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K-1 Children's Understandings of Selected Child Abuse Prevention Concepts

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K-1 Children’s Understandings of Selected Child Abuse Prevention Concepts

By

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the award of Bachelor of Education with Honours
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ABSTRACT

Over the past decade, child sexual abuse has gained increasing recognition as a problem of social consequence and significant proportion in Australia. Children have the right to be safe at all times and adults have the responsibility to preserve this basic right for all children. The risk and the growing statistics on the prevalence of abuse has led Australia to follow the United States and develop child sexual abuse prevention programmes. The programme used in WA schools is the WA Health Syllabus, Prevention Education Supplement (1990). Prevention education relies on children recognising when they feel unsafe.

The aim of this research project was to explore the reasoning used by young children in making judgements about the safety of selected scenarios. The research takes a case study approach, using subjects from the pre-primary/year one class at a small community school. The researcher was the class teacher and chose to conduct the research in the class in order to maximise the opportunity to maintain an environment of familiarity, comfort and care for the children.

The children involved in the study were between four and six years of age and would traditionally be viewed as belonging to the pre-operational stage of cognitive development as outlined by Piaget (1932) and the pre-moral stage of moral development as outlined by Piaget (1932/1962, in Berrick, 1991); Kohlberg (1969) and Freud (1961). The research explores whether young children can judge selected prevention education scenarios using the abstract concepts of safe and unsafe, as these are vital to the success of most prevention education programmes.

When the responses from the four children were compared, although there were differences in their judgements and reasoning, several issues of note emerged from the data. These include:

1. **All of the four children used the touch barometer to measure the child’s feelings rather than the safety of the scenarios.**
2. **Two of the four children had some difficulty with the terms safe and unsafe.**
3. **All of the children displayed the characteristics of a child in the pre-moral stage of development. However, they also demonstrated a developing autonomous conscience and made judgements consistent with this development.**
4. **All of the children recommended that the child in the scenario reject the potential abuser, even though they were not always able to judge the situation as unsafe.**
5. **All of the children were able to recognise that a situation was unsafe if there was a threat of physical harm to the child depicted in the scenario.**
The findings from this research study add support to the concern expressed by previous researchers about the legitimacy of the use of the terms safe and unsafe with young children. The research highlights the importance of exposing all young children to a developmentally appropriate prevention education programme, in its entirety, to increase their knowledge of safe and unsafe situations and provide them with support strategies for coping with abusive situations, should they arise. The recommendations made for policy and practice reflect this need. This research also suggests that some young children may have a developing autonomous conscience beyond the limitations of the 'pre-moral' developmental label, indicating a need for further research on young children’s moral development.
Declaration

I certify that this thesis does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief:

(i) incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education.

(ii) contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text; or

(iii) contain any defamatory material.

SAMANTHA WYNNE
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CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

1. Introduction

Over the past decade child sexual abuse has gained increasing recognition as a problem of social consequence and significant proportion in Australia. Children have the right to be safe at all times and adults have the responsibility to preserve this basic right for all children. Children are among the most vulnerable members of our community, and they are at risk of sexual abuse in a variety of cultural and social class settings. The risk and the growing statistics on the prevalence of abuse has led Australia to follow the United States and develop Child Sexual Abuse Prevention programmes.

1.1 Child Sexual Abuse

In Western Australia a child is legally defined as a person under the age of eighteen years. Child Sexual Abuse is defined as

*The involvement of a dependent and developmentally immature child or adolescent in the sexual activities of an older person or adult, where the young person is used for the gratification of sexual desires or needs of the older person or where social taboos or family roles are violated* (The Western Australian Child Sexual Abuse Task Force in The Advisory Committee on Child Sexual Abuse, November, 1991, p2).

Retrospective surveys indicate that the prevalence of child sexual abuse is more widespread than previously thought. The surveys found that one in four girls and one in eight to ten boys is subjected to sexual abuse before the age of
eighteen years (ACCCA, 1991, p4). Herman reported research in the United States of America which estimated 336,000 children are sexually abused every year. Furthermore the report stated that the reported cases of abuse constituted only nine percent of all child sexual abuse cases (Jones, 1982 in Herman, 1985).

