

Daniel Morcombe Child Safety Curriculum

Parent Guide: Prep to Year 2

Overview

The Department of Education, in consultation with experts in child safety education and other child protection partners, has developed the *Daniel Morcombe Child Safety Curriculum*. The *Daniel Morcombe Child Safety Curriculum* aims to assist students to Recognise, React and Report potentially dangerous situations.

Through the *Daniel Morcombe Child Safety Curriculum*, teachers will deliver important learning experiences, informed by current safety education research that will assist students to better manage their own safety.

This Parent Guide, for parents of students in Prep to Year 2, is part of a range of resources supporting the *Daniel Morcombe Child Safety Curriculum* and children's safety. This Guide includes key safety messages, an outline of the lessons covered in this phase of the *Daniel Morcombe Child Safety Curriculum* and tips for communicating with your children. In addition there are resources you can use at home and strategies to support children who report harmful situations.

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Daniel Morcombe Child Safety Curriculum

Parent Guide: Prep to Year 2

The *Daniel Morcombe Child Safety Curriculum* has been developed to support Queensland schools' delivery of key safety messages to students in Prep to Year 9. The *Daniel Morcombe Child Safety Curriculum* has been developed by a working group comprising of Bruce and Denise Morcombe; the (former) Commissioner for Children and Young People and Child Guardian; officers from the Department of Education; the Queensland Police Service; and the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women together with a network of advisors involved in researching child abuse and its prevention.

Through a series of lessons, students will learn how to recognise, react and report when they are unsafe or find themselves in situations that can have a significant detrimental effect on their physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing.

The *Daniel Morcombe Child Safety Curriculum* aligns with the Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education (Version 8.1) content descriptions.

We encourage you to talk to your child about what they are learning in class. The following table outlines the content to be delivered. This will be supported by take-home postcards and activities completed at school that will assist you to know when specific content is being discussed.

Safety lessons for students in Prep to Year 2 will include:

Recognise

- Safe and unsafe situations
- Safety clues
- Body clues
- Private body parts (using anatomical names)
- Body ownership

React

- Safety options

Report

- Safety helpers and persistence
- Phone and online safety

The content

Adults are ultimately responsible for keeping children safe, however, there is evidence that safety education can result in important learning with lasting positive benefits for students. Learning about safety can help students become more confident to take steps to avoid unsafe situations and tell someone if they are in situations that are unsafe.

Recognise

These lessons focus on students being alert to clues in their environment (e.g. sound clues like alarms, visual clues such as hazard signs or smell clues such as smoke) and to body clues (e.g. goose bumps or racing pulse) which may help alert them to unsafe situations.

Students will learn about the importance of rules and that these exist to keep them safe. Learning rules about private body parts is also included to develop understanding about inappropriate touching. Sadly, there is evidence that children as young as Prep age are exposed to this sort of harm, and in the majority of cases, by someone they know. Students will use anatomical language for private body parts in lessons to remove the shame and embarrassment often associated with discussing genitalia. Using anatomical language such as penis and vagina can improve the confidence of children to report inappropriate touching and removes any confusion that nicknames can cause.

React

This part of the curriculum focuses on students developing strategies for responding to unsafe situations. They will have opportunities to problem solve real life scenarios and think about different 'react' options. They will also learn that breaking rules may be necessary in order to become safe. Examples may include crossing the road to escape a dog, saying "No" to an adult who is using inappropriate touch, or breaking a window to escape a fire.

Report

A significant message of the curriculum is about reporting unsafe situations to an adult. Students are actively encouraged to become safe as quickly as possible if they can, and are reminded that it is necessary to report 'unsafe' incidents to an adult. This includes unsafe phone and online incidents such as accessing rude or offensive materials online.

Students nominate adult safety helpers who they think will be prepared to listen to them and to give them the help they need. Students will identify a variety of adults including family and friends from inside and outside of their homes. They will be encouraged to let their safety helpers know they are nominated so that they are prepared to listen when approached by the student. Students are also taught to persevere until they get the help they need.

Talking with children about safety

Parents have an important role in reinforcing the messages being delivered in the curriculum. As a result of participating in the lessons, it is possible that your child will want to discuss safety issues or ask questions about safety. The following tips may assist you to talk with your child.

