HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Level

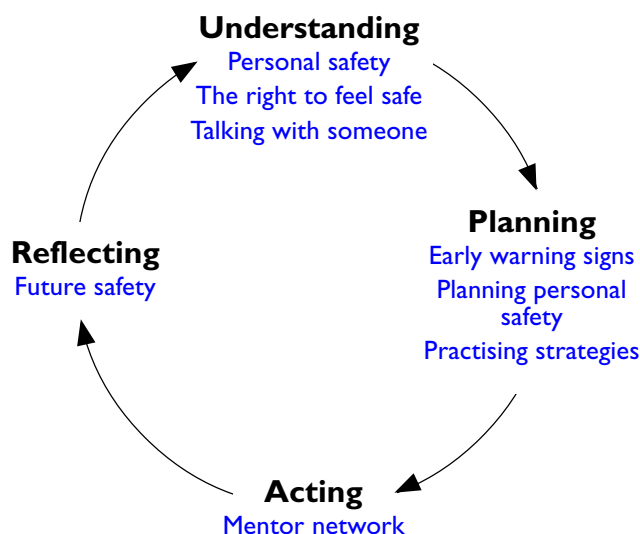| F | 1 | 2 | **3** | 4 | 5 | 6 | B6 |

*F*eeling safe

Strand
Enhancing Personal Development

Purpose

Students explore the concepts of personal safety and protective behaviours by identifying situations that may be threatening or of concern to them. They identify behaviours that do not enhance relationships, and analyse behaviours and actions that improve relationships in various groups and situations. They develop a personal strategy that will build relationships with people who are accessible, protective and supportive of them and reflect appropriate communication, cooperation and decision-making skills for dealing with situations when they feel pressured or unsafe.

Overview of activities

Activities in this module are based on a learner-centred approach with an emphasis on decision making and problem solving. As the following diagram shows, activities are sequenced in **understanding**, **planning**, **acting** and **reflecting** phases.

Understanding
Personal safety
The right to feel safe
Talking with someone

Planning
Early warning signs
Planning personal safety
Practising strategies

Acting
Mentor network

Reflecting
Future safety

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Core learning outcomes

This module focuses on the following core learning outcomes from the Years 1 to 10 Health and Physical Education Syllabus:

Enhancing Personal Development

3.2 Students develop and implement strategies, including codes of behaviour, to promote relationships in various groups and situations.

3.4 Students demonstrate communication, cooperation and decision-making skills to collaborate in social, team or group situations.

Core content

This module incorporates the following core content from the syllabus:

Enhancing Personal Development

- aspects of identity, in particular self-concept and self-esteem;
- relationships in families, friendships and groups, including roles, rights and responsibilities and enhancing and managing relationships;
- factors influencing identity and relationships, specifically interactions with others;
- interpersonal skills.

Assessment strategy

The following are examples of assessment tasks that provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the core learning outcomes identified in this module.

Enhancing Personal Development 3.2

- **Students develop and implement a personal mentor network that could be used in pressured or unsafe situations.**
  - Can the student develop a personal mentor network?
  - Does the student know how to approach people on the network?
  - Can the student communicate appropriate information to people about personal concerns?
  - Can the student identify pressured or unsafe situations that may affect personal safety?

Enhancing Personal Development 3.4

- **Students role-play in small groups a range of communication, cooperation and decision-making skills for use in unsafe situations.**
  - Can the student communicate effectively when responding to a variety of unsafe situations? For example, does he or she listen carefully, provide accurate information, use a clear tone and speak at an appropriate pace?
  - Can the student identify possible situations where, to remain safe, cooperation with others may be necessary?
  - Can the student demonstrate cooperation skills to remain safe in an unsafe situation?
  - Can the student demonstrate decision-making skills that reflect an awareness of pressured and unsafe situations?

Background information

The importance of protective behaviours

Statistics provided by the Department of Families, Youth and Community Care in Queensland show that in 1997–98 there were 10 243 notifications of child abuse, which resulted in 17 233 cases being investigated. There were 12 972 different children identified. Of these notifications 6323 were substantiated, 5405 were not substantiated or unfounded. Well over half of all substantiated cases of physical, emotional and sexual abuse and neglect involved children between the ages of five and fourteen years of age.

Unfortunately, the above statistics relate only to situations that occur within families. All instances of child abuse that occur outside the family home are investigated by the Queensland Police Service and contribute to another set of similar statistics. Such statistics indicate need for support material for teachers to help them develop protective behaviours in children. It is imperative that students be skilled in actions that can contribute to their safety in a range of environments.

