

# Warning Signs

## WHAT YOUR CHILD WILL LEARN:

- Listen to their body
- Identify their warning signs
- Understand that their body gives them messages about how they are feeling
- Identify when they are feeling safe and unsafe or worried
- Practice calming strategies, like slow breaths out
- Practice help seeking strategies



## WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Our bodies have an alarm system that sends us messages about what we are feeling. When we are hungry, our tummy might growl. When we are thirsty, we might get a dry throat. When we are feeling hot, we might sweat or get red in the face. Our body also send us messages when we are feeling unsafe or worried. We call these feelings, "Warning Signs".

Warning Signs are the signals our bodies give us when something doesn't feel right, like a fast-beating heart, butterflies in your tummy, or jelly legs. These feelings help children recognise when they might be excited, unsafe or worried. It is important to understand that everyone feels differently about situations and experiences, and that is ok. For example, some people might feel unsafe going high on a swing, and others enjoy it and feel excited. We want our children to learn how to recognise how **they** are feeling, and what **their** body is telling them - so they can identify when **they** are feeling unsafe or scared.

We want to teach our children to recognise and tell a trusted adult when they have their Warning Signs. When our children learn to identify, listen and tell us about these warning signs, it helps to keep them safe. Watch Daniel Morcombe Foundation Inc , Safety School - Body clues video to learn more: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=puHY4GAHZCg>

## WHAT YOU CAN DO AT HOME AND PLAYGROUP:

For babies and young toddlers, you can role model and build language and understanding about feelings, using simple words and real-life examples, including talking about your own feelings.



For older toddlers and young children, look for moments when your child is excited, nervous or scared and help them identify their warning signs. They can think about how they are feeling and what they need to do to feel safe again. Role model talking about times when you have Warning Signs in your every day life.

Build in conversations with your child about listening to their body, in every day moments. For example, encourage your child to practice listening to their body, and tell you when they are hungry or full, when they need to go to the toilet, or when they feel hot or cold.



## GAMES & ACTIVITIES:

Playing games is a great way to help children identify their own **warning signs**.

You can teach Warning Signs by using any game that creates excitement or anticipation! Some examples are:

- Building block towers (or jenga) see how high you can get the tower before it falls!
- Balancing on beams
- Going high on a swing
- Climbing a climbing frame
- Egg and spoon race
- Boom boom balloon
- Pop up pirate
- Bake ginger bread biscuits and decorate with warning signs e.g. butterflies in tummy, jelly legs, beating heart etc.
- Practice role playing with a puppet

### Warning Signs Poster: EDUCATE2EMPOWER



## SONGS:

Learn 'My Body Belongs to Me' song and sing it together with you child (to the tune of 'A sailor went to sea'):

"My body belongs to me me me (point to your chest as you say "me")

My body belongs to me (point to your chest as you say "me")

From my head down to my feet feet feet (touch your head and then bend and touch your feet)

My body belongs to me. (point to your chest as you say "me")

My body feels like jelly jelly jelly (wobbly your body)

My heart beats like a drum- boom boom (use your hand to tap your heart twice as you say boom boom)

I've got a feeling in my belly belly belly (move your hands around your belly)

I'll go and tell someone- talk talk talk (tap your thumb and fingers together to show talking)

[Click here for an example of the song!](#)



## BOOKS:

- **Max's Creepy Crawley Slimy Things:** Cath Law
- **Jasmine's Butterflies:** Justine O'Malley
- **Little Big Chats – Early Warning Signs:** Jayneen Sanders
- **Hattie and the Fox:** Mem Fox
- **Going on a Croc Hunt:** Laine Mitchell
- **Going on a Bear Hunt:** Michael Rosen

### HELPFUL TIP:



Look in your bookshelf at home. There are so many books you can use to talk about Warning Signs! Any book where there is a situations where a character is excited, scared, worried, you can ask "do you think they have their warning signs?", "what are your warning signs?", "what do you think the character could do", "who could they ask for help?".