



Protective Behaviours

Parent

Handbook

Parents' & Carers' Guide to Teaching the
Protective Behaviours Program



**PROTECTIVE
BEHAVIOURS WA INC.**

In Partnership & Sponsored by The WA Police Strategic Crime Prevention Office



Strategic
Crime Prevention

Welcome to the Protective Behaviours Parent Handbook



This book can help to keep your child safe. By reading this book and completing the activities you will be giving your child tools that will help to keep them safe.

Every child has the right to feel safe at all times. Each year however, thousands of children across Australia experience abuse. It is estimated that 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 7 boys will be subject to some form of unwanted sexual activity before the age of 18 (Australian Institute of Criminology).

Many parents focus on the issue of “stranger danger” when teaching personal safety to their children. Statistics show us however, that 96% of children who experience abuse know and trust the perpetrator (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare).

Protective Behaviours is an internationally acclaimed personal safety and child abuse prevention program endorsed by the Department of Education in Western Australia.

This program is based on two themes :

**“We all have the right to
feel safe at all times”**

**“We can talk with someone about
anything, no matter what it is”**

By teaching Protective Behaviours to your child, you will be helping them to develop the lifelong skills of assertiveness, self-confidence, problem-solving, communication, resilience and help seeking.

You will find that the activities and discussions in this handbook are simple and presented in a fun, child-friendly way, designed not to scare children but teach them some of the vital skills of personal safety.

How To Use This Book



Pencil Icon

Complete this activity
with your child



Speech Bubble

Reinforce the two themes
with your child in
everyday life



Thought Bubble

Provides further ideas and
topics for you and
your child to discuss

Types of Abuse

SOURCE : AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF FAMILY STUDIES

Physical Abuse

- Physical abuse refers to the non-accidental use of physical force against a child that results in harm to the child.
- A parent does not have to intend to physically harm their child to have physically abused them.
- Physically abusive behaviours include shoving, hitting, slapping, shaking, throwing, punching, kicking biting, burning, strangling and poisoning.

Sexual Abuse

- Sexual abuse is any act which exposes a child to, or involves a child in, sexual processes beyond his or her understanding
- Sexual abuse is the use of a child for sexual gratification by an adult or significantly older child
- Sexually abusive behaviours can include the fondling of genitals, masturbation, oral sex, vaginal or anal penetration by a penis, finger or any other object, fondling of breasts, voyeurism, exhibitionism and exposing the child to or involving the child in pornography.

Neglect

- Neglect refers to the failure by a parent or caregiver to provide a child with the conditions that are culturally accepted as being essential for their physical and emotional development and wellbeing:
 - Physical neglect
 - Emotional neglect
 - Educational neglect
 - Environmental neglect
- This can include failing to provide food, shelter, love, hygiene, isolating and encouraging maladaptive behaviour like crime, alcohol, drug abuse, truancy and non-enrolment and inattention to special needs.

Emotional or Psychological Maltreatment

- Emotional maltreatment refers to a parent or caregiver's inappropriate verbal or symbolic acts toward a child and/or a pattern of failure over time to provide a child with adequate nonphysical nurture and emotional availability.
- Such acts have a high probability of damaging a child's self-esteem and social competence
- This can include rejecting, isolating, terrorizing, ignoring and corrupting.

Witnessing Family Violence

- Broadly defined as a child being present (hearing or seeing) while a parent or sibling is subjected to physical abuse, sexual abuse or psychological maltreatment, or is visually exposed to the damage caused to persons or property by a family member's violent behaviour. Narrower definitions refer only to children being exposed to domestic violence between intimate partners.



Theme One

A human right that we are all **born with**, cannot be taken away and does not have to be earned

All of us,
you, me,
friends, family,
strangers...everyone

We all have

the right to

feel safe

at all times.

Physical & emotional,
it's a personal,
individual experience

24 hours a day
In the morning, during the day, at night time, at home, at school, at grandma's, at after school care.

Declaration of the Rights of the Child

SOURCE : UNITED NATIONS

1. All children have the right to what follows, no matter what their race, colour sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, or where they were born or who they were born to.
2. You have the special right to grow up and to develop physically and spiritually in a healthy and normal way, free and with dignity.
3. You have a right to a name and to be a member of a country.
4. You have a right to special care and protection and to good food, housing and medical services.
5. You have the right to special care if handicapped in any way.
6. You have the right to love and understanding, preferably from parents and family, but from the government where these cannot help.
7. You have the right to go to school for free, to play, and to have an equal chance to develop yourself and to learn to be responsible and useful. Your parents have special responsibilities for your education and guidance.
8. You have the right always to be among the first to get help.
9. You have the right to be protected against cruel acts or exploitation, e.g. you shall not be obliged to do work which hinders your development both physically and mentally. You should not work before a minimum age and never when that would hinder your health, and your moral and physical development.
10. You should be taught peace, understanding, tolerance and friendship among all people.