A report from the Department of Community Development in Western Australia stated that between June 1994 and 1995 there were 6237 allegations of child abuse and neglect in Western Australia. Of the allegations 1213 related to suspected sexual abuse of a child.

The department investigated 4326 of the total allegations made. Child abuse or neglect was substantiated in 1430 (33%) of cases with a further 670 children considered at risk. As Western Australia does not have mandatory reporting of child abuse many cases may not be reported, and those that are reported are not compiled and reported between agencies such as the Police Child Abuse Unit and Princess Margaret Hospital for Children. Therefore it is unlikely that these figures represent the actual incidence of child abuse in WA.

The effects of child sexual abuse can be immediate and long term and affect a child's physical, sexual and social-emotional health. The Western Australian Child Health Survey (1996) lists the possible effects of sexual abuse on the child and the family. These may include the betrayal of trust if the abuser is known to the child, the keeping of a 'guilty secret' and the possible rejection of the child by the mother when the father is the perpetrator.
Long term physical effects of child abuse may include the risk of pregnancy, abortion and physical illnesses such as sexually transmitted diseases, candida and AIDS (Briggs, 1986). There is also the risk of physical damage to the child's sexual organs. Other possible long term effects on health may include physical symptoms such as asthma, bedwetting, insomnia, migraine headaches, nightmares and eating disorders.

Long term social and emotional effects may include depression, inability to form close relationships, failure to achieve success at school or work, poor self esteem, attempts at suicide and suicide. (Briggs, 1986). Finkelhor (1991) lists the range of possible emotional effects, including the display of immaturity and emotional problems including anxiety disorders, aggression and antisocial behaviours.

The nature, prevalence and effects of child sexual abuse make the prevention of sexual abuse a priority. Throughout the last decade professionals from a number of fields have worked on prevention strategies. One of the major developments is a range of prevention education packages to teach children the necessary skills and concepts to avoid and/or report abusive situations.
1.1.2. Prevention Education

Prevention education packages are based on the belief that teachers can be instrumental in protecting children against sexual abuse by educating them. This premise is supported by Kenning (1985, in McQuillen, O'Brien and Schrader, 1993, p73) who state:

*The experience of clinicians working with child victims suggests that many children could have been spared substantial suffering if they had processed simple pieces of information about their right to refuse sexual advances, to whom to appeal when problems arise, or the inappropriateness of some adult behaviour.*

The majority of prevention education packages rely predominantly on young children identifying a situation, feeling or touch as being safe/unsafe or good/bad (Conte & Fogarty, 1990; Herman 1985). The introduction of this type of prevention strategy has led educators and researchers to question the appropriateness of these packages. One of the major areas of concern has been the introduction of programmes to young children. This concern has been born out of the belief that young children are unable to understand and apply the concepts because of the abstract nature of such concepts. These issues will be explored throughout the review of literature.
1.2 Statement Of The Problem

The introduction of prevention education programmes in Western Australia has led to the question of whether young children are able to understand the abstract concepts upon which prevention packages heavily rely. This is a significant issue as the teaching of the concepts presented in the prevention programmes, regardless of the success, transfers some of the responsibility to prevent sexual abuse onto the children themselves.

Therefore the purpose of this study is to explore the reasoning that young children (aged 4-6 years of age) use in making judgements about the safety of situations.

1.3. Research Questions

The study aims to provide a descriptive exploration of the reasoning used by young children, ages 4-6 years, in making judgements about selected events.

This is reflected in the following two research questions:

1. Do young children understand the construct of safe/unsafe as depicted in curriculum materials?
2. What reasoning is used by young children in making decisions about the safety of selected scenarios?
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter provides an account of the development of awareness and change in attitudes towards child sexual abuse in Western Australia from 1834 to the present time. The development of education programmes to protect young children from sexual abuse is outlined. Finally, a review of the effectiveness of such programmes and of the research literature is carried out.

