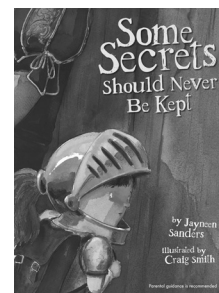


# 3 Lessons in Secrets and Body Safety



**FOCUS TEXT:** *Some Secrets Should Never Be Kept* (ages 4–11+ years)

Depending on the age of the children, the following lessons will take place over three sessions. Please adapt the lessons to suit the needs and ages of the children.

**Note:** extensive lessons on Body Safety Education are available through the lesson plans that accompany *My Body! What I Say Goes!* and also on pages 8 to 16 in *Body Safety Education*. If available, we suggest either set of lessons could be used prior to the following lessons.

## KEY OBJECTIVES

### Children will understand that:

- there is a difference between a ‘good secret’ and a secret that makes them feel unsafe, bad and/or uncomfortable
- their body experiences Early Warning Signs when they are feeling unsafe
- it is important to listen to and respond to their Early Warning Signs
- we each need a Safety Network, i.e. 3 to 5 trusted adults we can talk to about anything (including when we feel unsafe) and they will believe us.

### In these lessons children will:

- discuss ‘good secrets’ (or ‘happy surprises’) compared to secrets that make them feel unsafe, bad and/or uncomfortable

- analyse ‘safe’ and ‘unsafe’ feelings — both physical and emotional
- recognise that unsafe feelings are also known as their Early Warning Signs
- identify the people in their lives who form their Safety Network
- understand that some secrets should never ever be kept.

### For the lessons you will need:

- whiteboard, markers
- coloured pencils, textas
- A4 paper
- music and speakers
- resource masters: ‘Feelings Cards’, ‘Safe and Unsafe Feelings’, ‘If I Ever Feel Unsafe...’

# Lesson 1: Good Secrets and Secrets that Make You Feel Unsafe

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## Tuning In: Doggy! Doggy! Who's Got the Bone?

*You will need: a 'bone' (this can be a rolled up piece of paper, a whiteboard marker, anything!)*

Have students sit in a circle on the floor. Select one student to be the 'doggy' who moves to the middle of the circle with the 'bone' in front of them. The doggy closes their eyes, as the teacher quietly selects a person to steal the bone — meanwhile the group chants: 'Doggy! Doggy! Who's got the bone? Someone stole it from your home. Wake up doggy! Wake up NOW!' All students in the circle sit with their hands behind their back, not giving away who has the bone. The doggy gets three attempts to guess who has stolen the bone. If they guess correctly, they choose the next child to be the doggy. If they guess incorrectly, the person with the bone is the next doggy. Continue for a few rounds — there won't be time for the whole class to have a turn, but the game may be revisited later, if time allows.

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## Whole Class Discussion: What Is a Secret?

*You will need: whiteboard, markers*

Write the heading 'Secret' on the whiteboard and ask the class, 'What is a secret?' Brainstorm responses and record these on the whiteboard. Responses should include the idea that a secret is something that is not meant to be known by others, something you keep to yourself and don't tell, etc.

**Note:** if students provide examples of secrets in their definitions, write these in a different colour on the whiteboard as these relate to the next step.

Ask students if they have ever been asked to keep a secret. Provide them with the opportunity to share their experiences. Examples may include keeping a gift secret from their friends or family, not telling someone about a surprise party, not telling the 'doggy' who has the bone (link to Tuning In), and so on.

**Note:** don't pressure all students to answer; it is likely that only 'good secrets' will be discussed at this point. If a child begins to reveal a secret that makes them feel uncomfortable or unsafe, assure them that what they have to tell you is very important and that you will talk to them after class (see Disclosure on page 7 of these notes).

Discuss the idea of 'good secret'. Circle such examples on the whiteboard and ask, 'What makes these secrets a "good secret"?' Discuss. The aim of this discussion is for students to conclude that good secrets are there for a happy reason or for fun; they are not going to hurt anyone, but having these secrets allows the person to be surprised! Introduce the term 'happy surprise' as an alternative to 'good secret'. Explain that a 'happy surprise' is fun and it will always be told.