This plain language version above is only given as a guide.
For an exact rendering of each principle, refer to the original declaration.



What can I do?

- Discuss the above rights with your child.
- Teach your child that with every right comes a responsibility.
For example,

You have the **right** to a good education.

You have the **responsibility** to do your best at school.

You have the **right** to voice your opinion.

You have the **responsibility** to respect the opinions of others.

Early Warning Signs

Early Warning Signs are the involuntary physical sensations that take place in our bodies in reaction to potentially unsafe situations.

Our Early Warning Signs alert us to tell us that something is going on for us and that we may be feeling unsafe. Early Warning Signs may differ from one person to another, but we all have them.

Children can learn to identify their Early Warning Signs for when they are feeling unsafe and safe. Early Warning Signs can be fun and enjoyable when we have choice and control over what's happening to us.

What our bodies say :

- "My heart is beating really fast!"
- "There are butterflies in my tummy!"
- "My legs feel weak and I have jelly knees!"
- "My mouth is so dry!"

Others can include :

- Tight shoulders
- Feel sick in the tummy
- Red cheeks
- Goosebumps



What can I do?

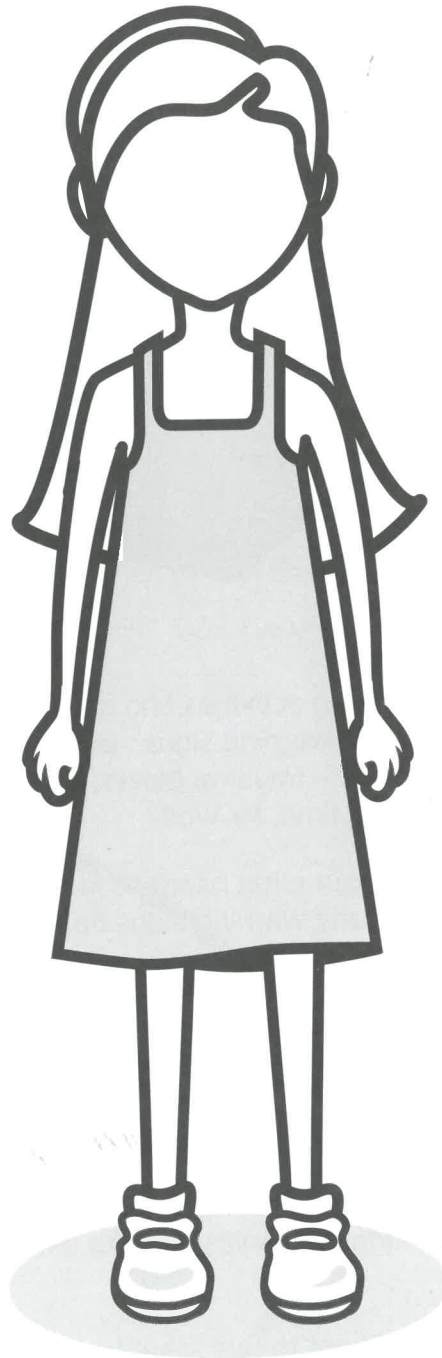


- Try some of the following activities and games to assist your child to identify their own Early Warning Signs : jack-in-the-box, pop up pirate, crocodile dentist, Jenga – tower of blocks, snap card game, egg and spoon race, What's the time, Mr Wolf?
- Talk with your child about what happens in their body when they start to feel scared. What Early Warning Signs do they feel?
- Watch for times when you think your child may be feeling scared. Ask where in their body they can feel their Early Warning Signs (Examples are, high swings, going somewhere new, first day in a new class). Encourage your child to pay attention to their Early Warning Signs and tell you when and where they happen.
- Encourage them to practise taking slow breaths when they start to feel scared. Explain that this helps them to think clearly and to plan what to do.
- Avoid telling your child not to feel scared, or that they are silly to feel scared (instead provide understanding, reassurance and encouragement to problem solve the situation).



Early Warning Signs

What Early Warning Signs does your body give you when you are feeling unsafe or doing something that is fun or scary? Draw your Early Warning Signs.