2.1 Child Abuse and Child Protection - Historical Overview

Child pornography, prostitution and sexual abuse were perceived to exist in Victorian times. It was known that some young women worked as prostitutes and young men as 'rent boys' but this was not classified as abuse (Doyle, 1994). As early as 1834 children who were classified as orphaned or delinquent were sent to the Swan River Colony (Western Australia) by the 'London Society for the Suppression of Juvenile Vagrancy'. The treatment of such children was extremely harsh by today's standards. Children as young as ten found guilty of criminal charges could be publicly whipped (Department for Community Development, 1994). There was little protection offered to children at this time.

In the early 1900s there was little recognition that children could be physically or sexually abused. An awareness that children could be physically harmed by their carers developed throughout this period.
In Australia in the early 1990s, the Alice Mitchell baby farming case became a matter of public scandal. Mrs Mitchell was a private foster parent. Her clients were mostly unmarried mothers who worked to pay her to look after their children. Mrs Mitchell kept the money for herself and sold the tins of baby food to the local grocers. At least 38 children are known to have died of starvation and neglect whilst in her care. She was charged with murder and convicted of manslaughter. The public scandal that followed the case led to an increased awareness of the need to protect children in a care setting (Department of Community Development, 1994).

The 1907 State Children’s Bill established the State Children's Department and insisted that institutions providing care for children be inspected and regulated. The profile of child sexual abuse in families did not become obvious until much later. The 1950s saw a change in attitudes toward sex that led to the recognition that children could be sexually abused.

The prevalence of sexual abuse was estimated by Weinberg (1995) in Doyle (1994) to be approximately one per million of the population. In the 1960s two changes in attitude took place. Firstly, the advent of the sexual revolution meant that people began to talk more freely about sex. Sex education was taught in schools and the use of explicit language increased the ability of children to communicate about sex with adults (Doyle, 1994).
Secondly, Henry Kempe a leading paediatrician coined the term 'the battered baby syndrome' (Kempe and Kempe 1978). The growing recognition that children could be and were being physically abused by their parents and carers led to people being more able to believe that children were being sexually exploited by people in positions of trust. During the 1970s it was recognised that child sexual abuse was a legitimate concern for the medical profession and child protection agencies.

In the early and mid-1970s, Western Australia was a pioneer in the development of child protective services in Australia. The first specialised child protective services to be created within a welfare department was the Child Life Protection Unit established in 1970. This unit worked initially with children under six years of age where abuse had already occurred. By this time policy and practice guidelines had been developed between the Child Welfare Department and Princess Margaret Hospital (Child Protection in WA, unpublished). The first national Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect was held in Perth in 1975 and the first article on child abuse in an Australian journal came from Western Australia (Child Protection in WA, unpublished).
In 1978 Kempe wrote prophetically:

I have chosen to speak on the subject of sexual abuse of children and adolescents as another hidden paediatric problem and neglected area. More and more clinical problems related to sexual abuse come to our attention every year. In our training and in our practice, we paediatricians are insufficiently aware of the frequency of sexual abuse; it is, I believe just as common as physical abuse and the failure-to-thrive syndrome. Just as the ‘battered baby syndrome’ rang a responsive chord among paediatricians 20 years ago, it is my hope that with this brief discussion I might stimulate a broader awareness among paediatricians of the problems of sexual abuse (Kempe in Doyle, 1994).

During the 1970s and 1980s the public understanding and discussion of child sexual abuse issues increased dramatically. The increased awareness led to a steady rise in the number of reports of suspected child sexual abuse (Department for Community Development, 1994).

In November 1989 the United Nations General Assembly adopted the UN Convention on Children’s Rights. Article 19 is central to issues of child abuse and prevention education. It reads as follows:

1. State parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s), or any other person who has care of the child.

2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the
child and for those who have care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and as appropriate, for judicial involvement.


2.2 Prevention Education Programmes

2.2.1 The Development of Prevention Education Programmes

Prevention Education Programmes grew out of the belief that the sexual abuse of children was widespread and that children needed to be engaged in their own protection so that sexual abuse could be stopped (Krivacska, 1992). In the United States of America, a handful of prevention programs developed in the late 1970s and early 1980s, snowballed to the hundreds of different curricula, materials and programs that are available today (Tharinger and Krivacska, 1988). Primary prevention models such as child sexual abuse prevention programmes held out new hope, and the realisation that the numbers of adults who had been sexually abused as children was high, focused renewed attention on those who were currently being abused (Krivacska, 1992).