1. Ask your child what they have learnt about safety

Asking what your child has been learning is a good way to start talking about safety and will help you gauge their current understanding. Some lessons include a take home postcard with the key safety messages on them. These postcards indicate to families what is being discussed in school and is provided to prompt additional discussion at home. Finding out what your child knows about safety helps you to build on that knowledge.

Encourage regular discussions with your child about these safety messages. This shows your child that you are interested and comfortable talking with them about safety and gives them opportunities to raise concerns.

Another way to discuss safety with your child is to use teachable moments.

2. Teachable moments

Often opportunities or 'teachable moments' arise in our daily lives that can be used to start a discussion or are useful for considering recognise, react and report strategies. For example:

- a television show about surf lifesavers could lead to a discussion about water safety
- using a zebra crossing could lead to a conversation about how to safely cross the road
- planning what your child should do if you are late collecting them from the pick-up zone
- giving advice on how to answer the phone or front door.

By talking about safety in everyday situations, you will help your child to build knowledge and develop skills to recognise, react and report if they are in an unsafe situation.

3. Discuss 'What ifs'

Whilst you cannot predict when your child may find themselves in an unsafe situation, speaking with them about what they could do in a variety of situations can help them to be prepared.

Using 'What if' questions for a range of safety situations is useful. For example:

- what if there was a fire in the house?
- what if they get lost at the local shopping centre?
- what if they access or get shown rude pictures online?
- what if an adult asks them to help search for a lost dog?

4. Answering questions

You may find it useful to familiarise yourself with the websites and stories that the teacher will be using during the safety lessons. These resources are listed in this parent guide. You may be able to access the story books used in the lessons through your school or local library. A selection of other safety resources has also been listed that may help parents to discuss and answer questions about a wide range of safety topics including: beach, fire and online safety as well as private body parts rules.

If you are uncomfortable talking about a topic, be honest with your child and tell them that even though you may feel embarrassed, you are willing to talk about the topic because it is important. And remember, parents don't have to know all the answers. If you are unsure of the answer to a question, be honest and then find out together. What is most important is that your child knows they can approach you if they have a question about safety, now and in the future.

Keeping children safe

When children are taught to recognise, react and report unsafe situations they may report a range of unsafe situations including dangers in the community, online or to their personal safety. Occasionally, this may include reports of harm by another person. Advice about disclosures and where to get assistance can be found on the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women website: www.csyw.qld.gov.au/child-family/protecting-children.

Parents are advised to contact the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services on 1800811810 or, if after hours on 1800177135 if a disclosure of abuse to your child or a child you know is made. Alternatively, phone the Police on 000 (Triple Zero).

Families experiencing domestic or family violence can contact DVConnect (www.dvconnect.org) for counselling and information services:

Womensline

Ph: 1800 811 811

(24/7 telephone service)

Mensline

Ph: 1800 600 636

(9am–midnight, 7 days)

Sexual Assault Line: Ph: 1800 010 120

(8.30am–11.30pm, 7 days)

In an emergency situation, always call 000 (Triple Zero).

Resources

Resources that will be used in the classroom

The following children's story books and websites will be used by teachers to teach key safety messages. You may find these useful to read with your child to reinforce the messages taught in class. Please note, where a booklet or video clip is unavailable, a teacher may substitute another resource to teach the key safety message. (The resources and website links listed were current at the time of publication).

Books

Bagnall, A (2003). *Lost at the Show*. Learning Media. New Zealand. (International Standard Book Number: 0478275609)

Bodsworth, N (1989). *A Nice Walk in the Jungle*. Penguin Group. Melbourne. (International Standard Book Number: 0670824763)

Edwards, R (2005). *Little Monkey's One Safe Place*. Frances Lincoln Limited. United Kingdom. (International Standard Book Number: 9781845075798)

Laws, C and Moore, A (2006). *Brave Knight*. The Protective Behaviours Consultancy Group of New South Wales Incorporated. New South Wales. (International Standard Book Number: 9780957992641)

Moroney, T (2005). *When I'm Feeling Scared*. The Five Mile Press. Victoria. (International Standard Book Number: 1741245052)

Rowley, T (2008). *Everyone's Got a Bottom*. Family Planning Queensland. Queensland. (International Standard Book Number: 9780957912960)