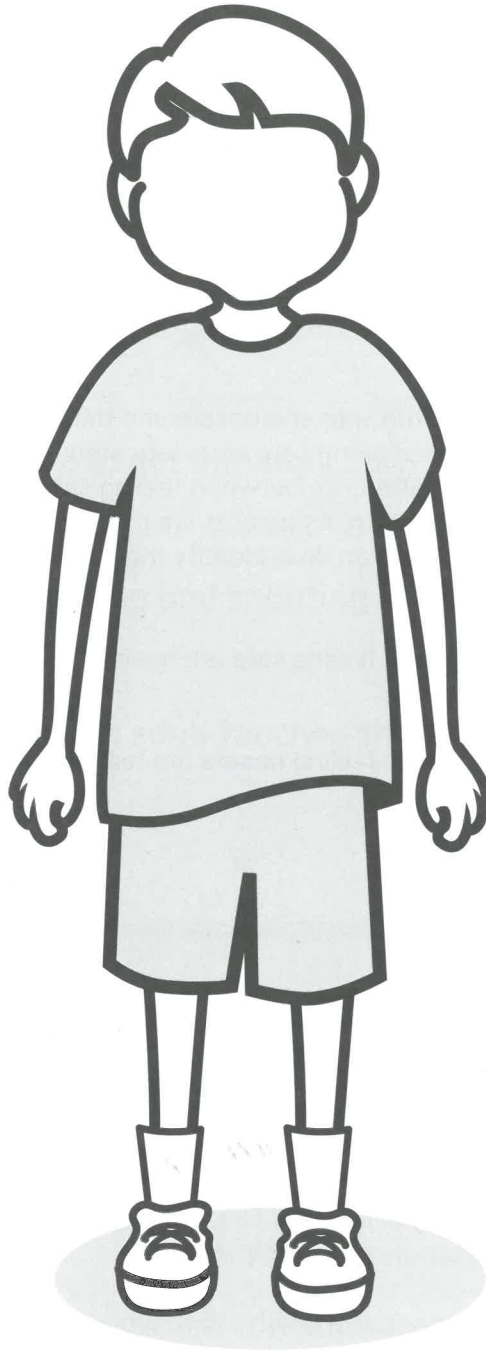


If I get my Early Warning Signs about a secret, it can always be shared with someone I trust.



Early Warning Signs

What Early Warning Signs does your body give you when you are feeling unsafe or doing something that is fun or scary? Draw your Early Warning Signs.



If I get my Early Warning Signs, it is important to tell an adult that I trust. I can keep telling until I feel safe again.

Body Awareness & Ownership

Teach your child that they are the **boss of their body**.

Talk with your child about the names and functions of both the private and public parts of their body. As soon as your child is old enough to begin to understand their feelings and name some of them and name their body parts, they are old enough to have conversations about keeping safe. As they grow older, the Protective Behaviours conversations become more detailed; appropriate to their age level and understanding.

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

It is appropriate for parents and professionals to use the correct terminology for private parts of the body in the appropriate context.

Teaching children anatomically correct terms, age-appropriately:

