

BRAVE SKILL-BUILDING ACTIVITIES FOR TEENS

Be Brave-Be Safe is a positive, proactive prevention program that nurtures self-value, confidence, resiliency, and awareness of personal safety while providing opportunities to practice skills that may help avoid and/or escape from danger. The goal of The Joyful Child's Be Brave – Be Safe Program is to cultivate students' natural abilities to reduce the risk of victimization by providing age-appropriate knowledge and tactile skill-building activities to improve their competence and confidence asserting their boundaries to protect their joy.

Top 5 Tips for Teens (ages 13+)

1. No one has the right to hurt me! If they do or try, it's not my fault, it's theirs!
2. If someone is inappropriate with me or if I feel that I am in danger, I do not have to be nice or polite. I can yell, throw things to get people's attention, and do whatever is necessary to get away and get help.
3. I deserve to feel safe and comfortable being myself. When I feel sad, worried, or like I'm not good enough, I think about what matters most to me, I do the things that usually make me feel good, and I talk to friends and Safe Adults I trust.
4. Friends want me to be safe, happy, and successful in life. If anyone tries to make me do something, even after I say that I do not feel comfortable or safe, I know that I cannot trust them, so I will leave and talk to Safe Adults I trust if I feel upset or worried.
5. My privacy is my power, so I don't share any details about myself online. I don't post or send anything that I wouldn't want everyone (including Grandma) to see because I only want to promote my best self online.

Although personal safety may not seem relevant to some teens, consider the scandals in the news over the last few years, and the resulting #MeToo movement and new laws to reduce sexual assault on college campuses.

The reality is that **young men and women are at the highest risk** of sexual assault, abduction, exploitation (trafficking), and violence among any population. Everyone can benefit from learning and practicing best practices to reduce their risk of victimization. You may also want to refer to the additional resources for Adults available at www.thejoyfulchild.org.

TEEN TOPICS

Safe vs. At-Risk

BRAVE Plans

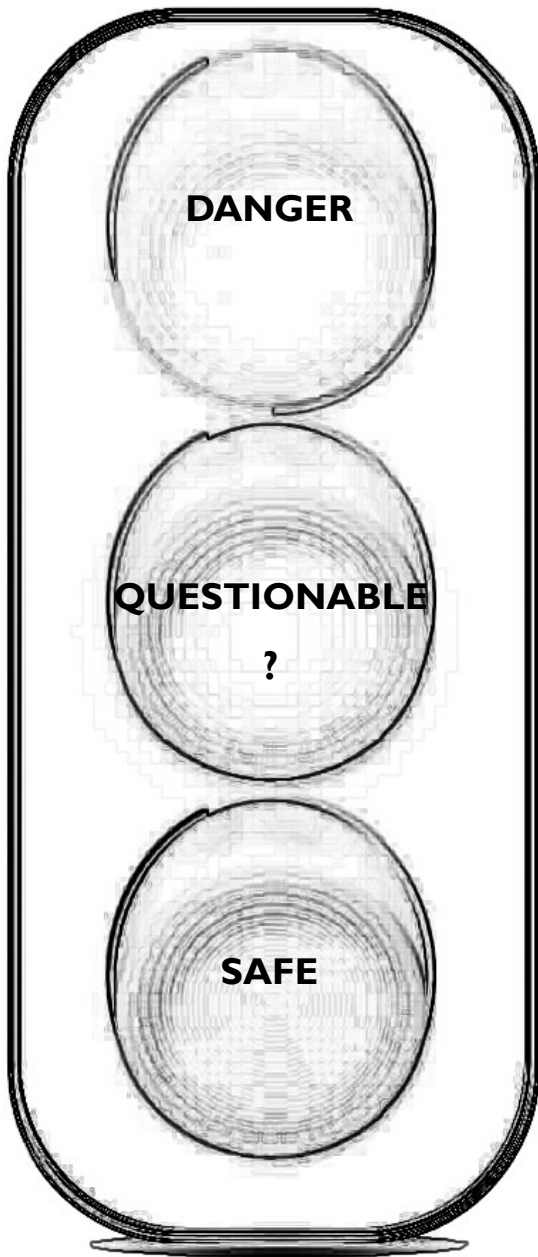
Behaviors and Boundaries

Consent

TRAFFIC LIGHT FOR TEEN SAFETY

The traffic light image is a metaphor used throughout this program to quickly assess if a situation is safe, questionable, or dangerous and determine a BRAVE Plan to be safe.

Write 3 examples of relevant Traffic Light situations that you have experienced or heard about recently.



RED - Emergency! Get away and call 9-1-1.

YELLOW - Something isn't right. Be alert and tell an adult.

GREEN - You feel safe and comfortable.

BRAVE SKILL-BUILDING ACTIVITIES FOR TEENS

Consider the situations below and how the traffic light may be applied to create a BRAVE Plan for each.

DANGEROUS, QUESTIONABLE OR SAFE?

- When I say, “no” or move away, the person stops and understands that I have a right to feel safe.
- At a party or with new friends, someone gives me a drink that I didn’t see prepared.
- My boy/girl friend checks in with me several times a day to see where I am and who I am talking to.
- I check-in with a Safe Adult before I get into a car or go anywhere with anyone.
- My friend starts a fight every time I’m going to hang-out with other friends.
- A friend asks me to send an inappropriate picture of myself.