One of the oldest child abuse prevention programmes designed for presentation to children (Child Assault Prevention Program - CAPP) was originally developed in the late 1970s by Women Against Rape in Columbus, Ohio (CAPP, 1983 in Krivacska, 1992). CAPP focused on the prevention of
both physical and sexual abuse based on feminist theory and evolved from the construct of empowerment as borrowed from rape prevention models.

In 1979 the good touch - bad touch - confusing touch continuum was developed by Cordelia Anderson in Minnesota and served as the starting point for the development of hundreds of child abuse prevention programmes (Krivacska, 1992).

In Western Australia, the 1984 Child Sexual Abuse Task Force Report (recommendation 59) stated that "Preventive and protective programmes should be a routine component within pre-primary, primary and secondary school curricula in all schools." The task force recommended that this should be the responsibility of the Ministry of Education.

In the early 1990s, the Education Department of Western Australia became the Ministry of Education, and for continuity, the State Department for Education will be referred to as the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Education supported the task force recommendation and stated that schools play an important role in equipping students with the knowledge, attitudes and skills to protect themselves from abusive or potentially abusive situations (Education Department, 1990). Furthermore, the Department asserted that children who are subject to abuse and neglect cannot benefit optimally from the education experience.

The Ministry of Education (1990) decided that rather than adopting a programme or syllabus written elsewhere, they would write a syllabus
supplement to be integrated with current Health Education at years 1, 4, 7, 8, 9 and 10. This led to the development of the WA Health Education Syllabus, Prevention Education Supplement (1990).

The Ministry of Education (1990) considers that school personnel are in a central position to assist children in regard to abuse and neglect. School personnel have a duty of care to protect students, by referring their concerns to, and working with, the appropriate agencies involved in the welfare of children.

2.2.2 Prevention Education Research Review

Freda Briggs has been at the forefront of child sexual abuse research and support of appropriate prevention education in Australia. Briggs reported the following case:

Some years ago I was called to investigate a complaint that a man had been 'rude' to children in his car. The witness was a seven year old American girl who was staying with her grandmother during the summer holidays. Their neighbour was taking his two sons and friends of the same age for a drive to a nearby park and he asked the grandmother if her young visitor might join them. Thinking that he was being kind and there was 'safety in numbers' she agreed.

When the children returned she reported that the man had exposed his penis and had told the children to touch it while he touched the private parts of all but his two sons. The visitor had refused to do as asked and ignored his pleas for secrecy and the threat that they would be in 'trouble' from their parent if they 'told'.
I interviewed all the children involved. They had been with the man on previous outings and gave the names of others. I collected statements from almost every six to eight year old in the neighbourhood. He was charged with the sexual abuse of thirty six children over a two year period (Briggs, 1986, p39).

Briggs (1986) believed that the American children who had been involved in child sexual abuse prevention programmes knew to say 'no' to the offender and to tell an adult. However, the local children had only been warned about 'strangers'.

Research addressing primary school-aged children's participation in child sexual abuse prevention programmes in the USA is readily available. The research reviewed addressed the knowledge attained by children following exposure to a brief prevention programme. Research is also reviewed on follow up studies to see how much information was retained by children up to a year later. A study by Kohl (1993) found that school based child sexual abuse prevention training is being conducted in all regions of America and that it reaches hundreds of thousands of students, as well as parents, teachers, administrators and other school staff.

The majority of prevention programmes designed for all age groups of children address similar principles including:

- the concepts that children own their own bodies and therefore can control access to their bodies;

- the belief that 'good' touch and 'bad' touch can be discriminated in a variety of situations and decisions about the relative safety of the touch made;
that secrets about touching can be told, and that children have a range of people they can tell, as well as support systems (Conte and Fogarty, 1990, p273).

