



Professional Development

Strategies to promote childhoods free from violence where children enjoy equitable and respectful relationships.

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Hello!

Thank you for being proactive with body safety, protective behaviours and respectful relationships education in your community.

This booklet supports your organisation in creating positive culture change and ending childhood sexual abuse. You will find strategies to promote the empowerment and participation of children. There are also tips on how to model consent and advice on how to reach out to your wider community.

Body Safety Australia was established in 2015. The not-for-profit is the passion child of founders Deanne Carson and Whitney Yip.

The **Body Safety Australia** team are committed to partnering with early childhood centres, schools, families and the community to create positive change in children's lives.



Working together, we promote consent and bodily autonomy education.

Body Safety Australia celebrates diversity and respect for all. We have specialised knowledge and experience in faith-based schools, special schools, LGBTIQ communities and CALD communities.

www.bodysafetyaustralia.com.au

www.facebook.com/bodysafetyaustralia

www.twitter.com/bodysafetyau

Tip Sheet: Talking to Families, Caregivers and Other Professionals

The team at **Body Safety Australia** understands that there are many fears and misconceptions around child sexual abuse. We want to support families and communities in starting the conversation.

Here are some frequently asked questions and suggested answers. Some adults in your community may be survivors of child sexual abuse, so always approach the topic with care and compassion.

Q: Why should we talk to children about body safety?

A: Body safety education for children simply helps them understand their bodies, their emotions and how they interact with others. It's an extension of what you are already teaching them!

Q: How do I talk to our families about body safety strategies?

A: Often families can be concerned about body safety strategies as they fear they may no longer be able to share spontaneous affection with the children. Explain that when children feel secure in their bodily autonomy, they are free to show affection in lots of different ways.

Q: How do we address the 'stranger danger' myth?

A: Childhood sexual abuse is rarely perpetrated by strangers. In fact, in 90% of cases the abuser is a relative, family friend, community leader or other known person.

Often child sexual abusers groom the caregivers long before they abuse children. They make themselves indispensable to a family, school, church etc. They are often described as a 'pillar of the community'.

Q: How do we help reconcile body safety strategies with our community's religion, culture, family structure or values?

A: The information in this booklet and our workshops are a guide only. Body Safety Australia is happy to consult with communities to ensure messages are culturally sensitive.

We celebrate diversity and have specialised knowledge and experience in faith-based schools, special schools, LGBTIQA communities and CALD communities.

Helplines:

Blue Knot Helpline (For Survivors): 1300 657 380

ChildFIRST: 1300 721 383 (general enquiries)

Centre Against Sexual Assault (www.casa.org.au)

1800RESPECT: 1800 737 732 (www.1800respect.org.au)

Child Protection Crisis Line: 13 12 78

**Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention
and Legal Service Victoria:** 1800 105 303

**InTouch Multicultural Centre
Against Family Violence:** 1800 755 988

Men's Helpline: 1300 78 99 78

Sexual Assault Helpline:
1800 806 292

Kids' Helpline: 1800 551 800

Police: 000

PartnerSPEAK (peer support for
partners and families of online child sex offenders):
contact@partnerspeak.org.au



Our Research:

Between 2016-2018, BSA reached over 7,500 students, families, teaching staff and other professionals working with children in Victoria.

Our **Superstars** program is the only suite of body safety services independently evaluated to measure the programs effectiveness, and participants' increased confidence and knowledge.

Before the Program:

- **77%** of parents are not confident talking to their children about abuse prevention strategies
- **55%** of 6 year olds could not identify safe and/or unsafe touch
- **49%** of 9 year olds could not accurately name genitals
- **28%** of 11 year olds could not identify unsafe online contact

After the Program:

- Children's ability to correctly identify private parts doubled
- Teacher confidence in creating a child safe environment doubled
- Parent confidence in knowledge of responding to child sex abuse doubled



2017 Primary School Case Study Results

"It was a fantastic program which was run well. Both the students and staff got a lot out of it!"

