



## Child's Safety Information Sheet for Protective Adults

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### 1. Awareness of Risks

The vulnerability of children and young people to personal violence is evidenced by the following:

- In Australia a child is reported abused or neglected every 1.5 minutes. <sup>1</sup>Conservative estimates suggest 10 – 20% of Australian children (upwards of 550,000) are abused or neglected each year.<sup>2</sup>
- *All children are at risk of sexual abuse* regardless of their age, gender, social class, race, religion or ethnicity. Up to 30% of children experience sexual abuse of any kind and between 5 - 10% experience severe abuse. <sup>3</sup>Most children are abused by people they know and trust and about one third of abuse is perpetrated by other children or young people. <sup>4</sup>
- *Online grooming and abuse are common.* Approximately a quarter of young people (aged 8 – 17yo) have been contacted by a stranger and 10% had been sent inappropriate content online. <sup>5</sup>
- *Bullying is frequently experienced by Australian children.* Approximately one in four Year 4 to Year 9 students reported being frequently bullied. Bullying is commonly experienced both online and in person by the same children.<sup>6</sup>
- *Children frequently witness domestic violence.* <sup>7</sup>Children who witness parental domestic violence are 2 to 4 times more likely to experience partner violence themselves (as adults) than people who had not. <sup>8</sup>
- *Almost one-fifth of all young people aged 11 to 17 yo experience high or very high levels of psychological distress.* Young people are less likely than any other age group to seek professional help.<sup>9</sup> One in ten young people aged 12-17 years old will self-harm, one in 13 will seriously consider a suicide attempt, and one in 40 will attempt suicide.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Child Family Community Australia (2017). Child Abuse and Neglect Statistics (online). Available <https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/child-abuse-and-neglect-statistics> [Accessed 31.8.20].

<sup>2</sup> NAPCAN (2007). *Child Abuse and Neglect Fact Sheet* (online). Available <http://www.napcan.org.au/what.htm>. [Accessed 3.4.07].

<sup>3</sup> Ogloff, J.R.P., Cutajar, M.C., Mann, E., & Mullen, P. (2012). Child sexual abuse and subsequent offending and victimisation: A 45 year follow up study. *Trends & Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice* no. 440. Canberra: AIC.

<sup>4</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (2006). *Personal Safety Survey, Australia, 2005*. Cat. No 4906.0. Canberra: ABS.

<sup>5</sup> Office of the eSafety Commissioner (2018). *State of play: Youth, kids and digital dangers*. Canberra: Office of the eSafety Commissioner.

<sup>6</sup> Bullying No Way (2020). *What is Bullying – Facts and Figures* (online). Available <https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/WhatIsBullying/FactsAndFigures> [Accessed 03.09.20].

<sup>7</sup> Richards, K (2011). Children's exposure to domestic violence in Australia, *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice* no.419. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology

<sup>8</sup> Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2018). *Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia 2018*. Cat. no. FDV 2. Canberra.

<sup>9</sup> Beyond Blue (2020). *Statistics* (online). Available: <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/media/statistics> [Accessed 20.8.20].

<sup>10</sup> Black Dog Institute (2020). *Facts about suicide in Australia* (online). Available: <https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/resources-support/suicide-self-harm/facts-about-suicide-in-australia/> [accessed 20.8.20].

### *Child Sex Offenders:*

- are mostly known to the child (90 – 96%)<sup>1 & 2</sup> including parents, relatives, family friends or care providers;
- are mostly heterosexual males. Best research estimates put female perpetrators at 20% of abusers of boys and 5% for abusers of girls<sup>6</sup>. Male offenders who abuse boys often do not view themselves as homosexual;
- cannot be typified by age, class, profession, race, religion or family status;
- often begin offending in childhood or adolescence. *Note:* sibling incest is widespread and poorly recognised.
- actively seek access to children and place themselves in positions where they can obtain legitimate, unrestricted, unsupervised access to children;
- work hard at being liked and accepted;
- target vulnerability, such as passive, emotionally needy children; those with a low self esteem; naïve children who have received little or no sex education; children who are quieter, less likely to object or put up a fight;
- adopt a grooming process to not only groom the target, but the target's parents;
- silence children with gifts, secrets, threats, emotional blackmail and/or violence;
- rarely have a criminal history (less than 5%)<sup>5</sup>;
- who abuse children outside their family are most often abusing children within their family.