Most evaluation studies have focused on the acquisition of knowledge and skills (Finkelhor and Strapko, 1987). A review of twenty five major evaluation studies reported that prevention concepts were acquired by child participants at all grade levels and that certain types of programs were more effective than others. Programs involving role playing were reviewed positively (Finkelhor and Strapko, 1987).

Studies demonstrating retention of sexual abuse prevention knowledge and skills have been reported by Wurtele, Saslawsky, Miller, Mars and Britcher (1986, in Henskley and Soled, 1993) and in Saslawsky and Wurtele (1986). Both studies used a behavioural skills training film and the children demonstrated their knowledge and skills three months after the treatment program. A similar study by Ratto and Bogat (1990 in Hensley and Soled, 1993) found that pre-school children also retained their knowledge three months after a treatment program. Peraino (1990, in Hensley and Soled, 1993) demonstrated retention of abuse prevention knowledge and skills by preschoolers in a 6.5 week retest. Hensley and Soled (1993) conducted a study with children of the mean age of 7.9 years. The children who participated in a brief (50 minute) body safety training program, were able to retain their knowledge 12 months later.
A US study conducted a brief prevention program with year one children and found that a year later when in their second grade, the children had retained their knowledge of personal body safety and sexual abuse prevention skills. Additional programmes demonstrated the retention of information for three to eight months following children's participation in a prevention education package (Fryeer, Kaizer and Miyoshi, 1987; Kolko, Moser, Litz and Hughes, 1987).

One of the main areas of concern apparent in the literature is how age affects the ability of children to understand and therefore apply sexual abuse prevention concepts (Tutty, 1992; De Young, 1988; Isbell and Morrow, 1991; Liang, 1991). Few of the evaluations which have compared the performance of different age groups have provided adequate information about pre-school and year one children's ability to learn prevention concepts.

Liang (1991) in her research with 117 children aged three to six years, demonstrated differences in the level of knowledge and skill acquisition between the age groups. Older pre-school children (six year olds) appeared to be at an advantage both in their initial knowledge of the skills areas and their ability to learn the concepts. This research also found that young pre-schoolers (three and four year olds) were often unable to recognise an abusive situation. Isbell and Morrow (1991) believe that the effectiveness of such programmes is questionable for young children. They assert that young children are unable to comprehend the abstract concepts and generalise the abstract ideas to unfamiliar situations. They hypothesise, based on developmental theory, that
young children have difficulty comprehending the abstract ideas and
generalising the information to unfamiliar situations such as those presented in
prevention programmes.

A study conducted by Wurtele and Miller (1987) found two groups of children
aged five to seven and ten to twelve differed in their abilities to conceptualise
sexual abuse, in their descriptions of abuse and their perceptions of the
consequences of an abusive incident. Given the range of age: the difference
in the results is not surprising. The older children offered relatively advanced
understandings compared to the younger group who indicated several
inaccuracies and misconceptions. A further study by Wurtele (1990) showed
that although pre-schoolers retained knowledge at a one month retest, there
was confusion about certain types of sexual abuse prevention knowledge and
skills.

Kraiser, Witte, and Fryer (1989 in Tutty 1992) teach children a strategy to say
'no' to any unwanted touches. Their program does not teach prevention
concepts or make any reference to sexual abuse material. They suggest that
children in pre-school and kindergarten may actually learn these skills more
easily than older children because the program focus is on the attainment of
skills rather than the understanding of concepts.

The key concept used in many programmes requires young children to
distinguish between good/bad or safe/unsafe situations and touch. In contexts
linked to sexual abuse, this distinction is critical as it requires young children to
label a situation, feeling or touch and then generalise that information to other situations.

De Young (1988) asserts that identifying safe and unsafe feelings is further confused because young children attribute good qualities to people who treat them in a positive way, therefore presenting a problem for young children as they attempt to understand that a 'good' person can do 'bad' things. De Young (1988) argues that the abstract concepts presented in the programmes affect young children's abilities to learn these concepts and subsequently to protect themselves from a potentially abusive situation. This is supported by Liang (1991) who observed that young pre-schoolers were often unable to recognise why a situation was abusive even though they demonstrated the ability to reject the abuser and leave the situation.

