

RIGHTS IN ACTION

A newsletter for ACT children and young people about their rights and wellbeing



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What's new?

- The Prime Minister wants to set a national age limit for social media. Some people think it will help protect children from social media harm, others think it is not the right solution. What do you think?

Did you know...

- Owls cannot move their eyeballs; they have to move their whole head to check what risks are nearby!
- Hermit crabs will fight to protect their shells, because their shells are their homes.
- Stink bugs use an awful smell to protect themselves from being eaten!

Yuma! Welcome to the September edition of Rights in ACTION! This month is all about your right to protection: Feeling safe and being safe is your right. Adults must make sure you are protected, and there are also ways you can protect yourself. Check out the activities on page 3 and 4 for some ideas.

Starting in Children's Week (October), I will be touring the ACT to listen to you! If you want me to come to your club or school, check out page 5 to find out how! But you don't have to wait until October to have your say, you can email me anytime!



actkids@act.gov.au



02 6205 2222



actkids.act.gov.au

Jodie

You have the right to protection.



You have the right to protection. The government must make sure you are safe from all forms of physical or mental violence, neglect and abuse by any person who looks after you.

Article 19, Convention on the Rights of the Child

You have the right to be protected from all forms of violence, in all situations: at home, in your community, at sport, even during a natural disaster. The government must have laws to keep you safe from violence and support the community to make sure you are protected from physical or emotional abuse or bad treatment.

This right is in place because violence against children is never okay, and adults must stop it from happening.

Often, we think of violence as physical, but this right includes being free from emotional violence, such as bullying, threats, name calling, and insults. Protection from violence through media or online is also included in this right.

Laws in the ACT

The [ACT Human Rights Act 2004](#) states that, as children, you have the right to extra protection because of your age, no matter what! For example, it does not matter where you are from, who your parents vote for, who you live with, or what you believe. All children must be able to live without violence in their lives.

There are also laws that focus on different places. For example, in the ACT, physical punishment is illegal in school, early childhood centres, and out-of-home care.

It is not just about laws; it is also important for families and communities to have support to raise children so that violence is less likely to happen. If a child does experience violence, the law should be applied in a way that is best for them.

You can also protect yourself

Part of being protected is learning how to protect yourself and being supported to take action for your own safety as you grow and learn. Adults must keep you safe, but there are some things you can do to help them protect you. There are some activities in this newsletter to help you with some of these actions.



Who is in your Safety Network?

Instructions:

1. Print this page.
2. Write the names and phone numbers of people you trust in the phone. Choose people you can talk to if you ever feel unsafe or worried.
3. Colour and decorate your phone. You can draw each person in the circles.
4. Keep it somewhere safe, like in your pocket when you go out, or in your school bag. If you have your own phone, you can enter the names and phone numbers into your contact list.

Do you know who you can talk to if you feel unsafe?

This is your Safety Network.

Each person should be someone you know you can talk to, who will believe you and who will help you feel safer.