### *Other important facts about child sexual abuse:*

- Small children are particularly vulnerable targets because of the difficulties in disclosing the abuse and their vulnerability to threats, bribes and coercion. The vast majority (82%) of child sexual abuse victims are under 10 years of age when they first experience sexual abuse<sup>5</sup>.
- Children are reluctant to report for reasons of fear, shame, confusion and guilt. When children do eventually tell a trusted adult (if they ever do), it is usually indirectly through disguised hints. Most disclosures of abuse are made months or years after the incident occurred, particularly when the offender was known to the child or young person.
- Children can be psychologically harmed by the reaction of significant adults upon disclosure. It is vitally important that when a child or young person discloses abuse that adults remain calm, accept what the child or young person is saying and organise professional intervention.

### **References:**

1 Briggs, F & McVeity, M 2000, *Teaching Children to Protect Themselves*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney.

2 McMenamin, B 2006, *Childwise Speak Up – An Australian campaign to protect children from sexual abuse*, Melbourne Vic.

3 ASCA (Advocates for Survivors of Child Abuse) 2008, Child Abuse – figures (online), Available [http://www.asca.org.au/childabuse/ca\\_figures.html](http://www.asca.org.au/childabuse/ca_figures.html) [Accessed 12 May 2008].

4 QPS (Queensland Police Service) 2005, *Protective Behaviours* (brochure), QPS, Brisbane

5 SNAICC (Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Childcare) 2007, *Through Young Black Eyes*, p.55, Victoria.

6 Childwise 2005, *Choose With Care Presentation*, South Melbourne

## 2. Indicators of Child Sexual Abuse

### *Physical indicators:*

- Bruises, scratches or other injuries not consistent with accidental injury
- Itching, soreness, discharge or unexplained bleeding
- Painful and frequent urination
- Signs of sexually transmitted infections
- Semen in the vagina, anus or external genitalia or on clothing
- Unexplained pain in the genital area
- Bruises, bite marks or other injuries to breasts, buttocks, lower abdomen and thighs
- Difficulty walking or sitting
- Persistent headaches or recurrent abdominal pain

### *Sexual behavioural indicators:*

- Sexual knowledge or language inappropriate for child's age/development
- Sexual themes in child's artwork, stories or play
- Hints about sexual activity through actions/comments
- Inappropriate sexual behaviour or play with self, dolls, toys, adults or other children
- Open displays of sexuality, for example, repeated public masturbation
- Promiscuity, repetitious sexually precocious behaviour

### *Developmental behavioural indicators:*

*Younger children:* open and compulsive sexualised behaviour (including sexual touching of self, others or toys); regression to an earlier stage with bedwetting or soiling; may become unusually withdrawn or aggressive.

*School-age children:* problems in school (lack of concentration); sleeping and eating disturbances; lack of self-esteem; may become unusually withdrawn or aggressive.

It is important to note that some of the developmental behavioural indicators listed above may not necessarily be connected to sexual abuse. However they do mean that something is wrong and that the child needs help.

## 3. Dangerous Messages and Practices

- *Stranger Danger:* does not account for the vast majority of child abuse perpetrated by a known person; prevents the assistance of potentially 'good strangers'; misconceptions abound regarding who a stranger is.
- *Always obey an adult's instructions:* the authority of adults needs to be questioned by children if they are being asked/told to do something they believe is wrong or makes them feel unsafe. Child sex offenders take advantage of parents who advise their child/children to obey the instructions of all adults.
- *Expectations of affection:* Conditioning a child to accept an innocent but unwanted touch makes it more difficult for the child to resist an abusive touch, since the child has already experienced being touched against their will and of their wishes and choice being ignored.
- *Positivity bias:* includes such beliefs as 'it will never happen to my family'; 'there is good in everyone'; 'he/she would never harm my child'; 'things will turn out for the best'. We need an awareness of risks so we can consider the best and worst possibilities. We can hope for the best but consider, and take steps to prevent/reduce the risk of, the worst.