However the type and range of programmes taught may be a key to the effectiveness of prevention education with young children. In a follow up study of children using child protection programmes in Australia and New Zealand, Briggs and Hawkins (1994) found that children had made the least progress in their ability to recognise feelings associated with safe and unsafe. The study by Briggs and Hawkins compared an Australian Prevention Education package 'Protective Behaviours' to a New Zealand programme 'Keeping Ourselves Safe', which utilised the New Zealand police and educators to work with parents and schools on a prevention programme.
The Australian education package aimed to make children aware of their unsafe feelings and when they experience them to take action to improve their safety. The New Zealand programme on the other hand, used ‘what if’ problem solving exercises based on the most common sexual abuse situation, as well as bullying and safety issues, both inside and outside the home.

Briggs and Hawkins evaluated both programmes one year after they had begun. The New Zealand programme was reported as considerably more successful than the Australian Programme. Children involved in the New Zealand programme demonstrated gains after use of the first module. Sixty eight percent of children gained the ability to offer several safe strategies for being lost in a crowd. Fifty three percent recognised that people may use tricks to persuade them to do things they would not otherwise have done. More than half of the children had gained knowledge about their right to reject inappropriate touching. Seventy five percent of the children in the study recognised that ‘rude secrets’ should not be kept. Briggs and Hawkins (1994) found the least development had occurred in the children’s ability to recognise feelings associated with being safe and unsafe (47%).

The children involved in the Australian programme showed no marked improvement in their responses. Only 30% of the children provided safe answers to any of the questions and these children were the oldest in the survey (8-9 years), in classes taught by teachers with markedly high levels of commitment to the programme. Briggs and Hawkins (1994) partly attribute the poor results to the fact that teachers, by their own admission, taught the
programme selectively, leaving out essential aspects involving the human body, children's rights, the adult-child power differential, secrecy and other important matters relating to personal safety.

The weakest area in the New Zealand study involved the recognition of unsafe feelings (47%). Briggs and Hawkins believe these concepts were too difficult for the five to eight year age group. The research did not conclude that young children do not benefit from child sexual abuse prevention programmes, but rather that young children require a school-based child protection programme which is developmentally appropriate in terms of language and concepts.

This recommendation is supported by Tutty (1992) who found that young children had more difficulty in extracting and understanding some of the main prevention messages from a play, and suggested that young children should receive supplementary materials that are consistent with their developmental levels.

There is research supporting the positive effects of intervention programmes in sexual abuse prevention with primary school-aged children (Soled and Hensley, 1993; Fryeer, Kaizer and Miyoshi, 1987; Kolko, Moser, Litz and Hughes, 1987; Finkelhor and Strapko, 1987, in Kohl, 1993). Although the research on the effectiveness of child sexual abuse prevention programmes reviewed for this study, supports the view that children learn the prevention concepts, there remain questions about the effectiveness of prevention programmes with young children. The arguments presented by De Young (1988) and Isbell and Morrow
(1991) support the belief that young children are, by virtue of their cognitive abilities, unable to grasp the necessary concepts and therefore unable to identify an abusive situation. However, the assertion that young children are able to benefit from prevention programmes that are developmentally appropriate in terms of language and moral concepts (Briggs and Hawkins, 1990; Tutty, 1992; Briggs, 1986), may mean that it is the design of the programme and not the developmental stage of the child that affects their success. However, even when the programme was considered to be developmentally appropriate, young children still made the least gains in the areas of safe and unsafe touches (Briggs and Hawkins, 1994). It is clear however, that the issue of the young child’s ability to understand concepts such as safe and unsafe and the range along a touch continuum remains in question.
CHAPTER THREE - THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.0 Introduction

Literature suggesting that young children are unable to learn prevention concepts (De Young, 1988; Isbell and Morrow, 1991) is based on the theory that young children are by virtue of their moral and cognitive development, unable to make appropriate judgements. However, post-developmental theories argue that young children are capable of more than these theories suggest. This chapter will provide an outline of theories of the cognitive and moral development of young children.