Now discuss the idea of an 'unsafe secret'; if there are any examples of unsafe secrets on the whiteboard, discuss these. Otherwise, ask, 'What might an unsafe secret be?' These may include: lying to a teacher/parent to keep someone else out of trouble, not telling about someone being mean to you because you fear they'll find out, not telling if someone is hitting or touching you in an inappropriate way, etc. Explain the following: that these secrets don't make you feel happy; they make a person feel uncomfortable, bad and unsafe; these kinds of secrets should never be kept, no matter who tells you to keep them (even an adult).

**Note:** this concept will be dealt with further in Lesson 2.

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## Individual Task: A Great Surprise!

*You will need: A4 paper/scrapbooks/exercise books, coloured pencils/Textas*

Have students draw or write about a time where they have either kept a good secret or experienced a happy surprise, or when others have kept a good secret from them. They may have surprised their grandmother with a special gift, kept a surprise party secret from their dad, or received a surprise gift from their sibling or friend. As a variation on this activity, older students may write a personal or fictional narrative about a real or imagined happy surprise.

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## Reflection

Have students share their drawings/writing with the class as time allows. Ask, 'How do you feel when you give or receive a happy surprise?' If needed, you may break this down into two parts: 1. How do you feel when you keep a happy surprise from someone and then finally reveal it? 2. How do you feel when you are the person receiving a happy surprise? Discuss.

# Lesson 2: Some Secrets Should Never Be Kept

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## Tuning In: Making Predictions

*You will need: Some Secrets Should Never Be Kept by Jayneen Sanders*

Show students the cover of *Some Secrets Should Never Be Kept* and read the title. Ask, 'What do you think this book is going to be about?' Have students think back to their work and the discussion from Lesson 1 where secrets were discussed. If required, ask, 'What kinds of secrets should never be kept?'

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# Whole Class Activity: Some Secrets Should Never Be Kept

**You will need:** *Some Secrets Should Never Be Kept* by Jayneen Sanders, whiteboard, markers

Read *Some Secrets Should Never Be Kept* to the class. While reading, allow students ample time to view the illustrations, but keep the discussion to a minimum in order to allow the storyline to flow. Ask, 'What kind of secret was Lord Henry asking Alfred to keep? Was it a "happy surprise" or a "unsafe secret"?' Discuss. Ask, 'How did keeping this secret make Alfred feel?' Refer to pages 15, 18 and 19 of the text if required. Make a list of unsafe feelings on the whiteboard. Explain that this is our body's way of warning us that something is wrong. Include both emotional and physical feelings such as sick in the tummy, sad, lonely, heavy heart, crying, hard to swallow, etc. Discuss the difference between physical feelings and emotional feelings; circle examples in different colours to show this contrast.

**Note:** refer also to the discussion questions at the back of the book after the reading. If a child does begin to disclose during the reading, see Disclosure on page 7 of these notes.

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## Independent Task: Safe and Unsafe Feelings

**You will need:** resource master 'Safe and Unsafe Feelings'

Have students complete resource master 'Safe and Unsafe Feelings'. They may use the list on the whiteboard as a reference for unsafe feelings. Encourage them to think back to Lesson 1, and the feelings discussed in the Reflection activity to fill in the 'Safe' feelings. As a class share/brainstorm ideas if required.

**Note:** see also Lessons 2 and 3 from *My Body! What I Say Goes!* and the Early Warning Signs poster which is free to download from [www.e2epublishing.info/posters](http://www.e2epublishing.info/posters)

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## Reflection

Compare emotional and physical feelings. Ask, 'Is one kind more important than the other? Which do you think comes first? Why do we have both?' Discuss.

# Lesson 3: My Body, My Safety Network and What To Do If I Feel Unsafe

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## Tuning In: Demonstrating Body Language

*You will need: an open space, resource master 'Feelings Cards' or the Feelings Cards from [www.e2epublishing.info/posters](http://www.e2epublishing.info/posters) — displayed as a poster, music and speakers*

This game is a variation on the standard Musical Statues. Have students dance until the music is stopped. They should 'freeze' and listen for the teacher to read out a feeling/emotion, e.g. sad or sadness from the poster (see also the list below for older students). When the feeling/emotion is read, students silently use their whole body to express the feeling/emotion, i.e. thinking about their body position, such as their shoulders, head, arms, legs as well as facial expressions. Select a variety of feelings/emotions to clearly demonstrate the range of body language we use to express feelings and emotions.