- *“The policeman/woman will take you away”*: This comment, sometimes delivered in good humour, can create a fear of police and thereby reduce the likelihood children will approach police for assistance in an emergency.
- *Failing to prepare our children*: We teach our children how to be safe in the water, in the sun and when riding their bicycles, yet we often fail to teach our children how to be safe with people. Sadly one of the greatest threats to the safety of our children is abuse from people, particular those known to them.

#### 4. Key Safety Messages

##### i) I am special, so are you!

**Aim:** To build a healthy self esteem and encourage respect and empathy for others.

The link between self esteem and mental, physical and emotional wellbeing has long been recognised. In relation to sexual abuse, children with a high self esteem are less likely to be targeted by offenders, are more likely to stop the abuse and are more likely to disclose abuse.

##### a) Appreciating individuality:

Children should be encouraged to appreciate and take pride in their individuality including their appearance, cultural and family background, gender, talents and abilities, likes and dislikes. It is also important for children to appreciate the individuality of others and to recognise that being different is what makes us special.

As concerned adults we can assist in boosting children’s self esteem by appreciating their individuality, praising them for what they do well, constructively correcting them when needed and encouraging them when they lack confidence undertaking a particular task.

##### b) Expect Respect:

People treat us how we allow them to. Teaching children to expect respect from themselves and others is an important step to building a healthy self esteem. We can do this by assisting children to set boundaries of unacceptable behaviour from others. Discuss steps children could take if people “cross the line” of acceptable behaviour.

We must also teach children the importance of showing others respect and how they can do this. Consider setting rules of acceptable behaviour at home or in the classroom to ensure boundaries are readily identified and agreed consequences are consistently enforced when a rule is broken. For best results, develop rules and consequences in consultation with children.

##### c) Expressing ourselves assertively:

Encourage children to take ownership of their feelings and to express themselves in a way that demonstrates self respect as well as respect for others. Assertive communication is a skill that does not come naturally for most people and needs to be practised regularly. We can develop assertiveness skills by: understanding different communication styles (passive, aggressive, passive aggressive and assertive); acknowledging the benefits of assertive communication; and practising to communicate assertively.

##### d) Building Resilience:

We can help to build children’s resilience by encouraging them to develop: a habit of positive thinking; an optimistic outlook on life; and a problem-solving response to challenging situations. Rather than rescuing children or telling them what to do, adults are encouraged to discuss options and to provide support.

### Other Self Esteem Building Strategies:

- Say I Love You
- Develop and maintain special daily rituals
- Let your children help you
- Take an interest in their sports or hobbies
- Eat meals as a family
- Seek out one-on-one opportunities often
- Praise desirable behaviour (praise should be genuine and specific)
- Correct firmly but lovingly
- Respect their choices
- Make your child/children a priority in your life

### ii) Safety is my right

**Aim:** To identify and effectively respond to potential unsafe situations.

#### a) Right to safety:

We all have the right to be safe with people. It is important for children to be aware of this right and understand if they do not feel safe that they can do something about it.

#### b) Corresponding responsibilities:

Having the right to be safe with people means children have a responsibility to maintain their own safety and to take action if their safety is threatened, such as going to a safe place and telling an adult they trust\*. They also have a responsibility to respect others' right to safety. Parents and teachers may discuss how children can respect others' right to safety, for example by treating others with respect and by assisting people in need of help. \*Note: *This responsibility does not remove the responsibility of protective adults to keep children safe.*

#### c) Preventative safety measures:

The safety messages contained in this handout do not seek to impose unnecessary restrictions on children's lives or in any way diminish their spirit of fun and adventure. Children are instead encouraged to think about how they can maintain their safety while doing the things they enjoy, accepting that there will be a degree of risk involved.

In almost every situation we can reduce identified risks by putting in place simple safety measures. Safety measures can be specific to an activity, for example wearing a helmet and appropriate footwear when riding a bike. Other safety measures are more general, such as making sure a parent is aware of children's whereabouts, who they are with and when they are expected home. Parents and teachers are encouraged to assist children to identify risks in the activities they enjoy and to implement safety measures to reduce them. For example ask, "How could we keep ourselves safe...(doing a particular activity)?"