3.1 Cognitive Development Of Young Children

Young children according to Jean Piaget develop in a series of stages and children aged between two and seven are normally considered to be in the pre-operational stage of development (Inhelder and Piaget, 1958, in Boulton, Lewis & Catherwood, 1994; Bjorklund, 1989; Wood, 1988).

Children in the pre-operational stage of development are said to be egocentric. In particular, they interpret the world through their own eyes and assume that others see that world as they do (Wood, 1988; McInerney & McInerney, 1994). Children in this stage have difficulty understanding that others may view the world differently. Their perceptions are centred, in that they attend to and make judgements based on the most salient aspect of their perceptual field (Bjorklund, 1989).
Other aspects of pre-operational thinking include phenomenalistic causality, where young children attribute feelings to inanimate objects; nominal realism where young children attribute words and language to power beyond the arbitrariness of language and phenomenalistic causality where children believe two occurrences are linked, such as a curtain opening and bringing out the sun (McInerney & McInerney, 1994). Pre-operational development is also defined by children's understanding of concepts such as shape, size, class, number and time.

Since the early 1980s aspects of Piagetian developmental theory have been reconsidered and research using alternative methodologies and new techniques has established that development theory underestimated the cognitive and moral capabilities of young children (Bjorklund, 1989; McInerney & McInerney, 1994; Donaldson, Grieve and Pratt, 1983). For example, research has demonstrated that young children who are considered egocentric by Piaget, can identify and empathise with the emotions of others and realised that they possess knowledge that others do not share (Hoffman, 1975, in Bjorklund, 1989).

Post-developmental theories of cognitive development have moved beyond the cognitive structures as described by Piaget (Boulton-Lewis & Catherwood, 1994; McInerney & McInerney, 1994). These theories view the young child as competent, focusing on the young child's capabilities rather than deficiencies (Cullen, 1992; Donaldson, Grieve and Pratt, 1983).
3.2 Moral Development Of Young Children

The models of moral development as outlined by Piaget (1932 in Berrick, 1991), Kohlberg (1969) and Freud (1961) appear to deal predominantly with young children's judgements of moral violations and compliance with rules (Buzzelli, 1992). However, children's understanding of rules and their belief about the rules in particular settings, would affect their ability to judge a situation as being safe or unsafe.

In these theories young children aged 4-6 years of age are considered 'pre-moral' because their judgements of moral violations are based on compliance with parental authority. Kohlberg referred to this as obedience orientation, Piaget as heteronomy and Freud as the absence of conscience (McInerney & McInerney, 1994).

Piaget (1932/1962, in Berrick, 1991) explored young children's moral development. He posed moral dilemmas to young children using six sample stories, examples of which are as follows:

\textit{A little boy who is called John is in his room. He is called to dinner. He goes into the dining room. But behind the door is a chair, and on the chair a tray with fifteen cups on it. John couldn't have known there was all this behind the door. He goes in, the door knocks against the tray, bang to the fifteen cups and they all get broken.}

\textit{Once there was a little boy whose name was Henry. One day when his mother was out he tried to get some jam out of the cupboard. He climbed up on a chair...}
and stretched out his arm. But the jam was too high up and he couldn't reach it and have any. But while he was trying to get it he knocked over a cup. The cup fell down and broke (Piaget, 1932, in Berrick, 1991).

Piaget aimed to discover whether the child pays more attention to motive or to material results (in Berrick, 1991). From his observations, Piaget postulated that children's responses to the moral questions depended on their cognitive development.

-The first is (naughtier) because he knocked over all 15 cups.
-If you were the Daddy which would you punish most?
-The one who broke fifteen cups.
-Why?
-The first broke lots of things and the other one fewer.

Reasoning based on the amount of damage provoked by an act is called objective reasoning. The child moves from objective reasoning to the next stage which is subjective reasoning. This is characterised by a child being able to distinguish the motives underlying an event. Piaget (1962, in Berrick 1991) explains this shift by the changes in a child's cognitive development. The leap to subjective reasoning usually follows or moves concomitantly with the child's cognitive transition to concrete operations. Piaget also believed that the change to subjective reasoning is linked to the child's social experience as they move beyond heteronomous reasoning.
A young child who displays heteronomous reasoning uses moral reasoning in which s/he bases moral judgements on unilateral respect for authority figures, that is, the objective rules of parents and other adults (Rich & DeVitis, 1985 in Berrick, 1991). As a child interacts more with peers and becomes more self reliant and less egocentric s/he begins to separate from the authority figure and to understand the separate aspects of externally driven rules.

