

# Developing personal safety skills for young people



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Reprint 2022



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We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the ACT, the Ngunnawal people. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and this region.



# Developing **personal safety** skills for young people



**Just breathe and calm your body**

## What Are Protective Behaviours?

Protective Behaviours is a way of looking at personal safety to develop life skills to recognise safe and unsafe situations. They are the things we say and do to keep ourselves safe.

*“Everyone has the right to feel safe all the time.”*

Everyone has the right to feel safe from all types of abuse, including bullying and violence both in person and online.

It encourages all young people to develop a network of safe and trusted ‘go to’ people if you have a problem, and to explore your own level of safety and risk taking. There is a difference between feeling safe and being safe.

Asking for help with others is about taking steps to ensure you are listened to and someone can take action to keep you safer.

*“You can talk about anything no matter what it is with someone you trust.”*

## Personal Safety and Early Warning Signs



### How does my body let me know if I am feeling unsafe?

Early warning signs are physical sensations that serve as indicators that we are at risk or that our risk is increasing. A quick body scan can help you notice any feelings or sensations that you may be having.

Most people get one or more indicators, including:

- > heart pounding
- > dry mouth
- > hands perspiring
- > legs trembling or feeling frozen
- > butterflies in the stomach
- > feeling sick
- > wanting to go to the toilet

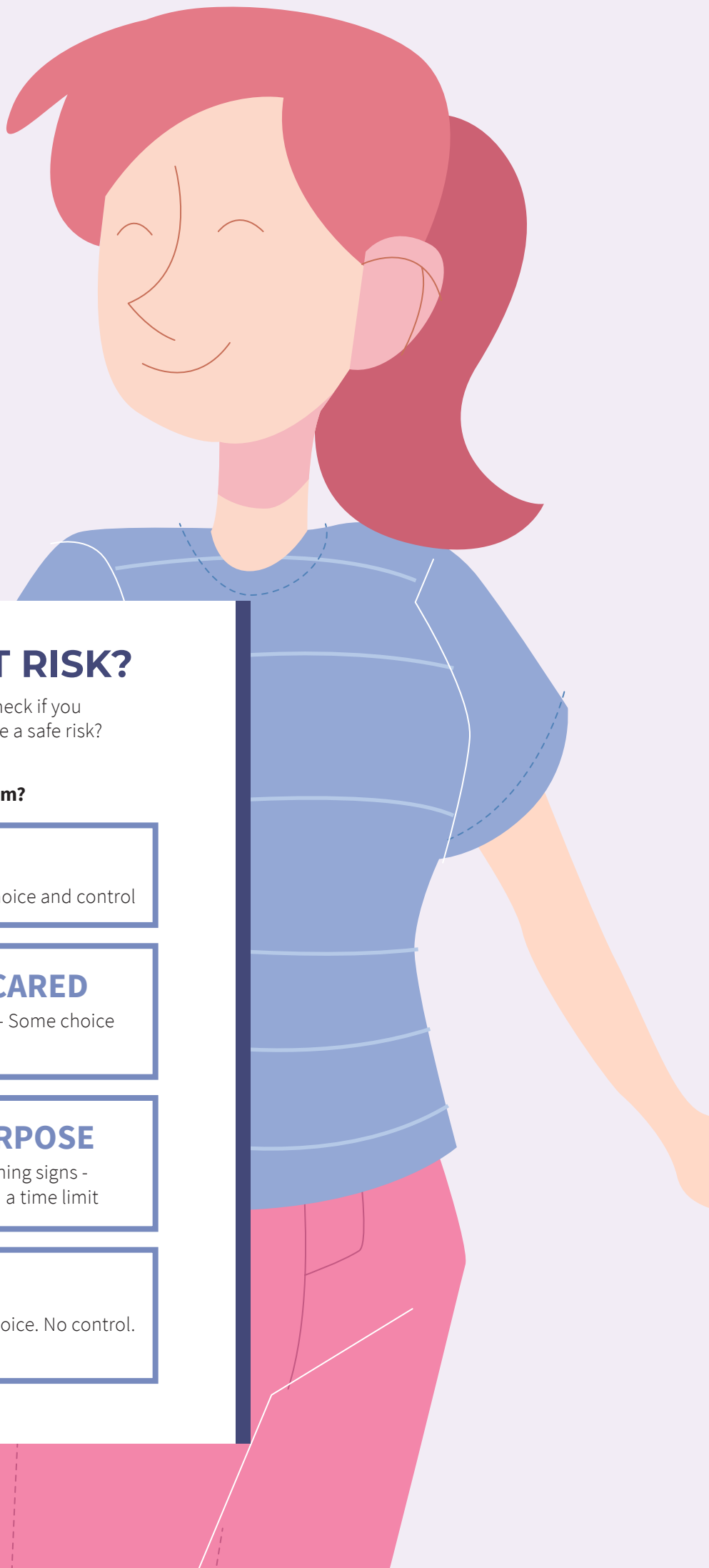
This is also known as the Fight/Flight/Freeze response when our primitive brain stem is activated.