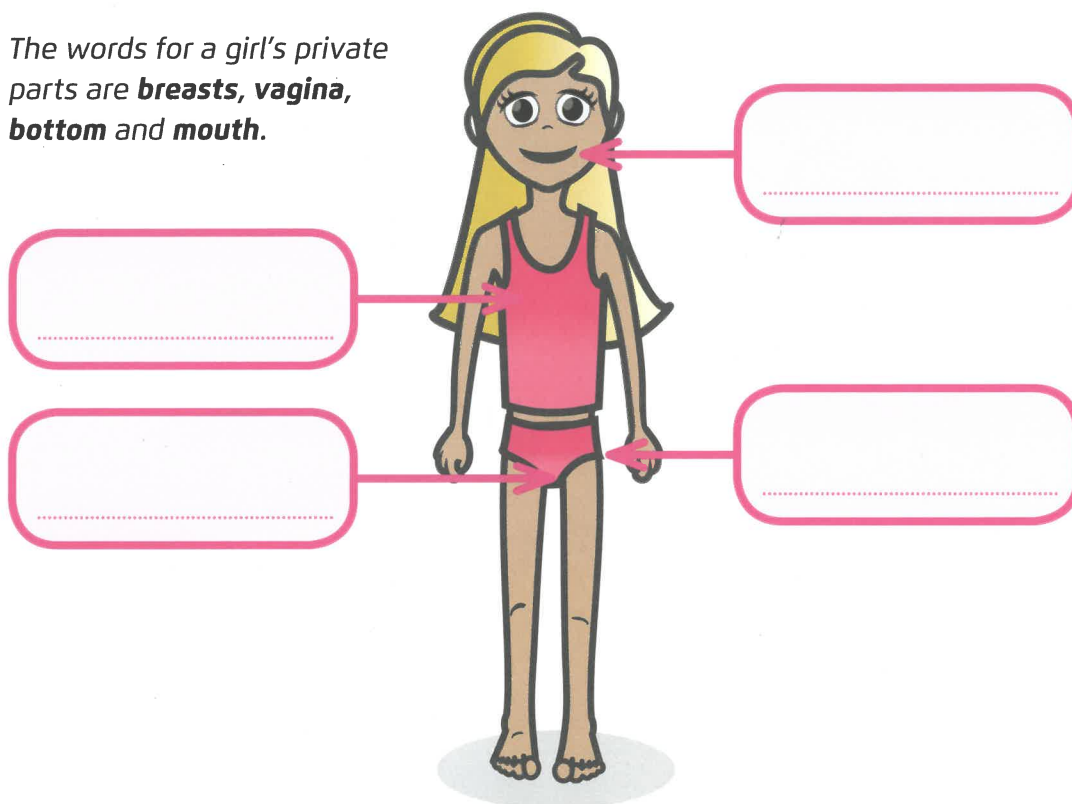
- promotes positive body image,
- builds self confidence,
- enhances parent-child communication;
- discourages perpetrators;
- and, in the event of abuse, helps children and adults navigate the disclosure and forensic interview process.

***“Give them the control –
they are the ones in charge of their bodies!
If anyone ever touches any part of them and
they feel uncomfortable, then they can move
away (regain their personal safety) and tell
someone on their network.”***

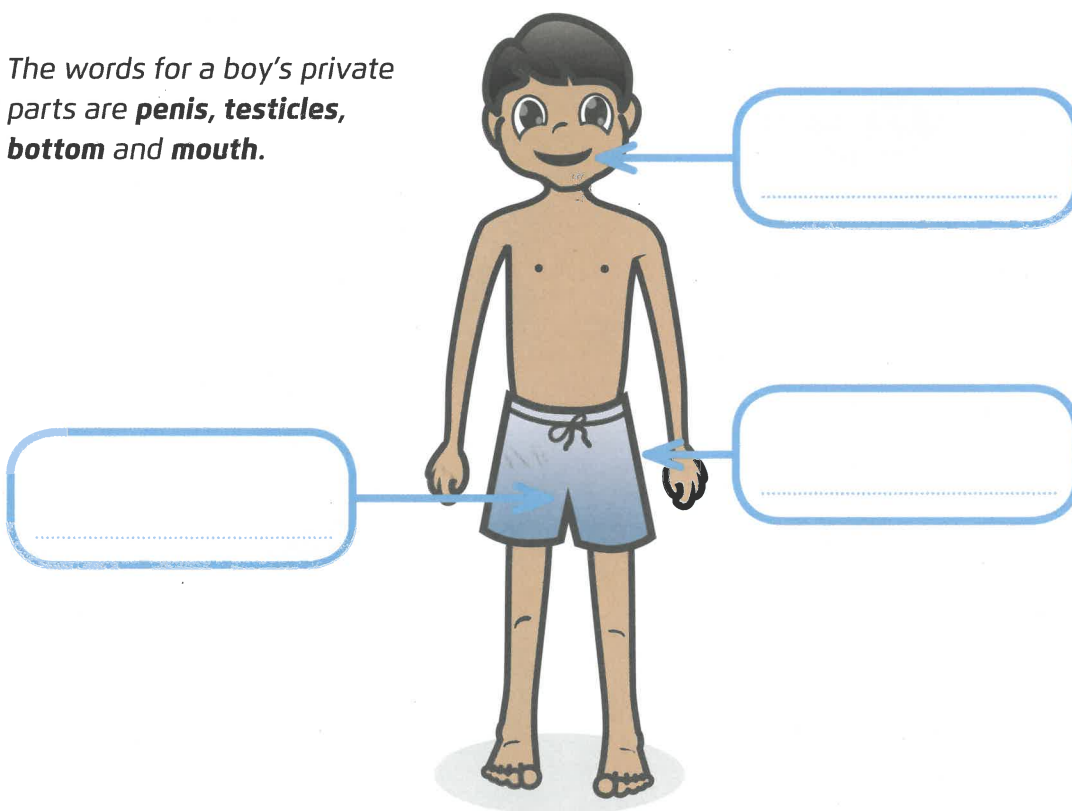


Label the pictures with words for the private parts of their body.