This module, based on the Protective Behaviours Program delivered by the Protective Behaviours Consultancy Group (Qld), provides opportunities for students to develop long-term skills and strategies for feeling safe and maintaining control in a variety of situations. It has been developed with the support and input of the Protective Behaviours Consultancy Group (Qld), senior guidance officers from Education Queensland, Family Planning Queensland and the Queensland Centre for the Prevention of Child Abuse. It is highly desirable that all teachers participate in protective behaviours professional development, which can be arranged by contacting the Protective Behaviours Consultancy Group (see contact details p. 6).

It is important to note that before any student group discussion that may include reference to protective behaviours, inappropriate touching or other sensitive issues, students need to be cautioned about making public statements and avoid making unsubstantiated claims and inappropriate disclosures. Such topics need to be addressed with sensitivity and within well-established ground rules which include banning personal anecdotes.

It is strongly advised that all schools have in place an established school program in protective behaviours to include community input and support. If no school program is in place, parents should be informed of an intention to teach protective behaviours.

Terminology

Activities in this module involve use of the following language in the context of Health and Physical Education:

assertiveness	feelings	skills
attention	private	strategies
emotions	protection	touching
empowered	relationships	

School authority policies

Teachers need to be aware of and observe school authority policies that may be relevant to this module.

Child safety, protective behaviours and sensitive issue policies are of particular relevance in 'Feeling safe'.

Social justice principles

This module provides opportunities for students to increase their understanding and appreciation of supportive environments and diversity. It includes activities that encourage students to:

- identify people and services that help to keep them safe;
- develop strategies to maintain their personal safety in a range of environments;
- work collectively to identify and plan strategies.

Students with disabilities or learning difficulties may require some activities to be modified in order to optimise both their participation and their ability to demonstrate the outcomes. Teachers should consult with parents/carers and specialist support staff to determine whether modification is necessary.

Support materials and references

Aardvark Productions 1990, *Kids Have Rights*, video, Perth.

Aboriginal and Islander Child Care Agency 1990, *My Body is Mine Only*, Townsville.

Ayers & James 1985, *It's OK to Say No!*, activity book, Crows Nest, NSW.

Ayers & James 1986, *Sometimes It's OK to Tell Secrets!*, colouring book, Crows Nest, NSW.

Ayers & James 1986, *What Should You Do When ...?*, colouring book, Crows Nest, NSW.

Bateman, P. 1985, *Talking about Touching: A Physical Education Supplement*, Seattle Institute for Child Advocacy Committee for Children, Seattle.

Briggs, F. 1995, *Developing Personal Safety Skills in Children with Disabilities*, Jessica Kingsley Publishers, London.

Chaback, E. & Fortunato, P. 1981, *The Official Kids' Survival Kit: How to Do Things on Your Own*, Little, Brown & Company, Boston.

Department of Education and Children's Services 1996, *Boys and Relationships Program: Upper Primary, Junior Secondary*, Curriculum Resources, Adelaide.

Department of Education and Children's Services 1996, *Child Protection. Students from a Non-English Speaking Background. Curriculum Issues for Teachers Culturally Inclusive Education*, Curriculum Resources, Adelaide.

Department of Education and Children's Services 1996, *Child Protection. Teaching and Learning Strategies for R-7 Students of Diverse Cultural and Linguistic Backgrounds*, Curriculum Resources, Adelaide.

Eliott, M. 1991, *Feeling Happy, Feeling Safe: A Safety Guide for Young Children*, Hodder & Stoughton, London.

Golding, C. & Todd, F. 1994, *Protective Behaviours through Drama: A Program to Integrate Aspects of Drama, Protective Behaviours and Health and Personal Development*, Department for Education and Children's Services, Adelaide.

Gordon, S. (ed.) 1995, *The Right to Feel Safe: A Protective Behaviours Manual*, Mission South Australia, Adelaide.

Gordon, S. & Litt, S. 1989, *Try Again Red Riding Hood: A New Look at an Old Story*, Essence Publications, SA.

Hindman, J. 1983, *A Very Touching Book: For Little People and for Big People*, McClure-Hindman, New York.

Hope, M. & Eves, R. 1988, *What Can I Do If?*, activity book, Horowitz Grahame, Sydney.

Lismore Neighbourhood Centre 1986, *Kids Can Say No*, Lismore, NSW.