Display the 'Feelings Cards' poster on the whiteboard for reference in the Whole Class Discussion.

### List of Feelings/Emotions

happy, sad, surprised, brave, joyful, worried, angry, frightened, bored, proud, shy, embarrassed, friendly, calm, quiet, curious, confused, safe, unsafe, relieved, jealous, frustrated, excited, uncomfortable, silly, forgotten, ignored, loved, curious, interested, engaged, overwhelmed, terrified, shame, peaceful

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## Whole Class Discussion: Body Language, Private Body Parts and Safety Networks

*You will need: Some Secrets Should Never Be Kept by Jayneen Sanders*

Revisit the text as a class. This time, looking only at the illustrations, focus on the body language and facial expressions shown by Alfred. Discuss how these change throughout the text, linking his feelings to being 'safe' and 'unsafe'. Next, directly compare the body language shown by Alfred on pages 9 and 12. Both are a direct result of Lord Henry's interaction with him. Ask, 'Why do you think Alfred looks happy on page 9 but not on page 12?' Introduce/revisit the term 'private body parts', i.e. the parts under our bathing suit and our mouth. Discuss that these are not for others to touch (unless for medical reasons with a trusted adult in the room). Refer to the 'Notes to the reader' on page 3 for more ideas/information on 'safe' and 'unsafe' touch, and also see pages 8 to 16 of *Body Safety Education*. Continue looking at pages 12 and 13, and ask, 'What should Alfred have done straightaway, even though Lord Henry told him not to tell anyone. What kind of secret was this?' Discuss the need to tell a trusted adult straightaway if you feel unsafe, no matter what. Then ask, 'Do you think Alfred felt scared? Why do you say that? If Alfred had told his mother or another trusted adult straightaway, what might have happened? Do you think Alfred tried to tell his mother? How did he do this?' Discuss.

**Note:** it is important for students to understand that Alfred was in no way to blame for the unsafe touch. But it is also important for them to know that even if an adult or older child tells them to keep an unsafe secret, such as touching their private parts, they must tell a trusted adult straightaway and keep on telling until they are believed.

Turn to page 24, and say, ‘Here we see Alfred telling his mother about the tickling and touching, was this a brave thing for Alfred to do?’ Discuss. Ask, ‘Why do you think Alfred told his mother?’ Discuss the need to tell someone who you trust, someone who you know will believe you and will help you. These people form a very special group, known as a Safety Network. Have students think about the adults in their lives they trust and could talk to if they ever felt unsafe.

**Note:** for a more in-depth exploration of these topics see Lessons 4 and 5 from *My Body! What I Say Goes!*. For younger children, Lesson 2 included with the children’s book *Resilience* would be an ideal additional lesson.

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## Individual Task: If I Ever Feel Unsafe ...

*You will need: resource master ‘If I Ever Feel Unsafe...’*

Have students complete resource master ‘If I Ever Feel Unsafe...’. For younger children go through/revisit the steps featured on the resource master as a whole class. The text could be written/drawn on the whiteboard.

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## Reflection

Revisit pages 30 and 31, and ask, ‘How do you think Alfred feels now? What has he learnt?’ Draw on all of the positive emotions and physical feelings that Alfred would feel. Discuss the idea that he is empowered, and that from Alfred’s experience we now know that even if someone asks/threatens you to keep a secret that is unsafe and/or makes you feel bad and/or uncomfortable, it should never ever be kept.