The words for a girl's private parts are **breasts**, **vagina**, **bottom** and **mouth**.



The words for a boy's private parts are **penis**, **testicles**, **bottom** and **mouth**.



"Your body is special and it belongs to you"

Safe & Unsafe Touch

Safe touches -

Does your child have choice and control?

Safe touch is important in our children's lives. Children need to know that there are many different types of touch and learn to recognise whether a touch is safe and loving or unsafe and unwanted.

Teach your child that it is ok to say "NO" or "STOP" if they feel uncomfortable or confused about a touch.



Discuss with your child

"Safe and appropriate touches can change to unsafe or worrying touches. You have the right to say "Stop" or "No".

"If someone touches you and it gives you Early Warning Signs and makes you feel unsafe, it isn't your fault. Talk with someone on your network."

"Safe and appropriate touches can be demonstrated as hugs, pats, kisses and strokes that are clearly enjoyed by both people."

"Hugs and kisses are nice, especially from people we like. But no one should ask you to keep a kiss, hug or touch secret. Someone may say that 'it is our little secret'. If anyone says that to you, even if you know that person, tell an adult you trust."

"No one is allowed to touch or kiss you without your permission."

Personal Space



Personal Bubble Space

This is your personal and private space. No one is allowed to touch you unless you want to be touched. No one is allowed to touch the private parts of your body (unless there is a really good reason like going to the Doctor).

You shouldn't ever touch someone else's Private Parts. We don't keep secrets about touching, you can always tell someone on your network.



Kiss, Cuddle & Squeeze Bubble

People (like close family members or carers) who you love, are close to you and you know really really well can come into this bubble IF YOU WANT THEM TO. Any time you don't feel like a kiss, cuddle or squeeze, it is OK to say "NO Thanks" even if they are your Mum or Dad or Carer.



Hug Bubble

Extended family members and friends who you know well and like to be around can come into this bubble for a hug IF YOU WANT THEM TO. Any time you don't feel like a hug it's OK to say "NO Thanks", even if it is someone from your family or a friend.



High Five Bubble

You know these people, but not as well as people in your hug bubble. They might be people that help you, like teachers and coaches. You might feel comfortable and safe to give them a high five, a side hug or a handshake. If you don't want them to touch you say, "NO Thanks" and move away.



Wave Bubble

You know these people, but not as well as people in your hug bubble or high five bubble. They might be people like a neighbour or community member you don't know very well. You might wave and say "Hello" to these people but you don't usually give them a hug or touch them.

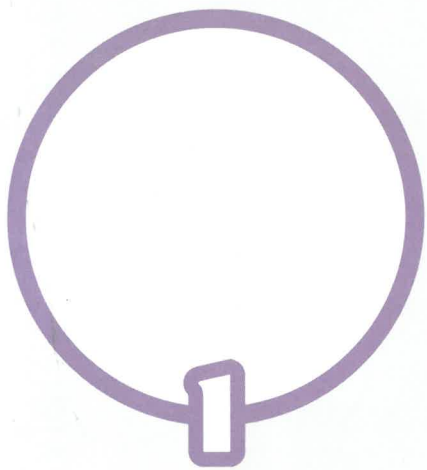


Stranger Bubble

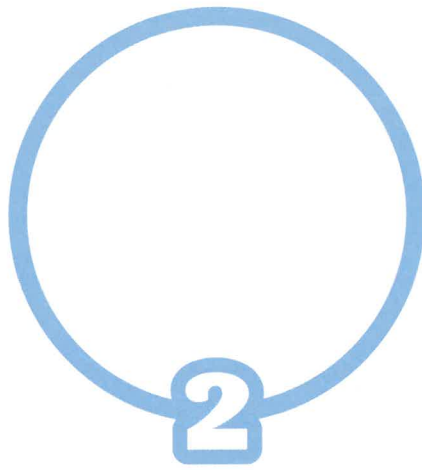
Strangers are people you have never met before. You wouldn't usually kiss, cuddle, squeeze or hug someone you have never met before. Sometimes you might need to ask a stranger in a uniform for help (like a police officer, nurse or shop assistant).



