



Dear Parent/Carer,

Your child will soon be engaging in this year's 'Australia's Biggest Child Safety Lesson' (ABC SL) created by the Daniel Morcombe Foundation.

This lesson aims to educate our students about consent and the importance of understanding how to **seek, give and deny consent respectfully**.

We want to emphasise that the content of ABC SL has been carefully curated to be age-appropriate and presented in a sensitive and responsible manner. It is important to educate children about consent and ABC SL 2023 provides an effective platform for these discussions. The lesson aligns to the Australian Curriculum. The Australian Curriculum Version 9.0 released in May 2022 for implementation from 2023, aims to ensure that students receive more explicit education on positive and respectful relationships and consent (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority [ACARA], 2022).

We understand that discussing such sensitive topics can be challenging for both parents and educators. However, we encourage you to engage with your child about their experiences with ABC SL 2023.

Recent Australian research indicates that more than 1 in 3 girls and almost 1 in 5 boys experience child sexual abuse. One of the key recommendations of the internationally recognised ACMS study was "dedicated prevention efforts in schools focused on healthy development, attitudes to gender equality, emotional literacy, and consent and relationships education." Open communication is key, and discussing consent at home will further reinforce the lessons learned at school.

If you have any concerns or questions regarding ABC SL, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. We are here to support you and address any queries you may have.

For more information on how to keep kids safe, please visit www.danielmorcombe.com.au

Thank you,



Your child recently participated in a Daniel Morcombe Foundation personal safety lesson, Australia's Biggest Child Safety Lesson (ABCSL). The lesson encouraged children seek, give and deny consent and to learn the correct names for their private and public body parts.

Why are we teaching children about consent?

Communicating about consent in a respectful way can help children assert their right to stay comfortable and enforce their right to stay safe. Consent means having a choice about touch or actions and respecting their answer. With children, we may be more used to using the language "asking for permission." We can lay the foundation for setting boundaries with children, making decisions about their bodies, asking for permission, and responding appropriately when someone says no to them. Conversations around consent should be ongoing and can be weaved into everyday scenarios. For example, "Do you want a hug goodbye today? We could also wave or high five." "Can I sit beside you while we read this book?"

Why are we teaching children the correct names of body parts?

It is important to teach children the correct names of their body parts from a young age. Children who know the proper names and functions of private body parts are less vulnerable to being targeted by abusers and more likely to tell an adult if they have been harmed.

Explain to your child that things about body parts should never be a secret. If an adult needs to touch a child in order to help them stay safe and healthy, it should never be a secret. ABCSL 2022 is about correctly naming body parts which is such an important conversation that we revisited this important message in ABCSL 2023.

Why are personal boundaries important?

Child sexual abuse often begins with a perpetrator ignoring a child's personal boundaries and bodily autonomy. Talk to your child about their personal boundaries and teach them to tell a Safety Helper if someone tries to cross a boundary. **Remind your child that they are the boss of their own body and that they can say 'No!' to anything that makes them feel uncomfortable.**

How does open communication help keep kids safe?

Sometimes children may avoid sharing worries with their parents due to fear of being punished or blamed and abusers will take advantage of this fear. Keep communication with your child open and remind them that they can talk to you or another Safety Helper about anything. Everyone has the right to feel safe all of the time. Tell your child that if they don't feel safe, they should talk to a Safety Helper. If the first Safety Helper doesn't help them, they should talk to another.

What are Safety Networks and Safety Helpers?

The people on a child's Safety Network are the names of five adults a child has identified as grownups who they feel safe around. We call these five grownups their Safety Helpers. You can help your child develop their safety network with this [activity sheet](#).

You can find out more information at danielmorcombe.com.au/keeping-kids-safe-resources/.