**Protective Behaviours Program - FAQ**

1. **What does this program actually teach my kids?**

The Protective Behaviours program was first taught in the USA in the 1980s and has since spread across the world.

The WACSS Protective Behaviours program is represented in the lessons below:

* Theme 1: “We all have the right to be safe and feel safe at all times”, and Feelings.
* Warning Signs
* Safety Check
* Theme 2: “We can talk with someone about anything, no matter what it is”, and Networks.
* Safe and Unsafe Secrets
* Persistence
* Body Safety
* Public and Private
* Personal Space and Consent
* The right to say ‘No’
* Theme and Program Reinforcement

For more information about the program you can contact WA Child Safety Services at [www.wacss.com.au](http://www.wacss.com.au) or 1300 310 083.

1. **Is this sex education?**

The Protective Behaviours program does not teach sex education. The program focusses on safe and unsafe situations/ behaviours that include topics such as body safety, and public and private information/ photos/videos/behaviours/clothing, however, this does not include sex education.

1. **Does this program scare young children?**

Child abusers can take advantage of children’s lack of knowledge about safe and unsafe (or inappropriate, harmful) behaviours. Protective Behaviours’ messages can be delivered in a clear, simple, and non-confronting way by using fun and engaging activities tailored to children’s ages and development. The teacher will use a range of books, games, discussions, and engaging activities to teach the program.

1. **How does this relate to ‘stranger danger’?**

Since the 1980s the concept of stranger danger has been well accepted in our community. While it is necessary to teach children that strangers may be the source of harm, this must not be the only message children hear about who may harm them. Abusers who are not strangers can take advantage of this fact if children are taught that strangers are the only cause for concern. Likewise, parents and carers can feel that their children will only be harmed by a stranger and not be aware of the potential of family/friends/neighbours that may abuse a child. It is an unfortunate statistic that around 80-90% of child sexual abuse is perpetrated by someone known to the child.

There may also be situations when a child needs to seek help from a stranger (e.g. getting lost at the shops). The Protective Behaviours program provides a range of safe behaviours for children to draw from if they are confronted with these situations.

1. **Who will teach the program?**

A teacher will teach the Protective Behaviours program using age-appropriate lesson plans and activities. The teacher has access to specialist training and support to ensure the program is delivered with your child’s safety and wellbeing in mind.

1. **How can I help?**

As the saying goes, “protecting children is everybody’s business.” We can all do something to help keep children safe.

As a parent or carer, you can find out more about the Protective Behaviours program by contacting WA Child Safety Services or better yet, go to a Protective Behaviours workshop provided by WA Child Safety Services. This workshop will give you comprehensive information about the nature of child abuse in Australia, why the Protective Behaviours program is effective and details about each of the eleven topics of the program.

There are many things you can do at home to make Protective Behaviours part of your everyday lives at home:

* Encourage using feeling words to describe emotions. You can try it too!
* Support your kids in taking notice of their feelings, particularly if they are uncomfortable, scared or ‘weird’ feelings.
* Use the correct names for ‘public’ AND ‘private’ body parts.
* Respect your child’s personal space preferences – they are the bosses of their bodies.
* Encourage your child to think about adults in their lives they can go to if they need help.
* Go onto WA Child Safety Services website and see the range of resources available that may help you to further support your child’s Protective Behaviours knowledge.
* Explore the Kids Helpline and eSafety Commissioner’s websites with your children.