### What to do?

The first step is to start taking some deep calming breaths.

**Just breathe  
and calm  
your body**

**Talk to  
someone on  
your network**



## Am I SAFE or AT RISK?

It is ok to look out for yourself and check if you are feeling safe. Am I choosing to take a safe risk? How safe am I?

Where am I on the **Safety Continuum?**

### SAFE

No early warning signs - Lots of choice and control

### FUN TO FEEL SCARED

Some mild early warning signs - Some choice and control

### RISKING ON PURPOSE

Getting moderate early warning signs - Some choice and control and a time limit

### UNSAFE

Early warning signs strong - No choice. No control. No time limit.

## What is Sexual Abuse?

- > It refers to any unwanted sexual contact by another person (male or female).
- > It involves inappropriate touching.
- > It involves having someone show you explicit images.
- > It can involve being forced to engage in sexual behaviour with another person.
- > It can occur at school, at work or in a social situation.
- > It is not the fault of the person being abused.
- > **REMEMBER: It is against the law.**
- > If it does happen to you find the courage to speak up to a safe person.

**It's ok to tell a friend or network person**

**Just breathe and calm your body**

## What is the Entrapment Process?

**What is it and how do young people and teenagers get caught up in it? Am I being groomed or being taken advantage of?**

While most adults and other young people in our community are trustworthy some may try to gain power over a young person to manipulate them into engaging in sexual activity.

Tactics may include:

- > Shame: making them feel bad about themselves.
- > Tricks: misleading someone e.g. saying all teenagers watch this stuff or take this or do these things.
- > Lies: saying everyone does it.
- > Blackmail: threatening them or embarrassing them.
- > Bribes: giving presents, drinks or substances or money.
- > Guilt: through making them feel that it is their fault.

**REMEMBER: It is never the young person's fault if they are caught up in sexual activity.**

**Be aware of tactics and think safety first**

## Who can help me?

Remember you can talk about anything with someone you trust no matter what it is. It can sometimes be hard to ask for help and identify the safe people who will provide what you need. Everyone needs to develop their own **personal network**.

### How do you know if someone is safe to talk to?

- > Teachers
- > Friends
- > Social worker
- > Doctor
- > Police
- > Psychologist
- > Counsellor
- > Parent/Step parent
- > Youth worker
- > Parent's friend
- > Grandparents
- > Other family members
- > Kids Helpline
- > Religious mentor
- > School psychologist
- > Librarian
- > School chaplain
- > Sports coach
- > Lifeline
- > Family friends
- > Neighbour

Our networks are people who will listen, who you can rely on, who you trust with your information and who can take action to help you feel safe. They must be available and accessible. Practice how to start the conversation.

## We can talk about anything, no matter what it is, with someone on our support network

What stops people from speaking out?

- > Fear of not being believed
- > Feeling too uncomfortable
- > Fear of being blamed and shamed or embarrassed
- > Fear of being judged
- > Unsure about whether it is consent or coercion
- > Fear for my personal safety
- > Not knowing who is safe to talk to
- > Concerns about how telling someone might impact on my friends and family and the people I know

**It's ok to tell**

**Keep persisting and find someone who will really listen**





## Consent, sex and the law

As a young adult this information is useful to know for yourself or maybe to support a friend.

What do you need to know about consent?

- > Consent must be free and voluntary.
- > Consent cannot be given if you are intoxicated, asleep or not aware of what's happening.
- > It cannot involve force, threats, intimidation, deceit or fraud.
- > If the victim withdraws consent it is against the law to continue.

**FACT:** It is an offence **in the ACT** for an adult to have sex with someone who is under **16** years of age, even if they agree as the law says that he/she cannot legally **consent**. The person can be charged with a serious criminal offence, jailed and placed on the sex offender register.

