

The SAFE series

Information for parents



The Office of the Children's Guardian has developed the SAFE series – four children's books containing personal safety messages for children under six. The books support children's rights and promote the concept of kids having a voice. They help children identify the parts of their body that are private, help them understand their feelings and encourage them to think about five people they trust to help them if they feel cared, sad or upset.

How can I help my child with the books?

By learning more about the SAFE series you can reinforce its protective messages at home. The books have four main themes: safe spaces, the undies rule, recognising your feelings and finding five people kids can turn to if they feel sad, scared or upset.

Sam the safe explorer looks at how children can recognise safe and unsafe spaces. It helps kids recognise how they feel in places, even familiar places, and especially ones where they're scared or upset.

Andy learns the undies rule is a non-confrontational way of explaining to children how the parts of their bodies covered by their underwear are private. The book reinforces the rights of the child to say 'no'.

Fiona finds her five heroes promotes the concept of kids having a support network of five people they can turn to if they feel sad, scared or upset. It aims to undermine the use of secrecy that many abusers rely upon. It also helps children understand there are always people they can turn to for help.

Eve listens to her feelings teaches kids to recognise when they are feeling sad, scared or upset and shows them that it's fine to communicate these feelings. The book helps children build confidence so that they have a voice and a sense of empowerment.

Your service provider has been provided with a guide to assist them to sensitively deliver the SAFE series. The guide explains how to read and discuss the books with children in a way that is not confrontational and that supports them if they disclose they've been harmed or abused.

Included in the guide are suggested activities that reinforce the messages in the books. Your child may come home asking for help with something, like colouring in or finding five heroes. You should encourage your child to explain to their chosen heroes the responsibilities that come with the role.

Children in this age group cannot always communicate how they feel, but as a parent you may observe changes in your child's behaviour that would let you know that something is not ok with them. By keeping protective behaviours communication frequent and by letting your child know that nothing is so awful they can't talk to you, may prompt your child to share with you the things that make them unhappy or scared.

The SAFE series promotes that protecting children from harm is a shared responsibility and knowing what keeps them safe is important, but that children are not responsible for their own safety, because this is the responsibility of the adults that care for the child.