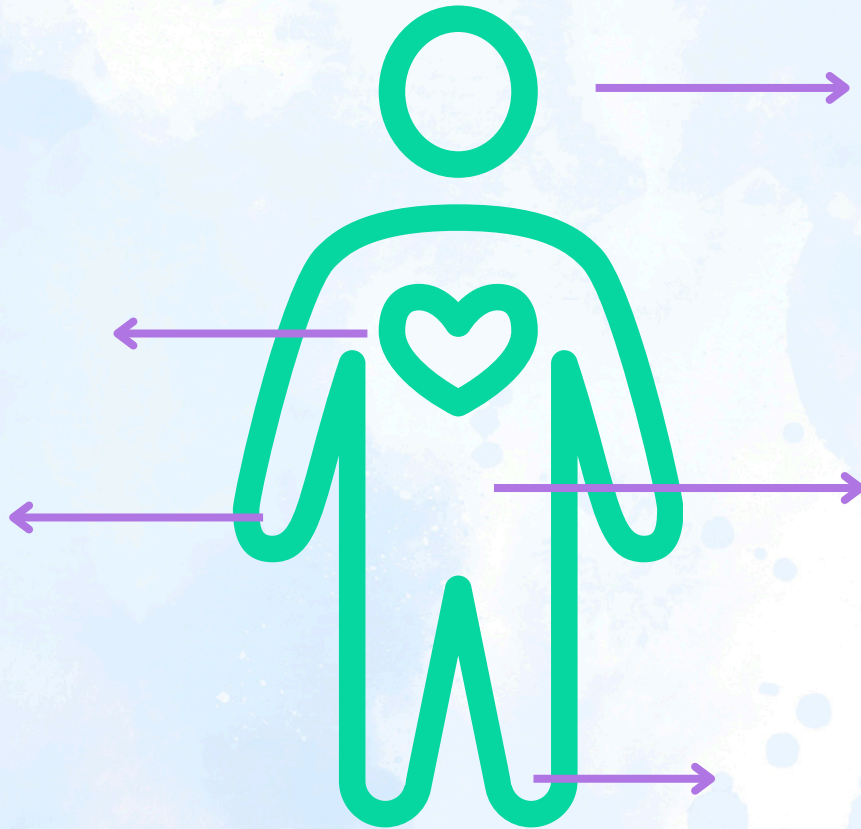


My safe people

<input type="text"/>	Name: _____
<input type="text"/>	Phone number: _____
<input type="text"/>	Name: _____
<input type="text"/>	Phone number: _____
<input type="text"/>	Name: _____
<input type="text"/>	Phone number: _____
<input type="text"/>	Name: _____
<input type="text"/>	Phone number: _____

What does your body tell you?

Our body tells us how we feel. When we feel safe, our body might tell us we are happy by smiling. When we feel unsafe, our body tells us in different ways. The way your body tells you how you feel might be different to how someone else's body tells them, and that's okay - everyone is different! When you feel unsafe, you might get a funny feeling in your tummy, sweaty hands, your heart might race, or your feet might want to move. How does being unsafe feel to you? Draw or write your answers here.



Knowing what your body is trying to tell you can help you work out when you are safe and when you are not.

Who else can you talk to?

If you don't want to talk to someone you know, you can call someone whose job it is to help you be safe and feel safe.

Things you can say to a safe grown-up

I feel scared because something has happened to me. I don't like it, and I don't know what to do about it.

I feel worried because someone has hurt me or is saying/doing things that make me feel confused or uncomfortable.

I feel worried about someone I know, and I need your help to work out what to do.



Contact list

The police

- **Call 000** if you are scared and need help right now.
- This is a free call from any phone in Australia.
- If it is not an emergency, you can call the police on 131 444 or you can go into your local police station.

Kids Helpline

- **1800 55 1800**
- You can call them if you are worried about something that is happening to you or someone else.
- It is free to call, or you can talk to someone online.



I want to listen to you!

Yuma! I am Jodie, your Children and Young People Commissioner and part of my job is to help make Canberra better for you!

I need your help!

I want to know what you think should be better so children and young in the ACT can grow up happy, healthy and safe.

Have your say

If you would like me to come to your school or club, you can email me at actkids@act.gov.au or ask your teacher or another adult to email for you.



You can also:

- draw or write your ideas and email them to me, or
- upload a video or voice message to my Young Thinker Forum (www.hrc.act.gov.au/ytf).

I will use what you tell me to plan my work in 2025.

Information for adults

I am available on various dates in October and November, starting in Children’s Week (18-27 October 2024, Week 1, Term 4). Contact my team to book a time.



Listening sessions will start with an interactive human rights workshop, then some activities to help children and young people consider the issues I should work on to make Canberra a better place for them to live. We can tailor the session to work with your timetable and group.

Please contact my team with any questions at actkids@act.gov.au or to book a session.