Mansutti, E., Worthington, P. & Read, P. 1994, *Feeling Safe, Staying Safe: Protective Behaviours*, video, Department of Education and Children's Services, Adelaide.

Margetts, D., Nault, S., Selk-Yerges, L. & Smaglik, L. 1997 *Feeling Safe and Standing Strong*, Mission South Australia, Adelaide.

Pika Wiya Health Service 1990, *Everybody's Kids: Three Stories about Child Protection*, video, Macumba Film and Television Productions, Adelaide.

Queensland Department of Education 1993, *Personal Safety for Primary School*, Brisbane.

Rowley, T. 1986, *Did I Ever Tell You How Special You Are?*, Queensland Centre for Prevention of Child Abuse, Brisbane.

Rowley, T. 1986 *Touches and Feelings*, Queensland Centre for Prevention of Child Abuse, Brisbane.

Staying Safe, 1988, video, Queensland Centre for Prevention of Child Abuse, Brisbane.

Stowell, J. & Dietzel, M. 1985, *My Very Own Book about Me!*, activity book, Lutheran Social Services of Washington, Spokane, Washington.

Stowell, J. & Dietzel, M. 1985, *My Very Own Book about Me!*, teacher's guide, Lutheran Social Services of Washington, Spokane, Washington.

FEELING SAFE • MIDDLE PRIMARY

Organisations

Families, Youth and Community Care Queensland
  Positive Parenting Coordination Section
  GPO Box 806
  Brisbane, Q 4001
  Tel: (07) 3224 7588
  Fax: (07) 3247 4856
  Website: http://www.families.qld.gov.au/index.html
  (accessed November 2000)

Family Planning Queensland
  100 Alfred Street
  Fortitude Valley, Q 4006
  Tel: (07) 3252 7922
  Fax: (07) 3854 1277
  Website: http://www.fpq.asn.au/ (accessed November 2000)

Protective Behaviours Consultancy Group of Queensland Inc.
  PO Box 606
  Roma Street
  Brisbane, Q 4003
  Tel: (07) 3278 2214

Activities

At the start of this module negotiate some rules with students about discussing protective behaviours. While discussion is to be encouraged, these rules should ensure that students do not make inappropriate and untimely comments that may embarrass, ridicule, stereotype or harm themselves or others. For example, rules could include:

- never talking about personal experiences;
- using a question box to ask a question informally;
- accepting other students' questions without comment;
- accepting that discussions stay within the room.

Ensure students are adequately informed before working through this module. Students should:

- have had prior learning experiences dealing with self-esteem and self-concepts that will support their discussions and learning in this module;
- be aware of the parts of the human body and have had prior lessons on growth and development.

Understanding

PERSONAL SAFETY	Developing an understanding of personal safety

▶ Students identify actions people take that may make their peers or family feel happy *and* safe. They list these actions and discuss them within their class.

Teaching consideration

It is important to make the distinction early that people may appear to be happy but may not be safe, or may appear safe and not be happy. Focus discussion on being both happy and safe.

▶ Students identify actions that make other people feel unsafe or unhappy. They list these and discuss reasons why people would make others feel unhappy or unsafe.

Teaching considerations

If available, read students the story *Try Again Red Riding Hood* and show them the illustrations. The story tells how Red Riding Hood may have felt and how she may have reacted differently to unsafe situations.

Actions such as bullying, teasing and pushing others may be some of the examples provided by students. Include discussion on the intentions of people who bully or tease.

▶ Students identify situations in which a person would feel safe or unsafe. An example of a safe situation may be attending a party with friends or family; an unsafe situation may be not being able to find a family member when in an unfamiliar place. Students describe the different emotions a person may feel in these situations and suggest how they can help others who may be upset or feeling unsafe.

Teaching considerations

Resource Sheet 1

Remind students of the class rules about not talking about people we know when giving examples. See strategy 4, 'One step removed' (Resource Sheet 1, 'Protective behaviour strategies').

Encourage students to start thinking about how they could communicate their feelings appropriately in unsafe situations, and how they may be able to liaise with others nearby to help them overcome worrying feelings.

▶ Students define their understanding of 'safety'. They write individual definitions to be displayed on a chart for class discussion.