Who is in your personal space bubbles?



Personal
Bubble
Space



Kiss, Cuddle
& Squeeze
Bubble



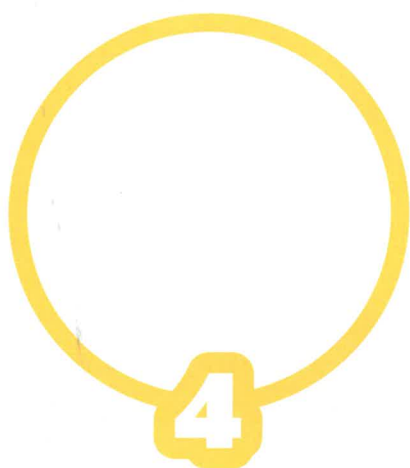
Hug
Bubble

Make your own personal space plan, draw a picture of yourself.

I am in charge of **my** personal space. I will respect **other** people's personal space.

Who do you like to give a hug to and who do you like to high five with?

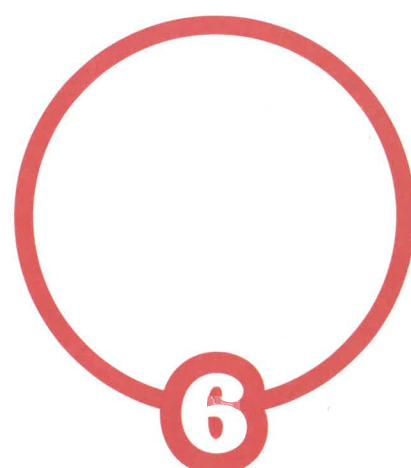
Write the names or draw a picture of the people that are in each of your personal space bubbles...



High Five
Bubble



Wave
Bubble



Stranger
Bubble



Assertiveness

If someone is hurting you, doing something that makes you feel unsafe or breaking the rules about private parts, you can...



Say



Then



And find a trusted adult from your network to



If someone wants to

Touch my private parts.

Look at my private parts.

Take photos of my private parts.

or

Show me their private parts.

Be assertive

**Say no, yell,
scream or shout.**



Practise your assertiveness skills

1. Playful No	is a laughing no "No Way!"
2. Polite No	is a manners no "No thanks!"
3. Assertive No	is a firm assertive no "No you can't"
4. Angry No	is an angry no "NO I don't want to"
5. Emergency No	is an emergency danger no "NO leave me alone"



What can I do?

- Practise using all five NOs with your child – demonstrate how body language and tone is different each time. To say "NO" assertively it is helpful to stand up straight, keep your head up, shoulders back, look into the person's eyes and use a loud voice when saying "NO".
- Discuss different situations and decide which "NO" would be most appropriate.
- Role play the NO, GO, TELL strategy using your child's puppets or toys.
- Encourage and let your child practise their "EMERGENCY NO" at home.



Make your own family safety plan

Talking with your child about safety, their bodies and how to protect themselves from an early age is an important part of keeping them safe.

Children who are confident, have good support networks and assertiveness skills are less likely to be targeted by child sex offenders. It is important to educate children from an early age about simple safety messages.

1. We all have the right to feel safe at all times. Reinforce this verbally, visually and by example.
2. When we do not feel safe we also have the right to do what we need to do until we feel safe again. Part of our right to feel safe includes the responsibility to see that others are safe with us. In other words treat others the way we want to be treated ourselves.
3. When things are safe for us we have choice, feel comfortable and are in control.
4. Early Warning Signs are the involuntary, physical response, which we feel in our bodies when we do not feel safe or when we are in an exciting or challenging situation. When we feel unsafe, our bodies may tell us through physical sensations that something is wrong; for example our heart beats faster or we have butterflies in our tummies.
5. We can talk with someone about anything, no matter what it is. Reinforce this verbally, visually and by example.
6. We can use our helping hand network to decide who the best person to talk with is and who will help us.
7. We may need to keep on asking for help until someone listens and believes us and we feel safe again.
8. "Your body belongs to you." Know the correct vocabulary for your body parts, including the penis or vagina. Understand that your breasts, buttocks, mouth and genitals are private.
9. No one is allowed to touch the private parts of our body unless they have our permission. A doctor may need to check our private parts for medical reasons but they must have our permission and we must be with a trusted adult. We are not allowed to touch other people's private parts.
10. Safety rules can help to keep us safe. If we are in an unsafe situation we need to say "NO" and to GO if we can and to TELL someone about it.