

# HAVE A SAY ON SAFETY YOUR REPORT

## IN THE PAST

some children and young people have been abused by adults other than their parents - adults who were supposed to be protecting them.

## IN 2013

the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse was established to find out why children were hurt and how to make sure this doesn't happen again.

## IN 2014

researchers from 3 universities talked to children and young people to find out what safety means to them, what they think organisations need to do to protect children and how well they think adults are going.

# YOU TOLD US

that adults can keep children and young people safe by asking children and young people what they're thinking, feeling and seeing and what they need.

**RESPECTING** Children and young people's abilities, observations, needs and wishes.

**ASKING** Children and young people what they're thinking and feeling and seeing what they need.

**WATCHING** What other adults are doing and how children are behaving.

**LISTENING** To what children and young people are really saying.

**DOING** What they're supposed to do, what they say they'll do and what children and young people need them to do.

**INFORMING** Children and young people about the dangers, what's being done and how they'll do what kids have asked them to do.

**STANDING UP AND SPEAKING OUT** When children and young people are being hurt, bullied or treated badly.

## WE SPOKE TO

over 120 children and young people aged 4-18 including:

- Kids in early childhood centres
- Students in school
- Young carers
- Young people with a disability
- Aboriginal students
- Young people in out-of-home care

## AND ASKED THEM

- What does it mean to be *safe* and *unsafe* and how can you tell?
- How safe are the places where children and young people are looked after by adults outside the home?
- How well are adults going in keeping you safe and feeling safe?
- What else needs to be done or done better?

**THIS IS A REPORT OF THE THINGS THAT WE HEARD.**

# SAFE

Children and young people told us that they thought about safety in terms of feelings, relationships, and having some control. They gave us ideas on places and times they felt safe, safe people, and things they did when they felt unsafe. We've included many of them below.

COMFORTABLE RELAXED HAPPY  
PROTECTED LOVED FAMILY ALONE  
PEOPLE FRIENDS PETS FOR KIDS  
READING MUSIC CAMP BEDROOM  
LIBRARY SCHOOL HOME POLICE  
DOCTORS DOG BIKE RIDING

# UNSAFE

Children and young people told us they were safe most of the time but sometimes they weren't safe because they came across people, places and things that weren't safe. They told us that *being* safe and *feeling* safe are different things and that adults need to understand this if they're going to help kids better.

CONFUSED SICK SCARED FUNNY  
UNKNOWN BULLIES STRANGERS  
CREEPY ADULTS BAD AT NIGHT  
ALONE PRESSURE SAD DARES  
CYBERBULLYING PUBS ANGRY  
MAKES YOU FEEL WEIRD

## WHAT'S NEXT?

- 1 We ask Aussie children and young people to complete an online survey to find out what they think about safety and how well organisations respond when they're unsafe.
- 2 We talk to our Children and Young People's reference group to find out what it all means.
- 3 We write a report for the Royal Commission and tell them what you and other children and young people have said.
- 4 The Royal Commission thinks about how what the children and young people have said fits with what they've heard from other people.
- 5 The Royal Commission reports to the Government on the things they have found and makes recommendations.

This project was conducted by the Institute of Child Protection Studies at the Australian Catholic University with assistance from Griffith University and the Queensland University of Technology. It was commissioned by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

If you'd like more information about the project or would like to fill out the online survey: go to <http://isia.acu.edu.au/ask-yp>



The project was guided by three groups of children and young people from Holy Spirit Primary School, Burgmann Anglican School and Dickson College.

We would like to thank these children and young people, their teachers, principals and parents for their wisdom and support.

## 8 SIGNS THAT AN ORGANISATION IS

# SAFE

Children and young people told us that they looked out for certain things when deciding that an organisation was a safe place for kids.

These are some of the "signs" kids thought were important.

- 1 The organisation's purpose is about helping children and young people.
- 2 The organisation takes children and young people's safety seriously.
- 3 The organisation knows who and what might hurt children and young people and how best to keep them safe.
- 4 Staff talk honestly to children and young people about unsafe places and situations and what they are doing to keep kids safe.
- 5 Staff are available when children and young people need them.
- 6 The organisation values children and young people's feedback- even when it's bad. They have things in place to make giving feedback easy and respond when they can.
- 7 The organisation is happy to have someone come in to check that they are doing a good job in keeping kids safe.
- 8 When they're unsafe, children are given a say on what should happen. Adults act on their needs and wishes and let them know if they can't.

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If you are worried about your safety and don't know or trust anyone who will listen, you can call Kids Helpline on **1800 551 800** for FREE