THE RIGHT TO FEEL SAFE

> **Understanding the protective behaviour theme: 'We all have the right to feel safe all of the time.'**

▶ Students participate in a 'Think, Pair, Share' activity to analyse the statement: 'We all have the right to feel safe all of the time.' Initially, students dissect the statement into smaller parts and discuss each of these parts — We all / have the right / to feel safe / all of the time. Students discuss the concept of 'rights' and how everyone has the right to be safe, and to have food, shelter and clothing. After communicating their ideas and feelings from the discussion, students make some group decisions on what the statement means, and report back to the class.

Teaching considerations

Refer to *The Right to Feel Safe: Protective Behaviours Manual* (Gordon 1996) which has extensive information on how to break up this statement.

Encourage those students who have difficulties in communicating orally to use other means to express their feelings. Refer to *Developing Personal Safety Skills in Children with Disabilities* (Briggs 1995) for further advice.

▶ Students list thoughts about how being 'safe' feels. They discuss these ideas within groups and note individual differences that may occur between group members.

Teaching considerations

Although suggestions are most likely to focus on positives such as warm, comfortable, nice, relaxed and happy, there may be some negatives, such as lonely, sad and worried. Students may need to be prompted to discuss such suggestions further; however, ensure personal anecdotes are not included.

Be aware that 'being safe' means different things to different people.

►   Students discuss the importance of having the right to feel safe all the time. They describe how they would feel if they knew they were always going to be safe and consider how this may influence their self-esteem.

Focus questions could include:

- **If you knew you were always going to feel safe wherever you went, how might you change?**
- **Would you change the things you did and the places you went? Why?**
- **Would you be a happier person? Why?**
- **Would you be a more confident person? Why?**

TALKING WITH SOMEONE	**Understanding the protective behaviour theme: 'Nothing is so awful that we can't talk with someone about it.'**

►   Students discuss the statement: 'Nothing is so awful that we can't talk with someone about it.' Initially they dissect the statement into smaller parts and discuss each of those parts — Nothing / is so awful / that we can't talk / with someone about it.

Teaching considerations

Encourage students who have difficulties in communicating orally to use other means to express their feelings. Refer to *Developing Personal Safety Skills in Children with Disabilities* (Briggs 1995) for further advice.

►   Students list some topics that people are often hesitant to talk about — for example, body changes during puberty, relationships, the death of a friend or family member, bullying or teasing, unwanted touching. Students suggest the most appropriate person to talk to if they were faced with such situations.

Teaching considerations

Remind students not to include personal anecdotes when suggesting topics.

The people chosen to talk to will vary with each student.

Students in isolated communities or who are transient may have limited people to ask to be in their network. Teachers will need to modify the strategy or choose another strategy appropriate for specific students. The School of Distance Education and the Protective Behaviours Consultancy Group are available to offer advice on this issue.

FEELING SAFE • MIDDLE PRIMARY

Planning

EARLY WARNING SIGNS	Identifying early warning signs from their bodies in given situations and understanding how these signs can help them to feel safe.

▶   Students identify physical feelings and emotional feelings that communicate early warning signs.

Teaching considerations

This should be done from both a positive orientation, that is, 'I recognise the feeling but I am going to proceed anyway because I know I am not in any personal danger' and a negative orientation, that is, 'I recognise the feeling and I know I am in danger, so I have to get out of the situation'.

Early warning signs is a core concept from the Protective Behaviours Program.

Early warning signs are those reactions within our body, physical or emotional, that make us feel uncomfortable, unsafe and aware that we may be in danger.

Physical feelings may include goosebumps, the need to go to the toilet, starting to cry and sweaty palms.

Emotional feelings may include feeling scared, worried, nervous or uncertain.

All student responses should be considered as students will respond physically and emotionally in different ways to different situations.

▶   Students identify situations when they may feel scared but know they are safe — for example, having to talk in front of a large crowd. They discuss why, in some situations, a person may feel scared or concerned but still decide to continue in the situation.

Teaching considerations

Discussion examples could include driving on the dodgem cars or going on some other ride at a show, swimming in big surf between the flags, waiting for the bus alone, travelling in a fast car.

It is important to make a link between recognising early warning signs and making a rational decision.

▶   Students compile a list of words that describe people's feelings in safe and unsafe situations. They then describe how people may behave or act differently as individuals and in groups when feeling this way.

PLANNING PERSONAL SAFETY	Planning the development of a personal safety or mentor network

▶   Students suggest strategies they could put in place to help keep them safe. They discuss when such strategies can and cannot be used.

Teaching considerations

Strategies may include a personal safety network, a personal telephone card, carrying a mobile phone, a buddy system, negotiating with someone, running away from the situation, always letting people know where they are and how long they will be gone.

