

Learn to be Safe

with Emmy and friends

Information for Families

Our personal safety information empowers children and adults to **recognise**, **react to** and **report** unsafe or risky situations.



Keeping kids safe is everyone's business

Follow the **HELP US TEACH KIDS TO** tips in this book to help us keep our kids safe!



Safety and Feelings

Being safe and feeling safe are both important!

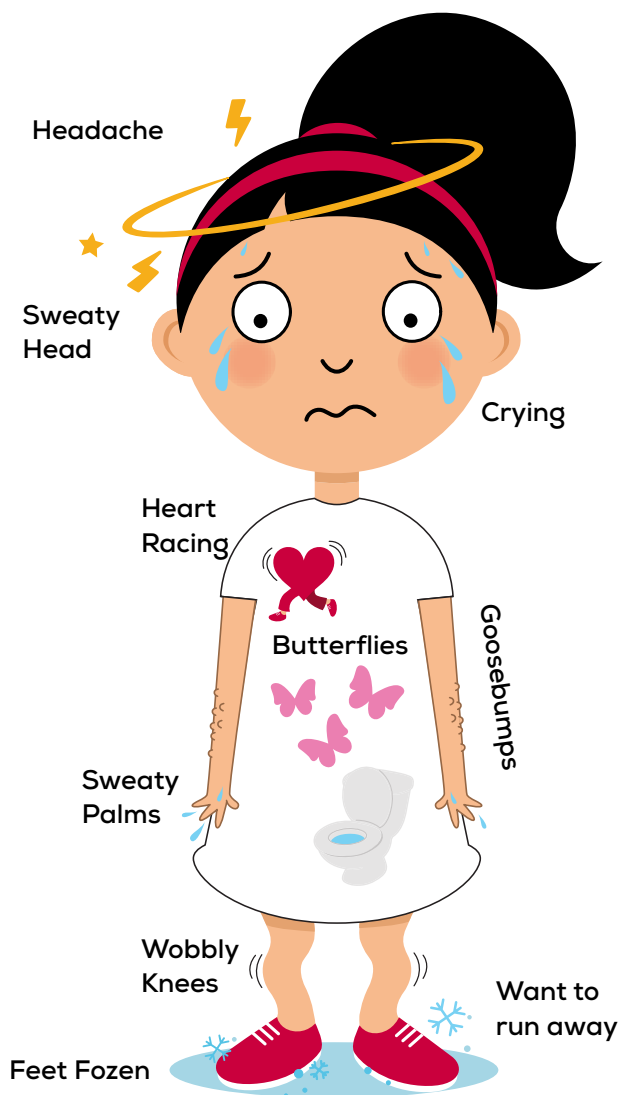
When kids know what “safe” feels like, they can also recognise feeling “unsafe”.

When kids can name and talk about their feelings they will know how to tell an adult if something upsetting has happened.

This means adults can help problem-solve the small worries and protect kids from the bigger ones.

HELP US TEACH KIDS TO:

- Name and talk about feelings
- Show feelings using our face and body
- Notice how other people are feeling
- Get help when they feel unsafe



Warning Signs (Body Clues)

Our body’s warning signs are automatic physical responses that happen when we feel unsafe.

These warning signs are clues that something risky might be going on and we need to be more alert or careful.

We all need to notice our body’s warning signs before we can tell the difference between safe and unsafe situations.

HELP US TEACH KIDS TO:

- Notice their body’s warning signs when they feel scared or worried
- Talk about their warning signs
- Get help from adults to calm these physical responses once any danger has passed

Instincts

When we are scared/in danger our instincts take over. This can make us:

FREEZE – Not move at all

FIGHT – Yell, scream, punch or kick

FLY – Run away, jump or back away

All of these responses are normal reactions to danger that we cannot control.

We teach kids that instincts are our body's way of protecting itself. This removes any shame, guilt or blame they might feel about how they reacted to an unsafe situation.

HELP US TEACH KIDS:

- To help keep us safe, our body reacts before we can even think
- If we are in danger our body will decide if we freeze, fight or fly – we don't get to choose.
- If someone is hurting us, it is never our fault – whichever way our body reacts is okay and normal

Safe Choices



Problem Solving and Help Seeking

Sometimes adults make unsafe choices. When a trusted adult makes an unsafe choice, it is hard for kids to know it is unsafe and seek help.

We can help children problem solve the difference between safe and unsafe choices. This helps them know when to talk with an adult about something unsafe.



HELP US TEACH KIDS TO:

Ask these questions...

1. Do I have any choice or control over what is happening?
2. Can I get help from a safe adult about this?
3. Do I know when it will end?
4. Is anyone getting hurt?

These questions can help kids identify if a situation is possibly UNSAFE, and they need to:

TELL, TELL and TELL again until someone listens and helps.

