CHILD SAFETY LESSON PRESENTED TO SUNDAY SCHOOL CHILDREN FEBRUARY 2025

On the 2nd of February 2025 our Sunday school staff presented the Protective Behaviours child safety message to our Sunday school students.
This program is under the Daniel Morcombe Foundation banner and has practical tips for children of all ages to assist in child protection. There are two simple concepts taught and below is a summary so parents in the congregation can continue the conversation and education around child safety to ensure the messages are reinforced and continued as children group.

Safety Network:
This is the concept of a handprint where all children list five contacts (one per finger) for people they have in their lives they can speak to if they have any safety concerns, about anything that might have happened to them. Obviously, mum and dad are the top two listed but we would like you to encourage your children to speak to any adult they have nominated as part of their safety network. Sometimes if a predator has threatened a child not to tell by saying things like "I will hurt you mum or dad" if you say anything then they need other adults they can feel safe to speak to, so that support can be provided to ensure they speak out about anything that may be happening. Children often list the following as part of their five-safety people -God, pets or Teddy's. We don't list these as part of the five fingers and tell children those are special ones that go in the middle of the palm. The reason for this is we encourage them to tell an adult who can help problem solve the issue and report any incidents that may be required. Children can still speak to God, pets and Teddy's but the major issue is, these three can't speak back to us and the children need to understand the difference that an adult is required to be told so the required help can be initiated to prevent harm.

Mr Wobbly:
This is the concept of a gingerbread man. Children identified physical feelings they have and listed what those feelings are when they are scared, nervous or feeling unsafe. Children drew these onto a photocopied sheet they had and included things such as heart beating fast, crying, shaking, goose bumps, wanting to run away, loss of voice, needing the bathroom etc. This concept is explained to the children in a way that there are times it is ok to feel these feelings and times when it's not ok (ie: unsafe times). The times it is safe to feel this way are experiencing a roller coast ride, or feeling sick and needing to see a doctor. The Mr Wobbly feelings are going to happen at these times but it's ok with these examples because

1. They choose to go on a rollercoaster ride and it's fun
2. they have parents' permission
3. Children enjoy this experience
4. If they are attending the doctors, it is explained they may feel bad, but the doctor/dentist is going to make them better with medicine etc and parents are also present during these visits.

So, bringing the whole concept together is explaining to the children that if Mr Wobbly is happening and it's not something fun like a rollercoaster or an activity they

have chosen to do and/or not the doctor or dentist they need to choose someone on their safety network to go and tell. However, there is one catch, sometimes one of the people chosen on the safety network might be the person who is causing the Mr Wobbly feelings and if that is the case then they need to tell a different person on their safety network and not the person who is making them feel that way. The children completed a safety network handprint and a Mr Wobbly picture during this session to take home and discuss with their parents.

These two concepts are a wonderful way for you to build on a trusting, open relationship with your children about potential harm and what they can do about it. I believe the safety network can be used for all types of scenarios and please praise your children when they tell you they have told an adult about anything that may have happened at school, sports etc so they get confirmation that it is a good thing to use their safety network throughout their lives. Mr Wobbly is also a great way to ask how they are physically feeling about other matters too.

If you have any further questions please feel free to reach out to Tracey Chase and/or Kerryn Browne who are happy to discuss any child safety related issues.