Encourage students to understand that, by being prepared with certain skills and strategies, they are better equipped to decide the appropriate actions and choices to take in situations where they may feel unsafe or pressured.

Focus on the positive side of strategy development rather than reporting on the negative side. This way, these skills and strategies can be used to build new relationships rather than just focusing on survival.

▶　Students discuss the concept of a personal safety or mentor network, which includes people who would be able to share in their successes as well as support them when they need advice or support. They list the types of people who may be included in such a network.

Teaching considerations

Protective Behaviour consultants often use the analogy of a person's hand when referring to a personal network. Each digit represents a different person, and may include a family member, a teacher, a doctor, a professional person (for example, a police officer) or a community organisation (for example, Kids Help Line). Students could use the second hand to include a relative, a neighbour, a member of their church or local club.

The network should also be seen as a positive way of supporting students in their lives through active encouragement and advice, and not simply a mechanism to put in place when the student has troubles. The closer the links between the school and the community, the better the chances of maintaining a child's safety.

▶　Students describe the qualities or characteristics of people who they would like in their network and consider how they could keep in contact with them.

Teaching considerations

It is preferable that the people on the network are people students know. Students need to be comfortable about approaching these people.

To be included on a network, people need to be trustworthy, honest, approachable and friendly.

Members of the network should also be accessible and may be replaced as the student grows or changes address. The network should be a flexible strategy.

PRACTISING STRATEGIES	**Practising a range of strategies to improve interactions with peers, friends, family and acquaintances, in both safe and unsafe situations**

R **Resource Sheet 2**

▶　Students determine actions they could take to approach the people they would like to include on their personal network. Actions could include a telephone call, a letter, a mentor invitation card (see Resource Sheet 2, 'Mentor invitation') or an interview. The students practise phone conversations and interview techniques or write drafts of a letter that could be used to make contact with possible network members.

Teaching considerations

Modify these activities for students with a speech or hearing impairment.

Parents must be informed that students are being asked to develop this strategy. It is expected that a family member is the first person to be contacted to be part of the network.

► Students research and develop a list of community organisations and support services that could help students who have concerns or problems — for example, Crimestoppers, Kids Help Line, the Salvo Care Line, domestic violence telephone service and Lifeline.

Teaching considerations

Explain to students that such organisations are there for people who may feel lonely or upset and need someone to talk to. They are not there just for urgent problems.

Encourage the students to keep a list of such organisations and their telephone numbers in a personal diary or workbook.

► In small groups, students role-play situations involving bullying or teasing that are resolved through non-violent strategies, such as 'win-win', 'I statements', moving away from the situation, seeking assistance or advice and working cooperatively with others. Situations may include:

• being picked on by a bully;

• being teased about a haircut;

• not being included in conversations and games.

Teaching considerations

Students could write situations anonymously on pieces of paper to be placed in a box. Make a selection of these for students to role-play. Emphasise that the students are in 'role' for the portrayal, and debrief them following the role-play.

Refer to the many resources in the 'Support materials and references' section that provide a range of strategies to overcome bullying behaviours.

Resource Sheet 3

► Students respond to fictional scenarios. They propose specific strategies that the character in the unsafe situation could use (see Resource Sheet 3, 'Discussion scenarios').

Teaching considerations

Question students as to why they made certain decisions during the role-play.

Be watchful for the 'home alone' mentality, where students believe they can protect themselves from all dangers, just as the young character in the movie did. Beliefs such as these need to be discussed and identified as unrealistic and dangerous.

Acting

MENTOR NETWORK	**Putting in place a personal safety/mentor network and developing other strategies to enhance relationships and improve safety**

► Students invite the people they have previously identified to be members of their personal safety/mentor network. Before approaching these people, students should decide on the most appropriate way of communicating with each person and practise their approaches.

Teaching considerations

If the people contacted are unwilling to be on the network, encourage students to find a replacement for that person. Emphasise to students, who may be disappointed at such refusals, that the people they approached may not have the time, availability or skills to be supportive of the student.

Because the safety network is designed to be a private network for the student, discourage students from discussing members of their networks. Parents, however, should be aware of their children's networks.

Encourage students to maintain regular contact with the people on their network to further enhance their relationship with these people.

► Students make a personal safety book that outlines:

- their definition of safety, which may have changed from earlier in the module;
- why they like to feel safe and happy;
- how they feel when they are safe and unhappy;
- what actions by other people can make them feel safe and happy;
- who can help them to feel safe;
- what personal strategies they can use to feel safe.

