotions



**Calm Harm**

Provides strategies  
to care for self rather  
than harm.



**Beyond Now**

Safety planning app.



**Stop, breathe  
and think kids**



HEADSPACE

**Headspace**

Developing meditation  
and mindfulness skills.



**Youthbeyondblue  
The Check-in**

Provides strategies to  
start a conversation  
and tips to look after  
your mental health.



**Beacon: Cyber  
Safety**

One-stop-shop for  
reliable information  
about the online  
world.



**Help Me**

HELP me button,  
alerts your Trusted  
Safety Network in  
an emergency.

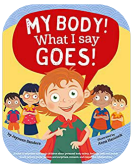
## Books



**In My Heart**  
by Joe Witek  
and illustrated  
by Christine  
Roussey.



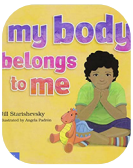
**Only For Me** by  
Michelle Derrig  
and illustrated by  
Nicole Mackenzie.



**My Body! What I say goes!**  
by Jayneen  
Saunders and  
illustrated by  
Anna Hancock.



**Welcome To Consent** By Yumi  
Stynes and Dr  
Melissa Kang.



**My Body belongs To Me** by Pro  
Familia and  
illustrated by  
Dagmar Geisler.



**Consent For Kids**  
by Rachel Brian.



**My Underpants Rule** by Kate and  
Rod Power



**No Means No!**  
by Jayneen  
Saunders and  
illustrated by  
Cherie Zamazing.



You can also visit your local library and see what books they have on these topics.

## Activities and Games



Feelings puzzle  
from Kmart



Jenga



Feelings poster



Balloons



These resources have been developed thanks to the financial support from the Western Australia Police Force.