Sanders, J (2010). *Some Secrets Should Never Be Kept*. Upload Publishing. Victoria. (International Standard Book Number: 9780646546230)

Websites

Kids Helpline

Kids Helpline is a free, private and confidential, telephone and online counselling service specifically for young people aged between five and 25 years of age. The Kids Helpline website contains downloadable resources for parents relating to online safety.

www.kidshelpline.com.au

Hector's World – Office of the Children's eSafety Commissioner

Hector's World features fun and engaging characters. Children can observe the characters as they learn how to stay safe online. The experiences of Hector and his friends offer children practical guidance in managing risks, and reinforces the importance of responsible online behaviour. www.esafety.gov.au/educators/classroom-resources/hectors-world

Triple Zero Kids' Challenge

Triple Zero Kids' Challenge is an online interactive game to teach young people about the importance and appropriate use of the triple zero emergency number. It features animated characters enacting emergency scenarios and the steps to take when dealing with emergency situations. This game is aimed at children aged five to ten years of age.

kids.triplezero.gov.au

Other child safety resources

There are a large range of other child safety books and resources such as online games that are available to facilitate further safety discussions at home. The resources listed were current at the time of publication. Some examples include:

Books

Brennan, H and Graham, J (2012). *Is This Normal? Understanding Your Child's Sexual Behaviour*. Family Planning Queensland. Fortitude Valley. (International Standard Book Number: 9780977570881)

Kleven, S (1997). *The Right Touch*. Illumination Arts Publishing Company Incorporated. Washington. (International Standard Book Number: 0935699104)

Laws, C and Moore, A (2007). *Max's Creepy Crawly Slimy Things*. The Protective Behaviours Consultancy Group of New South Wales Incorporated. New South Wales. (International Standard Book Number: 0957992637)

O'Malley, J (2002). *Jasmine's Butterflies*. Justine O'Malley. Western Australia. (International Standard Book Number: 064649967)

Spellman, C (1997). *Your Body Belongs to You*. Albert Whitman & Company. (International Standard Book Number: 9780807594735)

Starishevsky, J. (2007) *My Body Belongs to Me*. Safety Star Media. New York. (International Standard Book Number: 9780982121603)

Websites

Daniel Morcombe Foundation

The Daniel Morcombe Foundation website contains downloadable child safety resources and information about the foundation. danielmorcombe.com.au

Department of Community Safety – Kids' Corner

This page contains safety focused games, interactive activities, stories, fun history and photo links and includes making emergency plans with the family.

www.qfes.qld.gov.au/community-safety/kids

Domestic and Family Violence - Queensland Government

This Queensland Government website provides information about where to find help, reporting abuse and ways to support someone experiencing domestic and family violence.

www.qld.gov.au/community/getting-support-health-social-issue/support-victims-abuse/domestic-family-violence

National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect

The National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect is a national charity founded on concern for all children and focused on bringing about change to ensure their safety and wellbeing. The website provides information for parents as well as background information for teachers. The website has a number of printable brochures that may be useful for parents. www.napcan.org.au

Office of the Children's eSafety Commissioner

This website provides activities, resources and practical advice to help young children, teens and parents safely to enjoy the online world. www.esafety.gov.au/educators

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services

The Queensland Fire and Emergency Services website provides fire safety tips on how to best protect your home and family. The site also contains a link to Kids Corner where Blazer the koala aims to teach kids all over Queensland about fire and how they can help keep their family and friends safe. www.qfes.qld.gov.au/community-safety

Surf Life Saving Australia – Surf Ed

The site contains information links to beach safety videos for visitors to the beach. Safety messages include swimming between the flags and sun safety tips. beachsafe.org.au/surf-safety

Transport and Main Roads (Queensland) – Bicycle Education

The site contains a link to a parent brochure which details: how to teach children to ride safely, safety equipment and a checklist, tips on bike maintenance, and choosing the right bike for a child. www.qld.gov.au/transport/public/bicycle-riding

True: Relationships and Reproductive Health (formerly Family Planning Queensland)

This website contains downloadable factsheets and brochures for parents on a number of child safety related topics. In particular, the factsheet Communicating with Children about Sexuality contains useful tips on how to communicate with children about child safety and sexuality. www.true.org.au

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