Teaching consideration

Be aware and accept that students may be reluctant to share their personal safety book with peers.

Reflecting

FUTURE SAFETY	**Reflecting on learnings and considering the future**

▶ Students reflect on what they have learnt and suggest how they have changed or developed as a result of this learning. They discuss the value of sharing their learning with their peers and suggest strategies for doing this in the future.

Focus questions could include:

- **What did you learn during this module?**
- **How will these learnings help you in the future?**
- **How has your knowledge changed?**
- **How could we have improved the way we learnt about feeling safe?**

▶ Students suggest how they can review the skills and strategies they have practised and established to ensure they are appropriate for their future. They consider what might change in their lives (for example, changing address, going to boarding school) and how such factors could influence their future personal safety.

▶ Students review the method of inquiry — understanding, planning, acting and reflecting — they undertook during the module. They discuss what they did in each phase and how the approach helped them to make decisions and solve possible problems.

Protective behaviour strategies

The following eight strategies are used by consultants when developing a Protective Behaviours program in schools.

1. **Theme reinforcement:** Theme reinforcement involves using a variety of methods to maintain students' awareness of two themes — 'We all have the right to feel safe all the time' and 'Nothing is so awful that you can't talk with someone about it' — and to encourage their use.

2. **Network review:** Network review means students checking on a regular basis to be sure their network is intact and ready to use.

3. **Persistence:** Persistence provides a framework for people to persevere in seeking help, support and encouragement through a preselected network of trusted people until enough happens so that they feel safe again.

4. **One step removed:** This strategy allows students to always talk from another person's viewpoint even though they actually may be recalling personal experiences. The one-step removed strategy is useful in establishing a level of trust where a victimised person feels able to reveal abusive situations.

5. **Protective interrupting:** This occurs when a teacher or other facilitator interrupts a conversation that they believe is going to result in the disclosure of an abusive experience. If a disclosure is made in an unprotected setting, the student's feelings of victimisation can actually increase. Thus, protective interrupting is a necessary teaching strategy.

6. **The importance of language:** The importance of language focuses on the external or inner locus of control exhibited by students, that is, whether or not they own their actions, whether their statements are inconsistent with the protective behaviours process, whether they are avoiding violent metaphors, command-mode statements and external referents or prescriptions, and whether they are using empowering language.

7. **Risking on purpose:** Sometimes it is exciting for students to feel scared — to extend their limits physically and psychologically. This is taking risk with a purpose.

8. **Community involvement:** This strategy is used mainly when teaching the process to others. Research has shown that one of the key factors contributing to the success of protective behaviours in schools is the involvement of parents and community members. Children who learn similar messages from parents and teachers are the ones who benefit most from protective behaviours in teaching.

Mentor invitation

Use this invitation to find suitable mentors for your personal network.

Mentor invitation

A mentor is someone whom I can:

- trust
- share good times with
- talk about my problems with
- ask for advice
- ask to keep me safe.

Will you, _____, agree to be a mentor
on my personal safety network, please?

_____ (Student)

I would be pleased to be a mentor on your personal safety
network.

_____ (Mentor)

Date: _____

Discussion scenarios

Teachers may choose one or more of the following ideas to discuss with students. Ensure students do not provide personal stories and are always one step removed. As some of these situations can be quite serious, it is important that the students know and have demonstrated the rules for discussing protective behaviours in the classroom. Teachers may wish to modify these ideas or choose alternatives.

1. A child is walking home after school when a group of older children surround him/her and ask him/her for money. What should he/she do?

2. A boy/girl is dressing in a bedroom when he/she notices someone looking in from outside. What should he/she do?

3. An uncle/aunt who is a lot of fun and likes to take children to the beach and on trips wants to touch a child inappropriately and keep this a special secret. What should the child do?

4. A next-door neighbour invites a child to play a game where 'everyone' takes off his or her clothes. What should the child do?

5. A grandmother always wants to hug and kiss her grandchild and won't let go of him/her. She pats him/her on the bottom but he/she doesn't like it. What should he/she do?

Acknowledgment

Grateful acknowledgment is made to the following organisation for granting permission to use copyright material:

This sourcebook module should be read in conjunction with the following Queensland School Curriculum Council materials:

Years 1 to 10 Health and Physical Education Syllabus
Years 1 to 10 Health and Physical Education Sourcebook: Guidelines
Health and Physical Education Initial In-service Materials