Safe and Unsafe Situations

Lots of things can make kids feel nervous and scared. Not all of these are unsafe. We can help children decide if a situation is...

FUN TO BE SCARED

like feeling scared before going on a ride at a fun park

SCARY BUT NECESSARY

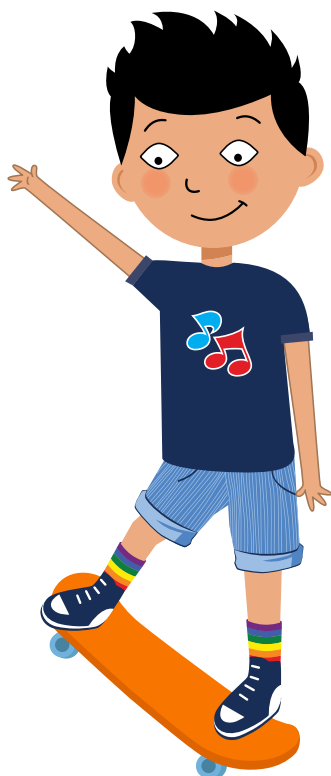
like feeling nervous on the first day of school

RISKY ON PURPOSE

like choosing to do a new trick on a skateboard even though it could cause an injury

UNSAFE

like people being hurt or not following our private parts rules



HELP US TEACH KIDS TO:

Listen to their warning signs when they feel unsafe, and help them problem-solve whether the situation is:

- Fun to be scared
- Scary but necessary
- Risky on purpose
- Unsafe

Remind your kids that if they ever feel unsafe they can **get help from an adult.**



Body Autonomy and Consent

Everyone is the boss of their own body.

We can teach our children about **CHOICE**, **CONTROL** and **CONSENT** from birth. We can respect our child's right to choose how people show them affection, and that it is always ok to say **NO**, no matter who the person is. This helps kids learn to be safe and in control of their body.

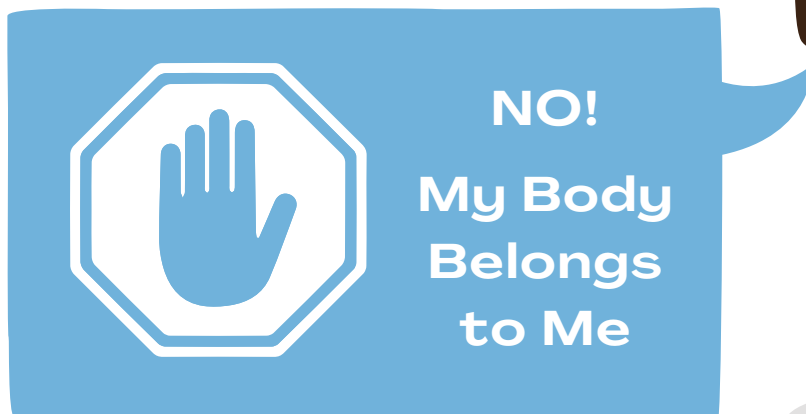
HELP US TEACH KIDS:

- We are all the boss of our own body
- Consent means we understand and give permission for something to happen
- If we don't consent to someone touching us, even someone we know, we can:
 - Say "No thank you"
 - Offer a high five instead
 - Keep saying "No, I don't like it" in a firm voice
 - Move away
 - Tell a safe adult and keep telling until someone listens and helps

Sometimes kids are too embarrassed or shy to tell adults or friends that they don't want to hug or kiss people close to them.

We encourage kids to choose how they share affection with their safe adults and friends. This helps kids be assertive if they are ever in an unsafe situation.

It is also important to teach kids that other people can say **NO** to them and they need to respect that person's choice.



Private Body Parts and Places

Our private body parts are parts of the body that we often cover up with our swimwear or underwear.

