

CHILD SAFE 'CHILD FRIENDLY' INFORMATION ON THE RIGHT TO BE SAFE

*The Currajong School takes a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and is fully committed to ensuring that its strategies, policies, procedures and practices meet all **Child Safe Standards as specified in Ministerial Order No. 1359 (2022)***

Introduction for Staff and Parent/Caregivers:

The Australian Human Rights Commission 2016 'Rights of the Child'

The Australian Government has promised to make sure that all children and young people growing up in Australia have these rights:

- The right to be treated fairly no matter what
- The right to be safe and not harmed by anyone
- The right to have a say about decisions affecting you
- The right to be cared for and have a home
- The right to live and grow up healthy
- The right to have a good education

The Council of Europe: One in Five Campaign

The Council of Europe (CoE) launched the ONE in FIVE Campaign to stop sexual violence against children in Rome (Italy) in November 2010. Through the campaign, the CoE wished to empower governments, parliaments, professional networks, academia, business communities, civil society, parents and children, enabling them to take the necessary steps to stop sexual violence against children. With a view to empowering children and parents, the CoE has developed an awareness raising tool, The Underwear Rule, which will help parents and carers to talk to children in a positive and child-friendly manner about their right to define their personal boundaries and to explain that children can talk with confidence about this subject to those who look after them. The empowerment tool has been widely welcomed and translated into all the EU languages.

"Empowering children to protect themselves and disclose abuse are the priority tasks of responsible adults, and there are no alternatives to these tasks. Understanding the risks that children face; empowering parents and teachers to identify them; knowing how to respond to them; improving social and community services that can be mobilised to provide specialist support; and ensuring ongoing monitoring and vigilance are all essential to the protection of children from sexual abuse" (Booklets 2007)

"The last thing that children need is to have unnecessary boundaries and limits imposed on them. These risk stifling their joyous and adventurous spirit. Intimidation

leads to fear and isolation, which only increases the risk of victimisation. To empower children to recognise and react effectively to potentially dangerous situations, the key concept is that everyone has the right to safety. Once children recognise this, the more readily they will understand the need to respond. Having the right to be safe with other people implies being responsible and caring for oneself, and knowing how to react when threatened" (Hitrec 2007)

Message to children about their right to be safe:

This information is important as it tells you some of the things you can do if someone is hurting you or your friends or making you feel unsafe and anxious.

1. What are your rights?

You have the right to be safe and not harmed by anyone.

It is wrong for anyone to threaten you, hurt you or touch you in a way that makes you feel unsafe, uncomfortable or scared.

No one should behave in this way including those in your family, at your school or outside school.

Remember that a person doesn't have to physically hurt or touch you to be doing the wrong thing and making you feel unsafe.

Even if you are not sure, if something doesn't feel right you should tell an adult who can help you.

2. Your body belongs to you

What is The Underwear Rule?

It's simple: you should not be touched by others on parts of the body usually covered by underwear and you should not touch others in those areas.

This rule helps you to understand that your body belongs to you and no one should touch it without permission.

There is a difference between safe and unsafe touching and between good and bad touching.

Inappropriate and unsafe touching is wrong and against the law.

If you are not sure whether someone else's behaviour towards you is acceptable, you should ask a trusted adult for help.

3. No! Go! Tell!

All children need to know how to quickly and loudly say **No** to inappropriate touch, to **Go** away from the unsafe situation, and to **Tell** a trusted adult as soon as possible.

Screaming, kicking and self-defence skills can be very useful as child abusers are usually scared of being caught.

It is very important that you keep telling trusted adults until you feel listened to and believed and can feel safe again.

4. Bad secrets and good secrets

All children need to know the difference between a bad secret and a good secret (a nice surprise).

Secrecy is a main tactic of people who are child abusers.

They might try anything from bribes (giving you stuff) to serious threats.

Some children get confused about keeping secrets because they don't want to 'tell tales' but every secret that makes you feel anxious, uncomfortable, fearful or depressed is a bad secret.

Bad secrets should never be kept but told straight away to an adult you can trust.

5. What if someone I know makes me feel unsafe?

Some children, especially younger ones, don't understand that someone who knows them or is part of their family could abuse or hurt them.

There need to be strict rules for all children about telling trusted adults about anyone who gives them stuff, asks them to keep secrets, or tries to spend time alone with them.

6. What if a stranger makes me feel unsafe?

All children should know about safety rules as child abusers may seem friendly and caring. They can be males or females, young or old.

Never get into a car with anyone you don't know, take money or gifts from them, or agree to go anywhere with them without your parents' permission.

If a stranger suggests any of these things you must remember **No! Go! Tell!**

Most strangers are not dangerous but if you meet one who might be, you need to get help from parents, teachers, policemen, people in shops, or families with children.

Children should know about the tricks that kidnappers use, such as telling a child that their parents have had an accident and that they will take them to the hospital.

They might say that your parents have told them to pick you up and drive you home and they might even know your name or your parent's names.

Never believe these kinds of stories without first checking with a person you trust.

7. Safety Network:

It's very useful to choose a small group of people that you can trust and who will listen and help you when you have a problem or are worried about something.

It's best to have a safety network of one or two people who live with you and one or two people outside the family.

Remember never to give up on finding help until the problem has been listened to and fixed and you feel safe again.

8. What will happen if I tell an adult at the school that I feel unsafe, or that my friend feels unsafe?

Adults at school will listen to your concerns and make sure that you don't have to deal with these by yourself.

Sometimes they may have to tell others about your concerns so that a solution can be found, and you or your friend can be protected.

9. What if I can't talk to anyone at my school?

If you don't feel comfortable about talking to anyone at school, you can talk to someone in your safety network: your parent or an aunt, uncle, a stepparent, a grandparent or any other adult you can trust.

Remember: you don't need to deal with things on your own.

10. There are other places where you can get help:

Visit eHeadspace (which provides an online and telephone support service)

www.eheadspace.org.au or 1800 650 850

Call KidsHelp Line on 1800 55 1800

Visit www.kidshelpline.com.au for 24 hour support

Call or visit your local police station or call 000

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed every two years or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances.

Approval date:	Approved by:	Next review:
December 2023	School Board	December 2025



The Currajong School acknowledges the traditional owners of this country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures and to the Elders past, present and emerging.