BSA Scorecard

- ★ 85% of teachers rated BSA an eight or above in overall satisfaction
- ★ 85% felt that the BSA program met or exceeded expectations
- ★ 92% felt encouraged and supported throughout program implementation
- ★ 84% want more training from Body Safety Australia

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In 2017, Body Safety Australia ran a combined body safety and sexuality education program at a lead Rights, Resilience and Respectful Relationships primary school. These are the results of the school's internal evaluation.

School Population:

- 10 Non-Teaching Staff
- 22 Teachers
- 318 Students
- 23% LOTE background

BEFORE the program:
The teachers wanted expert support and building capacity in:



Sex & Gender: 62%
**Public, Private and
Personal Body Parts 92%**

Bodily Autonomy & Bodies: 62% **Consent 62%**
Puberty: 85%

Babies & Conception: 100%

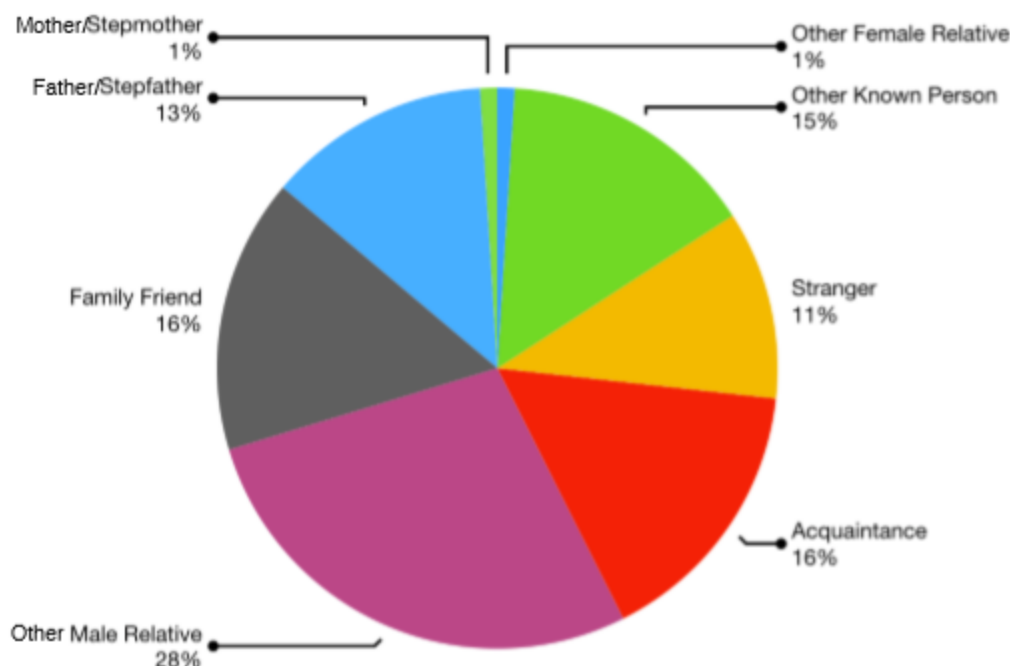
**Protective behaviours &
Body Safety: 54%**

AFTER the program:

69 % of teachers preferred having external providers overall

92 % of teachers felt **MORE** confident in supporting students and families

Child Sex Abuse Incidences Before the Age of 15 Age



When a child is abducted and harmed by a stranger, we react with collective horror. However, 90% of child sexual abuse is perpetrated by someone known to the child, and often, by a trusted and loved person.

One of the most difficult things in protecting children is to address the risk of a known offender.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2006a). Personal Safety Survey, Australia, 2005 (Cat. No. 4906.0). Canberra: ABS.

Key Body Safety Learning Objectives

Learning Objective 1: Emotions

To allow children to accurately identify emotions, both their own and others', and to be able to communicate their emotions to others including their safe adults.

Doing this also helps convey to the child that the adult is responsive to hearing about *all* emotions, particularly ones that trouble the child.

Learning Objective 2: Early Warning Signs

To allow children to identify signs in their body that tell them they may be unsafe. Often put down to intuition, there are very real physical cues that tell a person if they are safe or unsafe. This assists adults in learning the cues for individual children.

Learning Objective 3: Fight, Flight, Freeze

To understand that people have different fear responses and to assist children and adults to identify their own fear responses. Survivors of childhood abuse often say that they internalised blame for their abuse because they 'didn't do anything to stop it'.