**No Means No**

**If it is not an explicit Yes, it is a NO**

**Do I need to report it to someone?**

## What is the difference between consent and coercion?

### Consent...

is when a person agrees to engage in sexual behaviour without any threats or being forced or bribed or tricked. Even if you said yes but you felt you had no choice, it is not consent.

### Coercion...

is when a person keeps pushing some things when you do not want to engage in sexual activity. It can involve physical force or threats or emotional manipulation.

**FACT:** It is against the law to coerce someone into sexual behaviour.

**YOU HAVE A CHOICE**

## What are respectful relationships?

Answer yes/no to these questions.

- > Do both people feel good about this relationship?
- > Do both people feel safe in this relationship?
- > Am I able to say no and still feel safe?
- > Do I feel safe if at a party with my partner?
- > Do I get to choose my friends, where I go, what I wear, who I talk to?
- > Do I feel safe online in this relationship?

## Great relationships have these elements:

- > good communication
- > trust
- > boundaries
- > happiness
- > honesty
- > caring
- > negotiation
- > dealing with differences
- > fun
- > compromise
- > intimacy
- > balanced
- > genuineness
- > mutual respect
- > giving each other space
- > kindness

**Is the age difference between partners no more than 2 years?**

**Is my relationship safe?**

# What about online safety?

So how safe are you online? While being online has many benefits, many young people are reporting that they have been experiencing cyberbullying. Cyberbullying involves using technology deliberately and repeatedly to bully an individual or a group with the intent to cause harm. It can leave people feeling unsafe. In the ACT, 1 in 5 people have been cyberbullied.

## STOP, BLOCK, TELL

What can I do if this happens to me?

1. Directly report to the website
2. Collect evidence
3. Report it to: [esafety.gov.au/complaints-and-reporting/cyberbullying-complaints](https://esafety.gov.au/complaints-and-reporting/cyberbullying-complaints)

It includes:

- > Abusive texts and emails
- > Posting of unkind messages or images
- > Inappropriate image tagging
- > Excluding others online

Questions to think about:

- > Have I posted anything that will be part of my online identity that may impact on my future?
- > Do I know who to contact if I am bullied online?
- > Can I distinguish between what personal information to share online and how to protect myself?
- > Has anyone sent me naked images online or have I received any sexual images?
- > Do any of my friends need support online?
- > Can I identify digital grooming and know who to talk to?

**REMEMBER:** There are laws that protect young people against intimate images of them being sent without their consent.

**Choose what you send**

**Think before you post**

**Your  
image  
belongs  
to you**

# Useful contacts

## General help

### Lifeline

13 11 14

[www.lifeline.org.au/Get-Help/Online-Services/crisis-chat](http://www.lifeline.org.au/Get-Help/Online-Services/crisis-chat)

### Kids Helpline (5 to 25 years)

1800 55 1800

[www.kidshelpline.com.au/teens](http://www.kidshelpline.com.au/teens)

### Headspace

1800 650 890

[www.eheadspace.org.au](http://www.eheadspace.org.au)

### Youth Beyond Blue

1300 22 4636

[www.youthbeyondblue.com](http://www.youthbeyondblue.com)

### Sexual Offences

Contact ACT Policing to report on 131 444

### The Junction Youth Health Centre

6232 2423

**Talk to your school psychologist  
or welfare team contact**

**Talk to your GP**

## Cyber help

### E-Safety Commissioner

[www.esafety.gov.au/complaints-and-reporting/cyberbullying-complaints/i-want-to-report-cyberbullying](http://www.esafety.gov.au/complaints-and-reporting/cyberbullying-complaints/i-want-to-report-cyberbullying) to report Cyberbullying and Image-based abuse

### Think U Know

[www.thinkuknow.org](http://www.thinkuknow.org)

## Relationship help

### A Gender Agenda

61621924

### Canberra Rape Crisis Centre

62472525

### ReachOut Australia

[au.reachout.com](http://au.reachout.com)

### Relationships Australia

1300 364 277

[www.relationships.org.au](http://www.relationships.org.au)

### 1800RESPECT

1800 737 732

[www.1800respect.org.au](http://www.1800respect.org.au)

### SAMSSA - Service assisting Male Survivors of Sexual Assault

62472525

### Sexual Health and Relationship information

[www.shfpact.org.au](http://www.shfpact.org.au)







