



TIP SHEET

Teaching kids personal safety

Bravehearts
Educate Empower Protect
Our Kids

As trusted adults in children's lives, the most important role we have is to keep our kids safe. Teaching kids simple strategies that through regular revision and practice become second nature, can help them build confidence and resilience to protect themselves in a variety of situations across the span of their lives.

Children can begin learning these personal safety skills and strategies from as young as three years old. Research supports that teaching children about personal safety assists with:

- Reducing the likelihood of a child entering into an unsafe situation.
- Helping a child know how to respond to an unsafe situation.
- Increasing a child's sense of confidence and in doing so, reducing the likelihood the child will be targeted.
- Increasing a child's knowledge of their personal rights and in doing so, increasing the likelihood that the child will speak out if they feel unsafe or unsure.

THE 3 RULES OF PERSONAL SAFETY

Parents should instill in their children the following three personal safety rules:

1. We all have the right to feel safe with people.

This rule teaches kids that they have the right to feel safe and secure where they live, play, and learn, and that no one has the right to make them do something that makes them feel unsafe or unsure.

2. It's OK to say 'NO' if you feel unsafe or unsure.

This rule teaches kids that it is OK to stand up for themselves and to be assertive if something doesn't feel right.

3. Nothing is so yucky that you can't tell someone about it.

One of the reasons that children fail to disclose harm is because they are afraid of getting into trouble. This rule helps to encourage your child to speak to a trusted adult, even if something seems scary or terrible.

HOW TO TALK TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT PERSONAL SAFETY

- Speaking with your child about personal safety should not be a one-off conversation. Rather, create opportunities that allow talking about personal safety to be part of an ongoing dialogue between you and your child. Always let your child know you are there for them, and keeping them safe is your number one priority.
- It is recommended that you teach your child the correct language for their private parts. Emphasise that those parts are private and belong to them.
- Try not to scare or alarm your child. Speak calmly and confidently, keeping a neutral, natural tone, ensuring that you allow time for your child to process the information and ask questions. Never make them feel ashamed or embarrassed about sexuality or body parts.

NEED SUPPORT OR MORE INFORMATION?
Bravehearts Information and Support Line
FREECALL **1800 272 831**
Mon-Fri 8:30am - 4:30pm AEST