#### d) Early warning signs

Early warning signs are our body's way of telling us we don't feel safe. They include butterflies in the tummy, sweaty palms, a pounding heart, crying, wobbly knees, wanting to be sick, and so on. We can experience early warning signs in three situations:

1. When it is *fun* to feel scared, e.g. watching a scary movie or going on a fast ride.
2. When it is *not fun*, but our choice and we are in control, e.g. delivering a class presentation, going to the dentist, or getting a needle from the doctor.

3. When it is *not fun*, there is *no choice or control*. This is a *personal* emergency. Personal emergencies may include being bullied, lost or abused.

It is important for children to recognise when their body is telling them they do not feel safe through their early warning signs and to determine if they are experiencing a personal emergency.

*Note:* It is important to note there may be situations where children experience personal emergencies, but do not feel early warning signs. An example is children who have been sexually abused from an early age and who identify the abuse as normal behaviour. The grooming process used by offenders often involves building a trusting relationship with the child. Children may not experience early warning signs when they trust and feel safe with the offender, as they are often ignorant to the fact the offender's behaviour is inappropriate and abusive. While this issue is acknowledged, an awareness of other safety concepts included in this handout will assist children who may fall into this category, in particular educating them about body ownership and the rules about touching.

#### **e) Personal emergencies:**

If children experience a personal emergency they need to know what they can do to feel safe again, such as telling a trusted adult as soon as they can.

Children may need to break a rule in order to get to safety, such as:

- rules of good or accepted behaviour, such as "dobbing on someone";
- school rules, such as leaving the classroom without permission; or
- laws, in extreme circumstances, such as trespassing, driving unlicensed or breaking into someone's house.

The challenge for adults is to ensure children understand rules which may be justifiably broken in various situations and which rules which may not. A suggested strategy to determine appropriate responses in a personal emergency, as well as to develop problem solving skills, is exploring actions that may be taken in a range of personal emergency scenarios. For example, How would someone keep themselves safe if they were: being bullied at school/offered drugs/being sexually abused by a relative?

#### **f) Bullying:**

Students, teachers, parents and school communities all have a role to play in both responding to and preventing bullying. Developing an anti-bullying culture is necessary, where strategies are put in place to make it socially unacceptable to bully or to witness bullying, and acceptable to report incidents and support targets.

An effective school anti-bullying policy that is understood and followed by students, teachers and parents is a good start. The role of bystanders is also part of the solution, where witnesses to bullying behaviour accept responsibility to intervene, either directly or indirectly. This may be by standing up for the child being bullied or reporting the incident to a teacher or parent.

In order to tackle the significant issue of bullying, all parties (students, teachers and parents) need to understand what it is, how it can occur and why some children engage in bullying behaviour. An understanding of the impact of bullying and how children could respond to bullying behaviour is also recommended.

### iii) My body belongs to me

**Aim:** To identify, prevent and stop all forms of abuse.

#### a) Body Ownership:

One of the most powerful messages to convey to children to prevent them from becoming a victim of sexual abuse is that their body belongs to them and no one is allowed to touch their body without their permission. It is equally important for children to be educated about their private parts, using the correct terminology. Talking openly with children about their bodies, particularly from a young age, prevents feelings of embarrassment or shame when discussing private parts and encourages children to disclose uncomfortable or abusive situations.

As part of appreciating body ownership, children are encouraged to take care of their bodies. They can do this by eating healthy food, exercising, dressing appropriately and wearing sun protection.

#### b) Defining abuse:

Child sex offenders prey upon children who are naïve and are unaware of which behaviour constitutes inappropriate touching. Children need to know that it is **not okay** for *anyone* to:

- touch or look their private parts;
- make them touch or look at someone else's private parts; or
- show them rude pictures, such as in a book, on a computer or TV.

The very few exceptions to these rules, such as when being examined by a doctor in the presence of a trusted adult, should also be discussed.