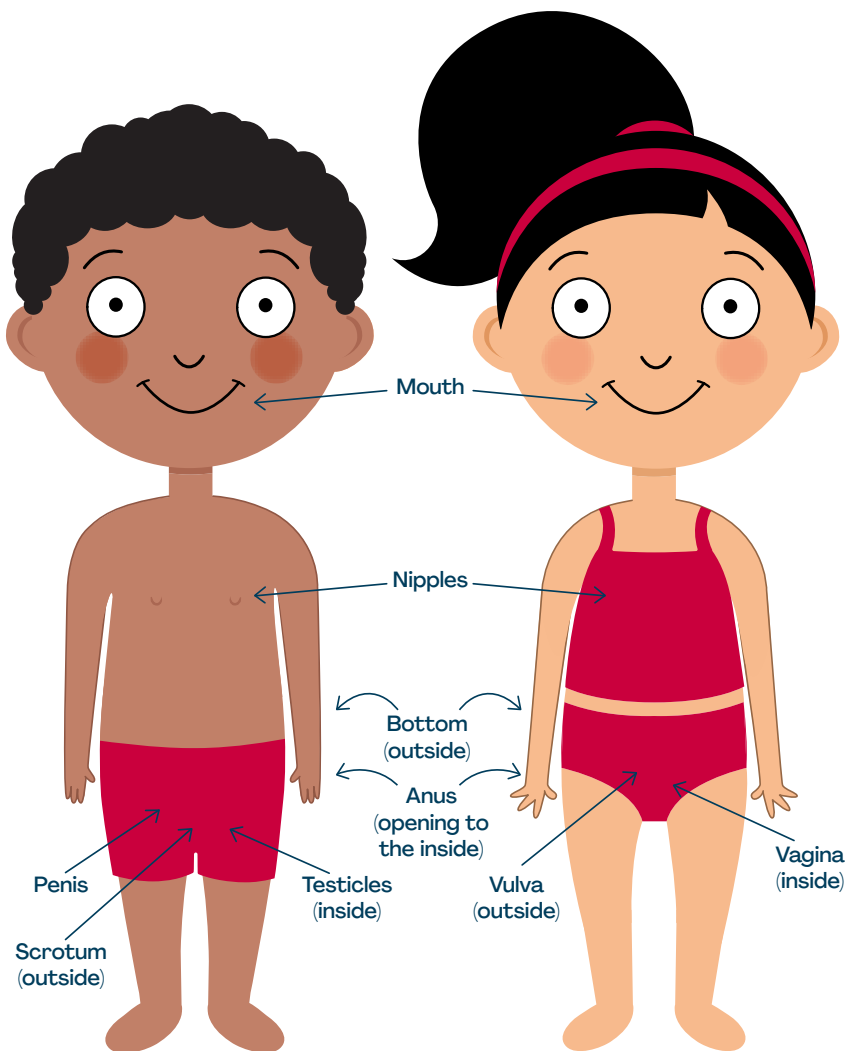
It is important to teach children the anatomical names so they have the right words to use if they need help.

Private places include bathrooms, bedrooms and alone spaces.

HELP US TEACH KIDS OUR PRIVATE PART RULES:

1. Do not touch people's private parts
2. No one is allowed to touch your private parts *(Unless it is to help you wash, get dressed or stay healthy)*
3. No one is allowed to show their private parts to others (No pictures or videos either!)
4. Only touch your own private parts when you are alone and in a private place

Even our family, friends, doctors or other people we trust need a good reason to touch or ask to see your private parts because your private parts are **JUST FOR YOU.**



WHAT ARE OUR PRIVATE BODY PARTS?

- Penis
- Testicles (inside)
- Scrotum (outside)
- Vulva (outside)
- Vagina (inside)
- Bottom (outside)
- Anus (opening to the inside)
- Nipples

This mouth is often called a private part too because it can be used for kissing.



Rights and Responsibilities

We all have the right to feel safe and be safe all the time.

We also have the responsibility to make sure we don't hurt others.

It is adults' job to keep kids safe. It is not okay for adults to make choices that hurt children or put them in danger.

Kids who are told to ALWAYS OBEY adults are fearful or confused when adults make choices that make them feel unsafe or uncomfortable, and often keep this a secret.

We teach kids they can always get help from another adult, no matter what.

HELP US TEACH KIDS:

- To tell another adult if an adult they know makes them feel unsafe or uncomfortable
- Adults don't have to be obeyed if they are doing the wrong thing or hurting us or other people

Safety Team

A child's personal Safety Team is safe adults they can talk to if they feel unsafe or need help.

When parents/carers are busy or distracted it is easy to miss clues that something worrying has happened to their child. This is why we ask children to name five adults for their safety team.

HELP US TEACH KIDS:

We can talk about anything with our Safety Team.

Our Safety Team members must be:

- Adults (inside and outside of the family)
- Trusted to keep us safe
- Able and wanting to help
- Easy to find and talk to



Secrets

When a child is harmed, it is usually by someone they know and trust (within the family or the community). This person uses a range of “tricks” to get close to caregivers and make the child keep the abuse a secret.

UNSAFE SECRETS

make us feel sad, guilty, ashamed, confused, worried, scared or uncomfortable. Unsafe secrets might be about private parts or someone being hurt.



SAFE SECRETS (OR SURPRISES)

make us feel happy or excited. Safe secrets are never about private parts or someone being hurt.



Always listen to your child’s concerns and show you believe them even if it doesn’t make sense to you at the time. Your child needs to feel that it was a good choice to talk with you about it.

HELP US TEACH KIDS:

We don’t keep secrets that:

- Make us feel worried, scared or sad
- Are about private body parts
- Are about anyone being hurt
- Are kept for a really long time

Find out more about Learn to be Safe.

Email: learntobesafe@actforkids.com.au

Visit: actforkids.com.au

