

Daniel Morcombe Child Safety Curriculum

Parent Guide: Year 3 to Year 6

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 Years 3 to 6, 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: Years 3 to 6

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 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 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 Years 3 to 6 will include:

Recognise

- Safety clues and situational awareness
- Risk taking
- Rules, rights and responsibilities
- Private body parts (using anatomical names) and body ownership

React

- Problem solving
- Strategies

Report

- Safety helpers and persistence
- Online and mobile phone safety
- Review of personal safety using self-confidence skills

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 children's rights and their right to be treated fairly. Learning 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 *Daniel Morcombe Child Safety 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 menacing 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 *Daniel Morcombe Child Safety 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

You have an important role in reinforcing the messages being delivered in the *Daniel Morcombe Child Safety 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 are 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'

While 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 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 have also been listed that may help you 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 1800 811 810 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

Bueti, A (2012). *The Quest for Courage*. SunnyKids and the Encouragement Foundation, Queensland. (International Standard Book Number: 978 0 9872604 8 2)

Carlson, N (2003). *Harriet and the Roller Coaster*. Lerner Publishing Group Incorporated. Minneapolis.
(International Standard Book Number: 978 157505 202 1)

Ironside, V (2011). *The Huge Bag of Worries*. Hodder Children's Books. London.
(International Standard Book Number: 978 0 340 90317 9)

Laguna, S & Pignataro, A (2007). *Stephen's Music*. Hachette Livre Australia Proprietary Limited. Sydney. (International Standard Book Number: 978 0 7344 1016 0)

Langford, J (2011). *Try Again, Emma*. Pearson Australia. Victoria. (International Standard Book Number: 978 1 4425 4799 5)

Rochester, K (2011). *Be Brave*. JoJo Publishing. Melbourne. (International Standard Book Number: 978 0 9808710 1 2)

Thomas, P (2003). *I Can be Safe*. Barron's Educational Series Incorporated. New York. (International Standard Book Number: 10: 0764124609/ 13: 9780764124600)

United Nations Children's Fund (2002). *For Every Child* (Red Fox edition). Random House Children's Books. London. (International Standard Book Number: 978 0 099 40865 9) Book order details: www.unicef.org/publications/index_5383.html

Websites

Children's Week Council of Australia Inc.

The Rights of the Child poster, based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is available on this site. Prior to use, the organisation has requested that teachers seek permission to download and use the poster in class.

This site also links users to their local Children's Week convenor who will list events during Children's Week (an annual event during the fourth week of October) that promote the Rights of Children. www.childrensweek.org.au

Department of Transport and Main Roads

Queensland's Department of Transport and Main Roads website contains a number of past and current safety campaigns. www.tmr.qld.gov.au/Safety

The following road safety campaigns are referred to within the curriculum:

- New rules around schools
www.tmr.qld.gov.au/Safety/School-road-safety
- Look out! There are children about
www.tmr.qld.gov.au/Safety/School-road-safety/Safe-school-travel-safest

Kids Helpline

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

Smart Online, Safe Offline clip: Cyberbullying affects real lives! (Years 5 to 6)

This video clip, developed by Smart Online, Safe Offline depicts the impact of cyberbullying. It is suitable for students in Years 5 to 6. vimeo.com/51802169

United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund: Convention on the Rights of the Child animations

This United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund website has a range of animated vignettes that illustrate the individual Articles that make up the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Please note that some of the Articles 1 to 20 and Articles 21 to 54 vignettes are not suitable for students. Recommended vignettes have been listed in the curriculum materials and teachers will view the animations to assess their suitability prior to showing students. sites.unicef.org/rightsite/433_cartoons.php

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in Child Friendly Language

This version of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, developed by the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, is particularly suitable for students in Years 3 to 4. sites.unicef.org/rightsite/files/uncrcchildfriendlylanguage.pdf

From website: sites.unicef.org/rightsite/484_540.htm

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. Some examples include: (The resources listed were current at the time of publication).

Background reading for parents

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)

Briggs, F (2010). *Smart parenting for safer kids*. Docklands, Victoria: JoJo Publishing.

Wurtele, S and Berkower, F (2010). *Off limits: A parent's guide to keeping kids safe from abuse*. The Safer Society Press. Brandon, Vermont.

Wurtele, S (2010). *Out of harm's way: A parent's guide to protecting young children from sexual abuse*. Parenting Press. Seattle, Washington.

Books

Barth, A (2009). *Annabelle's Secret*. Loving Healing Press. Michigan, United States. (International Standard Book Number: 13: 978 1 932690 95 8)

Garner, L (2009). *Some Secrets Hurt: A story of healing*. Shadow Mountain Publishers. Utah, United States. (International Standard Book Number: 13: 978 1 60641 135 3)

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

Martin, H (2011). *Hayden-Reece learns a valuable lesson that private means 'Just for you'*. Hung Hing Off-Set Printing Company Limited. China. (International Standard Book Number: 9780980529449)

Starishevsky, J (2007). *My Body Belongs to Me*. Safety Star Media. New York. (International Standard Book Number: 97809821216 03)

Thomas, R and Herran, J (2006). *Health and Safety: Street Smart*. Macmillan Education Australia Proprietary Limited. South Yarra, Victoria. (International Standard Book Number: 978 1 4202 0433 9)

Websites

Australian Federal Police website

The Australian Federal Police are dedicated to preventing all Australians from becoming victims of online crime by informing them how to use technology safely and responsibly. The website contains parent and teacher resources as well as youth resources and community resources. www.afp.gov.au

Bullying. No Way!

Bullying. No way! is developed and managed by all Australian education authorities for use by Australia's Government, Catholic and Independent school communities. Links are available for students, teachers and parents and responds to issues of bullying, harassment, discrimination and violence to create safe school communities. bullyingnoway.gov.au

Daniel Morcombe Foundation

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

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

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

The core content of Hector's World features high quality two dimensional animation with fun and engaging characters. Children can observe the characters as they learn how to stay safe online. The experiences of Hector and his friends offers children practical guidance on managing risks and reinforces the importance of responsible online behaviour. www.esafety.gov.au/educators/classroom-resources/hectors-world

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. 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 Rescue Service

The Queensland Fire and Rescue Service 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/kids

Surf Life Saving Australia – Surf Ed

The site contains information and 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 – Bike user guide

The site includes information about 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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