*Teaching notes written by Yale Mercieca*

# Disclosure

If, during a session, a child begins to disclose, stop them gently and say, 'What you are telling me is very important. We can talk about this after our lesson.' Ensure they know you are concerned and value what they are about to reveal. If another teacher is available, have them continue the lesson and take the child aside so they can disclose in a safe environment. Protective interrupting is important so confidentiality is kept and it prevents other children from hearing the disclosure. If a child does disclose, never deal with the disclosure by yourself; follow the instructions in *Body Safety Education* on pages 26 to 28, then contact your principal (or welfare officer). The disclosure can then be reported to the Department of Human Services in your state and/or contact organizations such as those listed on page 37 of the same book. In Australia, all teachers and principals are mandated by law to report child abuse and a protocol does exist between the Department of Human Services and the Directorate of School Education which encourages and supports teachers when responding to the abuse of children.

If a child has experienced sexual abuse and this is known to the staff, it may be best to remove the child from the class for some lessons in case the content triggers memories of the abuse. However, it is important the child receives Body Safety Education and therefore I suggest the child receives this important knowledge in a one-on-one situation with a trusted teacher. The teacher can then support the child in their learning and take 'time out' if need be. It is also recommended that any professionals involved with the child, e.g. a psychologist, provide recommendations on how to proceed with teaching Body Safety Education to that child. Of course, each situation is different and this is a case-by-case decision.

It takes an enormous amount of courage for a child (or adult) to disclose sexual abuse. They will, no doubt, have been threatened with horrific consequences were they to tell. To find the bravery to overcome such threats, is a true act of courage. But what a child needs more than anything from the person they disclose to — be it a parent, relative, teacher or friend — is compassionate reassurance. Therefore, stay calm and:

- reassure the child you believe them
- reassure the child they have done the right thing in telling
- reassure the child that they are incredibly brave and courageous
- reassure the child that they are in NO way to blame
- reassure the child that they are loved
- reassure the child that they are safe and will be looked after
- reassure the child that you will do everything you can to stop the abuse (never promise it will stop)
- contact one of the organisations listed on page 37 in *Body Safety Education*.

**Disclaimer:** the information in these lesson plans is advice only consulted upon by the author of *Some Secrets Should Never Be Kept* (Jayneen Sanders) based on her advocacy and training in this area, and her experience working with children as a classroom teacher and mother. The information is not meant to be a substitute for professional advice. If you are concerned about a child's behaviour, seek professional help; a listing is provided in *Body Safety Education* on page 37.

# Feelings Cards



**worried**



**proud**



**calm**



**happy**



**sad**



**brave**



**angry**



**scared**



**disappointed**



**confused**



**lonely**



**shame**



**guilty**



**embarrassed**



**excited**

# Safe and Unsafe Feelings

Safe Feelings	Unsafe Feelings
Physical Feelings	Physical Feelings
Emotional Feelings	Emotional Feelings

Good secrets, or happy surprises, make us feel **safe** and happy!



Unsafe secrets make us feel worried and sick in the tummy!

# If I Ever Feel Unsafe ...

If I ever feel unsafe, my body gives me warning signs, like ...



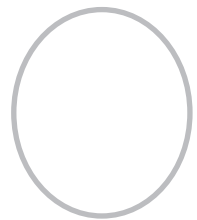
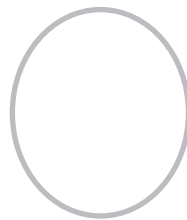
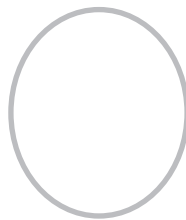
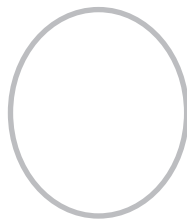
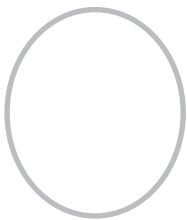
I need to think about **why** I am feeling this way.

And what has happened to make me **feel unsafe**.

Sometimes I'll know why I feel this way, and sometimes I won't — either way, I need to ...



... talk to an adult on my **Safety Network**. These are 3 to 5 adults that I trust, and I could tell anything to and they would believe me. For me, these adults are ...



\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



It's **never ok** to feel unsafe — but telling a trusted adult on my Safety Network is the best thing to do. If they are too busy and can't help me, I can tell someone else on my Safety Network until I feel **safe** again.

Because **some secrets should never be kept!**