#### c) Responding to abuse:

Family Planning Queensland's 'No! Go Tell' response is suggested for children to use when responding to sexual abuse:

- NO!: Tell the person "NO" or "Stop, I'll tell"
- GO: Leave immediately (break rules if necessary to get away); and
- TELL: a trusted adult exactly what happened as soon as possible. Don't stop telling until you are listened to, believed and action is taken to ensure you are safe and feel safe again.

Children must be taught to recognise the importance of reporting abuse to stop it from occurring and *how* to report, including who to tell and what to say. Practising disclosures is encouraged, including being persistent if children do not receive the help they need.

#### d) Known abusers:

As the vast majority of abuse is perpetrated by someone known to the child, it is imperative that children are aware of this possibility and have strategies in place (such as those listed above) should it occur. It is also important for children to be aware of tactics frequently engaged by offenders to groom children, such as spending time alone with them or giving them money or gifts. Any such incidents should be reported directly to a parent or another trusted adult.

#### e) Strangers (Unknown abusers):

The shortcomings of the Stranger Danger program have previously been discussed (dangerous practices and messages). In addition to alerting children to the possibility of harm from a known and often trusted person, which is the most likely scenario, children should also be aware that strangers may present a danger. The most common type of stranger a child is likely to interact with is via the internet.

*Appearance and demeanour of strangers:* Strangers are anyone we don't know. They may be male or female, can be very friendly and may even address us by name. Unless children have physically met and know the people they interact with over the internet in person, they should regard these people as strangers. It is not uncommon for child sex offenders to masquerade as children to meet, develop relationships and groom children for abuse.

*Most strangers may provide assistance:* Contrary to commonly views about strangers, the vast majority of people we don't know (strangers) are not dangerous and may be able to provide us with assistance, if needed. It is important to identify people we would encourage children to approach in these circumstances, e.g. police, security officers, shop assistants, parents or grandparents with children. In seeking assistance, children should be advised to be aware of their early warning signs and to use the safety checklist. (The Safety Checklist is: Do I feel safe with this person? Will a trusted adult know where I am? Can I get help if I need it? One no, don't go!)

*Practical strategies for stranger scenarios:* While the following scenarios don't regularly occur, it is still a good idea to ensure children are aware of how to respond to them. Children should avoid: approaching a car with a stranger inside; accepting a gift from a stranger; or going anywhere with a stranger. Some tricks thought to be used by strangers to abduct children include: seeking help to find a lost puppy, asking children for street directions, advising 'mum has had an accident and asked me to pick you up to take you to the hospital to meet her there' or similar.

Children should use the safety checklist with strangers and listen to their early warning signs. If they sense danger, they should move away immediately. The use of code words, known only to family members, can enable 'safe' people to collect children when needed.

*Suspicious people:* Children should be made aware of what to do if they see someone acting suspiciously (that may cause them to feel unsafe) including observations they should make (and record), who to report to, and when.

As previously noted, the greatest likelihood of a stranger approaching a child is via the internet. General internet safety guidelines for children from the Queensland Police 'Who's chatting to your kids' publication include:

- Avoid sending a picture of themselves to someone they don't know, and never place a full profile and picture of themselves anywhere on the internet.
- Never give out personal information including their name, home address, phone number or school.
- Never arrange a face to face meeting with someone they have chatted with on the internet.
- Limit 'buddy lists' on social networking pages to people who they know including their real name. They should also be able to tell a parent how they know the person.

#### **f) Safe and unsafe secrets:**

Offenders use secrecy to keep their victims silent. Subsequently children need to know the difference between a safe and an unsafe secret, and that unsafe secrets should never be kept. We generally feel happy and excited about safe secrets. Unsafe secrets, by contrast, often evoke anxiety and feeling scared, unsafe, confused and/or uncomfortable. Children need to be able to identify unsafe secrets and what to do if someone tells them to keep an unsafe secret, i.e. to tell a trusted adult immediately.