Learning Objective 4: Assertive Communication

To be able to clearly and assertively communicate one's right to bodily autonomy. Children learn they have a right to choose who touches their body, when and why. They also learn how to communicate that to others. This may include finding other ways of expressing affection besides physical touch.

Learning Objective 5: Safe Adults

For children to identify a range of adults in whom they feel they can confide. To brief those adults on their responsibility as a 'safe' adult.

Learning Objective 6: Bodily Autonomy

For children to understand that their body belongs to them and nobody has the right to touch it without permission. They also learn to respect the bodily autonomy of others.

Learning Objective 7: Private, Personal & Public Body Parts including naming genitals

To differentiate between personal, private and public body parts. Outlining the difference between public, private and personal can help adults to have purposeful conversations with children about what is appropriate behaviour.

Learning Objective 8: Necessary Touch

To acknowledge that there are exceptions to bodily autonomy and consent, and to explore exceptions to bodily autonomy and encourage adults to find ways of increasing a child's agency in times when a child is not able to withhold consent to touch.

Learning Objective 9: Secrets and Surprises

To understand the difference between a surprise and a secret and the role of both in a child's life, and how to teach and model this to children.

Learning Objectives 10: Tricky Times

To help children understand appropriate boundaries between adults/teens and children.

To explore how to help children differentiate between what is appropriate for adults to ask of children, what is inappropriate, and why.



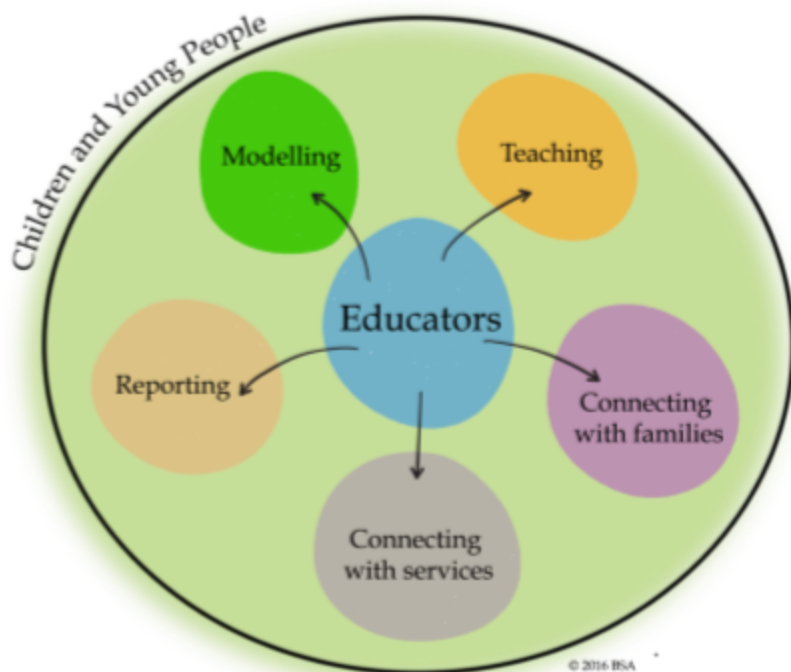
Best Practice in Body Safety Education

Creating a culture of child safety means more than just delivering content.

For each learning objective, think of ways that you can teach students, model respectful practice and embed the learning across the curriculum.

Best practice in body safety education is a whole-of-community approach.

This includes reaching out to families and communities to extend child safe practices to all the places children learn, live and play.



Inclusive and Responsive Approaches to Child Safety

Have you considered:

- Using language to ensure all children in your class are included and supported?

- This may mean talking about 'your grown ups' instead of 'mum and dad' or knowing the words for penis and vulva/vagina in the child's first language.

- How the lessons actively encourage the participation and empowerment of students?

- Sometimes it is tricky to ask children's feedback about what makes them feel unsafe and what they would like changed. Remember, this is your professional obligation under the Victorian Child Safe Standards.

- Whether your content material has an equal focus on a child's responsibilities as well as rights? How can they contribute to others' safety and well being?

