



## Talking to Your Child About Secrets

It is essential that we talk to our children about secrets, as some should never be kept. Many children worry that by "telling," they will be called a "snitch" or get others into trouble, believing the negative outcome of seeking support is greater than the inevitable worry of keeping the secret. This discussion is vital for ensuring their own mental health, well-being, and personal safety.

## Teaching Children About "Safe" and "Unsafe" Secrets

As soon as children are old enough, teach them about the difference between safe and unsafe secrets. An unsafe secret is anything that might make them feel frightened, worried, or scared.

<b>Safe Secrets (Secrets that will eventually be revealed)</b>	<b>Unsafe Secrets (Secrets that should never be kept)</b>
<b>Surprise parties.</b>	<b>Any kind of physical behaviour or touch</b> which makes them feel uncomfortable.
<b>Gifts</b> that will be kept secret until they are opened.	<b>Any kind of language or behaviour</b> which makes them feel uncomfortable.
Simple secrets between friends (e.g., about a playdate), provided they do not exclude or compromise safety.	<b>Games or behaviour that might put someone in danger</b> or be hurtful.
	<b>Behaviour on social media</b> intended to exclude, target, or spread unkind gossip.

We understand children can be reluctant to seek help, but they must understand the impact the worry can cause and that by keeping unsafe secrets, the eventual outcome can, in fact, be much worse.



## Contact and Resources

Reading books and watching films with your child can be a great way to discuss secrets—ask: ***Which of the characters was keeping a secret? Was this a good idea? Was anyone hurt by the secret being kept?***

If you have any concerns or worries about situations that may be bothering your child, please speak to a member of school staff or contact the Pastoral Team via the school office. If the concern is related to an **unsafe secret**, please ask to speak directly to a **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**.

Useful Resource	Link
<b>NSPCC Underwear Rule</b> (Body Safety)	<a href="#">Talk PANTS: Conversation to help keep children safe   NSPCC</a>
<b>NSPCC Online Safety</b>	<a href="#">Keeping children safe online   NSPCC</a>
<b>Childline Online Safety</b>	<a href="#">Online safety   Childline</a>
<b>Thinkuknow</b> (Online Safety)	<a href="#">Parents and carers   CEOP Education</a>