BRAVE Plans

Accidents happen and no one intentionally puts themselves in danger of assault or violence, but the more we know and practice being safe, the less likely we are to get hurt. The Be Brave - Be Safe Program offers tips and tools to encourage you to be brave about being true to yourself and to help you develop realistic plans to be safe in a variety of situations. These action plans are called Brave Plans.

Choose a BRAVE Word and a Safe Signal (sign-language) that are unique (not something you say or do often) and are easy for you and your most trusted friend and Safe Adults to remember and use in situations where you may feel anxious or afraid. Be sure the Safe Signal is big enough for them to notice and recognize in a busy or crowded situation. The BRAVE Word can be posted or sent via text to alert your Safe Adult and trusted friend that you do not feel safe and want them to help; e.g. make up an excuse to get you away quickly.

What is your BRAVE Plan if you do not want to tell me out loud that you feel uncomfortable, worried, or unsafe?

BE BRAVE - BE SAFE

My BRAVE Plan if I feel uncomfortable or afraid:

1. I will say out loud: “I do not feel comfortable.” I may use my BRAVE Word or Safe Signal.
2. I will move away or run toward people and look for a Safe Adult to tell.
3. I will tell Safe Adults until I feel safe.
4. If there is no Safe Adult to help me and I am afraid, I will call 9-1-1 because *my safety is 1st!*

BRAVE SKILL-BUILDING ACTIVITIES FOR TEENS

Safe Adults



Choose 3 Safe Adults. You are the only person who knows who makes you feel the most comfortable and safe. Talk with your parent/guardian about who is on your 'emergency contact list' at school or just in general. Agree on at least 3 Safe Adults that both trust to pick you up or take care of you in an emergency. It is important for every young person to know that there are several adults you can trust, if for any reason, you are worried, afraid, or need help.

Also consider who may be safe to approach for help in a public place if you are alone and don't see anyone you know. It is safest to approach someone is not likely to try to take you to another location, such as a cashier in a store, a mother with children, or a group of people all together (**safety in numbers** ...of people around to help).

Safe Friends and Adults want you to be safe and to feel comfortable at all times, but we can't know how other people feel inside. If a friend or an adult, even someone who is usually totally safe, is suddenly making you feel uncomfortable or afraid, they are not being your Safe Friend or Adult right now, so it is okay to get away. If someone (no matter who it is) ever makes you feel uncomfortable, weird, nervous, or scared, tell someone right away and talk to Safe Adults.

We know how other people behave (what they do) and what they say, but we don't know what they are feeling. That's why it is important to pay attention to how you feel around different people. Sometimes people get **a weird feeling about a person or situation** even though everything looks okay and that feeling may be our body warning us that something isn't right or safe. You don't have to run and scream, of course, but pay attention to how you're feeling, get away as soon as possible, and let a Safe Adult or trusted friend know. Don't worry about whether or not the person or situation is actually dangerous.

BE BRAVE - BE SAFE

My BRAVE Plan for Safe Adults:

My family and I talked about which adults make me feel the most comfortable and safe.

We agreed that the following 3 Safe Adults are the only people allowed to pick me up from school or take me anywhere without checking with my parent/guardian first:

- | | |
|----|---------------|
| 1) | Phone number: |
| 2) | Phone number: |
| 3) | Phone number: |

If someone else has to pick me up and I am not expecting them, it is okay for me to call my family to make sure it is okay. We also have a special BRAVE Word that my family can share with someone if there is an emergency so that I will know my parent/guardian gave them permission. Of course, I don't have to go anywhere with anyone if I don't feel safe.

YOUR PERSONAL BOUNDARIES

BRAVE Boundaries and Consent

You are the only person who knows how you feel and how your body is responding in any given situation. Be brave about being true to yourself and trusting how you feel. You have a right to feel safe, so if you're uncomfortable or afraid, ***it is okay to get away even if you can't explain why.***

Everyone has different boundaries and they change often. It is okay to feel one way and then to change your mind. Sometimes we're just not in the mood to be affectionate and that is okay. Everyone has their own feelings and there are times that we like touch and times that we do not. It is helpful if people ask for consent before trying to be affectionate, but even without that, it's still always okay to back up or turn away and say, ***"No, thank you"*** or something like, "I don't feel like hugs right now."

It may feel awkward to reject affection from someone who you care about, but you don't have to be rude to be brave about being true to yourself and your feelings. If someone cares about you, they don't want you to feel uncomfortable, so it is important to say something to let them know. You may consider suggesting an alternative expression of connection or friendship, like a high-five or fist bump, that makes you feel safe.

***If someone makes a big deal about you asserting your personal boundaries,
that is their problem, not yours.***

Your body belongs to you and you get to say!

Write what you would say if you did not want someone you care about to touch you?

Write what you would do? [For example, back up, turn away, offer an alternative like a fist bump.]

SIGNS THAT SOMEONE MAY BE DANGEROUS:

1. Ignores your response when you say, "No."
2. Quickly assumes an intimate friendship.
3. Sends inappropriate images, videos, or messages.
4. Tries to make you share personal information, pictures, or asks you very personal questions.
5. Asks you to keep secrets from and/or to spend less time with your family and friends.