- This may mean brainstorming ideas on how a child can be a 'good friend' or 'how can we make sure our friends feel safe around us?'

This can extend to exploring how to handle disappointment when things don't go as expected.

- Have you taken the time to ensure activities are accessible to children with a disability and that their parents and caregivers understand the role of body safety education in their child's safety and empowerment?

- Have you approached specialist staff and aides to ask for their input on suitable activities for a child with a disability?

- Sometimes it is tricky to approach family and caregivers about what makes their child feel unsafe and what they would like changed. Remember, this is your professional obligation under the Victorian Child Safe Standards.

- How to engage greater parental/guardian participation and education for children from high risk demographics?

- This may mean working with a cultural liaison officer, or community engagement leader in your community to deliver content in a sensitive and inclusive manner.

- Often parents/guardians are unable to attend information sessions and workshops because of shift work and/or childcare reasons. Consider holding sessions at a different time, or offer childcare to increase engagement.



Understanding Appropriate Sexual Behaviour

Sexual behaviours which are spontaneous, curious, light-hearted and consensual are a part of healthy development.

0-5 years

- thumb sucking, body stroking and holding of genitals
- wanting to touch other children's genitals
- games - 'doctor/nurse', 'show me yours and I'll show you mine'
- asking about or wanting to touch the breasts, bottoms or genitals of familiar adults, eg when in the bath
- enjoyment of being nude
- interest in body parts and function
- games - 'doctor/nurse', 'show me yours and I'll show you mine'

6-17 years

- growing need for privacy
- masturbation in private
- curiosity and seeking information about sexuality
- use of sexual language and/or use of sexual humour and obscenities with peers
- interest and/or participation in intimate relationships
- hugging, kissing, touching with known peers
- exhibitionism amongst same age peers within the context of play e.g. occasional flashing or mooning
- use of mobile phones and internet in relationships with known peers
- sexual activity with a partner of similar age and developmental ability (ability to consent must be considered)
- viewing materials for sexual arousal e.g. music videos, magazines, movies

in Children and Young People (birth - 17 years)

Sexual behaviours which are persistent, or where there is inequality in age, size, power or ability, or risk to the health and safety is concerning.

0-12 years

- chronic peeping
- pulling other children's pants down/skirts up against their will
- explicit sexual conversation using sophisticated or adult language
- preoccupation with adult sexual type behaviour
- following others into toilets to look at them or touch them
- preoccupation with touching another's genitals (often in preference to other child focussed activities)

13-17 years

- masturbation in preference to other activities, in public, and/or causing self-injury; sexual preoccupation which interferes with daily function
- persistent explicit communication, art or play which is sexual or sexually intimidating and/or obscene
- accessing age-restricted materials e.g. movies, games, internet with sexually explicit content
- persistent fear, or presence of sexually transmitted infection or pregnancy
- flirting behaviours, seeking relationships with older children or adults in preference to peers
- intentional spying on others while they are engaged in sexual activity or nudity

0-12 years

Sexual behaviours that are excessive, compulsive, coercive, forceful, degrading or threatening, secretive, manipulative or involve bribery or trickery, or involve children with a significant difference in age, developmental ability or power need immediate protection.

- simulation of explicit foreplay or sexual behaviour in play
- persistent masturbation
- persistent touching of the genitals of other children
- persistent attempts to touch the genitals of adults
- sexual behaviour between young children involving penetration with objects
- forcing other children to engage in sexual play

13-17 years

- compulsive masturbation e.g. self harming, seeking an audience
- engaging vulnerable others in a process to gain sexual activity by using grooming techniques, e.g. gifts, lies, flattery
- preoccupation with sexually aggressive and/or illegal pornography
- force or coercion of others into sexual activity
- sexual contact with others of significant age and/or developmental difference
- presence of sexually transmitted infection or pregnancy
- deliberately sending and/or publishing sexual images of self or another person
- arranging a face to face meeting with an online acquaintance without the knowledge of a peer or known adult
- sexual contact with animals
- sexual activity in exchange for money, goods, accommodation, drugs or alcohol.
- possessing, accessing or sending child exploitation materials e.g. photos of children naked or in sexual activities
- forcing or manipulating others into sexual activity

Digital Technology

Increasingly digital technology is being used to groom or abuse children. Content and apps that appears to be made for children can often be very explicit and normalise sexual abuse and violence.