#### iv) I can get help

**Aim:** To access help from trusted adults and relevant organisations.

##### a) Benefits of talking with someone:

Discussing the benefits of talking with someone when they feel scared, confused, sad or upset will encourage children to approach you and/or other trusted adults at these times. Such benefits include gaining help, advice and support to put the problem into perspective and to determine the best response option. Sharing a problem can also provide a sense of relief and increase the child's confidence in solving the problem.

##### b) Developing a safety network:

A Safety Network is a group of at least five trusted adults, chosen by the child, who can be approached for assistance if they experience a personal emergency or have a problem they wish to discuss. A minimum of five network members increases the likelihood of at least one network member being available at any one time. Safety Networks can be represented on a hand to assist with remembering network members. Children are encouraged to select network members they trust, who are available, and who will listen to them, believe them and assist them when needed. Network members may include relatives (including immediate family and extended family members), a neighbour, a friends' parent, a teacher or school principal, a sports coach, Adopt-a-Cop and/or a youth leader, priest or minister. Agencies such as Kids Helpline may also be used as a network member. It is suggested only one network member they reside with be selected, in addition to four network members outside of the home.

A Safety Network is more likely to be effective if network members are aware of the expectations of their role. Children should be encouraged to approach potential network members to clarify their role and to gain their acceptance before they become part of their Safety Network.

##### c) Using a safety network:

Children will be more inclined to use their Safety Network if they are aware of how to approach network members and what to say to clearly communicate their personal emergency or problem. It is a good idea to communicate that they are approaching the person as a network member to indicate the importance of the conversation.

Should a network member be unavailable, not listen, not believe the person or fail to take the necessary action, children need to *persist* in seeking help from other network members. The only time they should stop seeking assistance from their Safety Network is when they feel safe again or the problem has been solved.

##### d) Assisting others:

Children should be encouraged to consider how to be a good friend or classmate for others. Examples include approaching children who appear sad, withdrawn or in need of help, listening to them and/or approaching an adult for assistance on their behalf.

### Cautionary notes:

- Parents, teachers and other protective adults are encouraged to adapt the key safety messages to ensure the information provided, and delivery method/s used, are age-appropriate and suitable for the cognitive capacity of the children.
- The manner in which concerned adults convey safety messages is also crucial and should aim to *prepare* rather than scare. Fear-evoking messages are likely to increase fear and diminish confidence, thereby putting the child at greater risk. Safety messages conveyed in a supportive and empowering manner will equip children with an awareness of safety threats, together with practical strategies, skills and confidence to effectively respond to them.
- Children need regular opportunities to transfer safety knowledge into behaviour. It is only when this transition takes place that they have the ability and confidence to apply the safety strategies in response to 'real life' safety threats. Behaviour rehearsal is most effectively achieved through role plays. Other rehearsal opportunities include discussing 'what if' situations and encouraging problem-solving to identify appropriate responses
- While teaching the four key safety messages of the Safe Start program will assist to promote children's safety and wellbeing, no program or information in the world can *guarantee* their safety. It would be very remiss of parents or teachers to believe that as a result of children being exposed to these messages that they no longer are required to actively protect the children in their care.

## 5. Supportive Strategies to Maximise Children's Safety

The following strategies are designed to complement the four key safety messages by promoting a supportive environment to further maximise the safety of children.

- **Openness:** Children are more likely to open up and share their thoughts, feelings and concerns (including disclosures of abuse) with their parents, teachers and other trusted adults if open and effective communication is maintained. Love, respect, understanding and acceptance underpin open and effective communication. Children need to know parents/teachers won't 'freak out' if they talk about a problem of a personal nature.
- **Positive role modelling:** Children learn to communicate and handle challenges by watching their parents and teachers. Important skills include problem-solving, assertiveness, handling conflict, managing anger/aggression, handling disappointment and expressing love and affection. Through positive role modelling we can help children to develop these skills, which will benefit them throughout their lives.
- **Behaviour rehearsal:** As mentioned in 'Cautionary Notes' children need regular opportunities to transfer safety knowledge into behaviour. Creating a supportive environment requires ongoing efforts to ensure safe behaviours become habits.
- **Minimise opportunities:** of offenders to abuse children by being alert to grooming behaviour, assessing safety risks, and implementing effective preventive measures, such as educating children about the four key safety messages.
- **Act if you suspect abuse:** if a child discloses abuse or if you have reason to suspect abuse, you are encouraged to do what you can to support the child and report the abuse. Key guidelines for handling disclosures include:

