



Government of Western Australia
Department for Child Protection

Keeping our kids safe



A guide for Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander families
and communities

Keeping our kids safe

Kids have a right to be safe. They need to be kept safe at home and in the community. Kids are our future. We need to help them to grow up to be healthy and strong people. Our families and community can work together to help care for and keep kids safe.

Slapping, punching, shaking or kicking can hurt kids

- don't lose your temper
- think before you act and stay calm when disciplining kids
- it isn't good to shout or use bad language when speaking to kids.

Think about why kids are misbehaving

Sometimes kids play-up because they might be:

- sick or hurting
- upset or frightened
- feeling lonely or want to be noticed.

Always hug kids and tell them you love them

It is important that kids:

- feel good about themselves
- are praised when they do good things
- feel loved and cared for.

Kids need food, shelter, love and care

- teach and encourage your kids to eat lots of healthy food
- kids need a safe and happy home.

Kids who don't get enough of these things will be very unhappy, and it will be hard for them to learn and do well at school.

If kids feel good about themselves they will be much happier and will listen when you ask them to do something for you.

Teach kids to be safe

- always leave kids with an adult who you can trust
- don't leave kids alone
- teach kids to be strong and tell someone if they are feeling scared or worried
- teach them not to let anyone touch their private parts and to say no if they are being asked or forced to touch someone's private parts.

When kids tell you that someone has touched their private parts, listen and believe them and find help straight away. Take them to somewhere safe.

Other sexual things that will affect kids:

- letting them look at pornographic movies, pictures or stories
- forcing them to watch sexual acts
- flashing private body parts
- forcing or asking kids to touch private body parts and touching them in the same way.

Kids can get badly hurt over these things

When kids are hurting there may be signs that something is wrong. These signs can be physical or emotional. These things may not always be from bad touching but it's important to encourage kids to yarn about how they are feeling.

Things to keep in mind to help you look after your kids

Family violence affects the whole family

Kids who see their mum or dad being hurt can become very frightened, sad, depressed and may blame themselves. Many kids in homes where family violence happens can also have trouble at school. Kids may:

- find it hard to concentrate
- not do well at school
- have difficulty with making friends
- lose interest in school and miss lots of days
- become aggressive or withdrawn.

If kids try to help stop the fighting they may:

- get hurt themselves
- babies and young children may be hurt if they are being held when it is happening

Family violence can cause kids to do harmful things

- use alcohol and drugs
- start breaking the law
- end up in violent relationships.

Some of the emotional effects of family violence on kids include:

- thinking they are to blame
- constant worry (that another beating will occur)
- stress-related disorders such as headaches, ulcers, and rashes, hearing and speech problems
- guilt for not being able to stop the abuse or for loving the abuser
- fear of separation/clinging to their mum or dad
- not mixing with other kids and have difficulty with making friends
- low self-esteem.

Things you can do

- keep your kids safe
- listen to your kids and support them
- always check on your kids and find out who they are playing with and know where they are
- ask for help if you need it and give help if someone else asks for it.

Positive parenting

- spend time with your kids
- teach kids what is good and bad behaviour
- teach kids to respect rules and boundaries
- develop routines that encourage kids to have a healthy lifestyle
- let kids know what they are doing wrong.

Kids need to have good role models

- encourage kids to play sport
- keep kids away from alcohol and drugs
- encourage kids to go to school everyday
- parents and families need to show kids how to behave properly.

Things that might tell you there is a problem:

- withdrawing from other people and not wanting to be touched
- suddenly clinging to mum and dad a lot
- getting angry and aggressive
- wetting the bed again even after they have stopped doing it
- becoming scared of things or people they were not scared of before
- pain or irritation in private body parts and getting infections in those areas
- nightmares.



Where to go for help

There are people in your local area who will know where you can get help. You can speak with your local doctor, child health nurse or Aboriginal Medical Service.

It is important to talk to people. If you want to talk to people without being known you can call the following places. People there will be able to give you information about what you can do and where you can go.

Family Helpline

(08) 9223 1100

1800 643 000 (country free call)

Parenting Line

(08) 9272 1466

1800 654 432 (country free call)

Crisis Care

(08) 9223 1111

1800 199 008 (country free call)

Kids Helpline

1800 55 1800 (24 hrs)

Men's Domestic Violence Helpline

24 hour information, referral and telephone counselling for men.

(08) 9223 1199

1800 000 599 (country free call)

Women's Domestic Violence Helpline

24 hour support and counselling for women experiencing family and domestic violence.

(08) 9223 1188

1800 007 339 (country free call)

Sexual Assault Resource Centre (SARC)

Crisis Line (08) 9340 1828

1800 199 888 (country freecall)

Counselling Line (08) 9340 1899

Child Abuse Services WA

(08) 9223 1111

Department for Child Protection

Your local Department for Child Protection office. Locations and telephone numbers are listed on the website: www.dcp.wa.gov.au