Child exploitation material is being produced by adults in a child's life or by strangers who approach children through online gaming or social media.

78% of people charged with downloading or possessing child abuse images also abused shortly prior to or after downloading the images.

Have you considered:

- asking for consent when taking images of a child and/or their work?
- exploring and understanding the most current and popular devices?
- lesson content on how to identify 'friends' on online spaces?



Recommended Just For You

Superstars Starter Kit (ages 3-8 years) \$64.95

My Safe Adult Dedoches: Finger Puppet Activity
(ages 3-8 years) \$24.95

Roll 'n' Play Emotions Game Pack (ages 3-8 years) \$24.95

Surprise! Mum's B'rthday by Deanne Carson (ages 4-6 years) \$14.95

BSA's Consent Continuum Poster (with definitions)
\$14.95

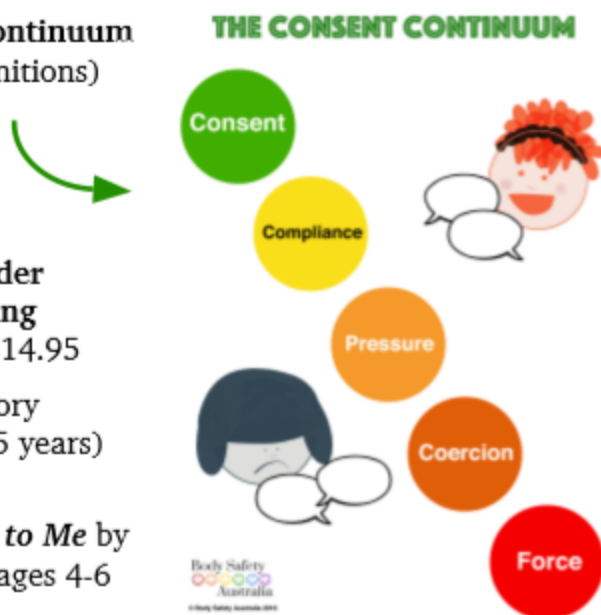
BSA's Space Invader Poster: Introducing Personal Space \$14.95

It's My Body by Lory Freeman (ages 3-5 years)
\$21.95

My Body Belongs to Me by Jill Starishevsky (ages 4-6 years) \$22.95

I Won't Sayd, Willow by Candy Lawrence (ages 5-8 years)
\$30

Some Secrets Should Never Be Kept by Jayneen Sanders (ages 7+ years) \$27.50



To purchase, please visit www.bodysafetyaustralia.com.au
or email info@bodysafetyaustralia.com.au

What's Next ... ?

Body Safety Australia has developed a suite of incursions, parent workshops and professional development to support your organisation in delivering respectful relationships and sexuality education.



- **Body Safety Superstars:** body safety and protective behaviours education
- **Naked Truths:** supporting online respectful relationships
- **Unique You:** respectful relationship and sexuality education

We also consult with organisations to create tailored solutions to empower children, young people and families.


If you would like to find out more, drop us an email at info@bodysafetyaustralia.com.au

Otherwise join our mailing list, or keep in touch with us on Facebook (@[bodysafetyaustralia](https://www.facebook.com/bodysafetyaustralia)) or Twitter (@[bodysafetyau](https://twitter.com/bodysafetyau))!

www.bodysafetyaustralia.com.au



Curriculum-Mapping: How Can Body Safety Australia Support You?



Curriculum	Body Safety Superstars: consent and body safety education.	Naked Truths: technology, sexuality and young people.	Unique You : inclusive sexuality and relationship education.
Victorian Child Safe Standards	★	★	★
Victorian Resilience, Rights & Respectful Relationships	★	★	★
The Australian Curriculum	★	★	★
National Quality Standard (ELYF)	★	—	—
Free From Violence	★	★	★
Child Sexual Abuse Final Report Recommendations	★	★	★
New South Wales Child Safe Principles	★	★	★