- Remain calm – do not express shock, panic or disbelief
- Listen without interrupting
- Believe the child
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by telling and that the abuse was not his/her fault
- Avoid leading questions: question to confirm the need for reporting, don't investigate
- Do not confront the parents/perpetrator – this is best left in the hands of proper authorities
- Do not make promises you can't keep
- Let the child know what will happen next
- Make detailed notes
- Report the abuse and seek support for the child

Suggested actions following a disclosure, or in response to a suspicion of abuse, include reporting the abuse or your suspicions to your local police and/or the Department of Communities (Tel 1800 811 810 during business hours or 1800 177 135 after hours). You are also required to comply with the reporting requirements outlined in your school/organisation's child protection policy. It may also be appropriate to seek assistance from support services (e.g. counsellors and other support workers) for the child and yourself.

#### Where to from here?

- Relay the key safety messages to your children or the children in your care.
- Create a supportive environment to maximise children's safety.
- Learn more through further training, reading or speaking with child protection professionals.
- Lobby for a child protection program (such as Safe Start) to be implemented throughout your school/organisation.

For further information contact Children's Safety Australia via email: [admin@childsafety.org.au](mailto:admin@childsafety.org.au)

## Reading List

### a) For adults:

#### **Child Abuse Prevention:**

Briggs, F 2011, *Smart Parenting for Safer Kids*, JoJo Publishing, Melbourne, Vic.

Briggs, F & McVeity, M 2000, *Teaching Children to Protect Themselves*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney.

Briggs, F & Hawkins, R 1997, *Child Protection: A Guide for Teachers and Child Care Professionals*, Allen and Unwin, Sydney.

Robinson, A 2007, *The Silent Crisis: Simple ways to protect children from sexual abuse*, Silversky Publishing, Perth.

Salter, A 2003, *Predators: Pedophiles, Rapists and Other Sex Offenders, Who They Are, How They Operate and How We Can Protect Ourselves and Our Children*, Basic Books, New York.

#### **Bullying:**

Rigby, K 2008, *Children and Bullying: How Parents and Educators Can Reduce Bullying At School*, Wiley-Blackwell, Brisbane.

Rigby, K 2003, *Bullying among young children: A guide for parents and A guide for teachers and carers*, Australian Government Attorney-General's Department.

#### **Self Esteem:**

Ramsey, Robert D 2002, *501 Ways to Boost Your Child's Self Esteem* 2<sup>nd</sup> edition

Plummer, Deborah 2007, *Self-Esteem Games for Children*

Harley-Brewer, Elizabeth 2006, *100 Tips for Parents and Teachers Praising Boys Well*

Harley-Brewer, Elizabeth 2006, *100 Tips for Parents and Teachers Praising Girls Well*

### b) For children:

#### **Early Childhood:**

Rowley, T 2007, *Everyone's got a bottom*, Family Planning Queensland, Brisbane.

Beaumont, K 2004, *I Like Myself* (illustrated by David Catrow)

#### **Lower Primary (4 - 8 years):**

Patterson, S and Feldman, J 2004, *NoNo the Little Seal: The gentle story of a little seal who learns to stay safe, say 'No', and tell*, Innovative Resources, Bendigo.

Surrey Hills Primary School & Munro, H 1994, *Try Again Red Riding Hood*, Essence Publications, Adelaide.

#### **Upper Primary (8 – 12 years):**

Angelo, F, Pritchard, H & Stewart, R 2006, *Secret Boys' Business* (sexual education for boys approaching puberty, also provides hints for parents carers and teachers).

Angelo, F, Pritchard, H & Stewart, R 2006, *Secret Girls' Business* (sexual education for girls approaching puberty, also provides hints for parents carers and teachers).

Ludwig, R 2005, *My Secret Bully* (addresses relational aggression sometimes referred to as emotional bullying by a "friend")

Reading, N 2008, *Rosy and Jack*, Innovative Resources, Bendigo.