Piaget theorised that young children focus on the observed consequences of actions and believe in absolute, unchanging rules handed down by outside authorities (McInerney & McInerney, 1994). The young child in the heteronomous stage of moral development has a great concern for rules and believes that rules are fixed and cannot change to fit a situation. Piaget believed that the narrow perspective of the younger child reflects their egocentrism and the strong coercive influence that adults have over children of this age (McInerney & McInerney, 1994).

The egocentric child believes that events that affect them originate from them (Berrick 1991). Therefore if they are punished then they must have done something wrong. In this stage of moral development, events are considered good or bad depending on an adult's response to actions. Young children also believe that the outcomes of an action, not the intent, is important. If the outcome is bad, then they believe they are bad (Cole and Cole, 1993).

As part of most child sexual abuse prevention programmes, children are told that abuse is never their fault, but it may not be possible to convince a young
child that s/he has not caused the abuse. Furthermore, if the child feels pain or physical harm as a result of the abuse, then their orientation towards objective reasoning may mean that the child will feel more guilt (Berrick, 1991). This will decrease as a child's social experience increases and s/he moves beyond heteronomy.

Kohlberg expanded on Piaget's theories to develop his model of moral development. Kohlberg's developmental theory was based on three assumptions. Firstly, that each level must be obtained before the individual can perform at the next level. Secondly, that the attainment of a higher moral judgement appears to involve the reworking of earlier thought patterns rather than an additive process of development, and thirdly, that moral development occurs in a sequence, no matter what the child's national or sub-cultural background (McInerney & McInerney, 1994).

Young children were considered by Kohlberg to fit stage one of moral development: the 'punishment and obedience' stage. A child in this stage does not consider the interest of others and does not consider that it may be different from their own. They consider their actions in terms of the physical consequences of the act, such as how to avoid punishment or obtain rewards. Young children in the 'punishment and obedience' stage believe those in authority have superior power and should be obeyed (McInerney & McInerney, 1994).
During child sexual abuse prevention programmes children are instructed to repel a sexual assault by saying 'no', getting away and telling an adult. However, if the young child is in the 'punishment and obedience' stage then their actions may be primarily influenced by their orientation to obedience to their primary caregiver (Berrick, 1991).

According to Kohlberg's theory, the young child has not yet formulated an internal, autonomous conscience and therefore is unable to judge individual acts for their merit. If this is so, then the young child's orientation to obedience may make it difficult for them to say 'no' to an unwanted touch or to defy the offender and tell another adult. Seventy to eighty percent of offenders are known to the child, making this likelihood more pronounced (Berrick, 1991). The child's orientation to obedience shifts in time and then the older child is more likely to be able to follow the information presented in the prevention programmes (Berrick, 1991, De Young, 1988).

Traditional developmental theory such as that postulated by Piaget and Kohlberg casts doubt on young children's ability to benefit from prevention education. They would be unable to comprehend the distinction between the abstract concepts of 'good' touch/'bad' touch or safe/ unsafe (Isbell & Morrow, 1988).

Children egocentrically and concretely attend to the visible outcomes in making their moral judgements because of the difficulty in evaluating the subtleties between good and bad, right and wrong (Bjorklund, 1989; De Young, 1988).
De Young argues that if young children are able to make a judgement of an event only on the basis of its outcomes and consequences, in cases of non-intrusive sexual contact, or contact from someone they perceive as good, they may be unable to judge non-intrusive sexual contact as bad and therefore abusive (De Young, 1988). One must look beyond traditional developmental theory to see if prevention programmes have a role in the early years of school.

Post-Piagetian research on moral development indicates that moral understanding emerges earlier, (i.e., during the first few years of life), and is related to a different set of relationship factors from those described by Piaget, Kohlberg and Freud. Lamb (1991) and Kagen (1992) found an increasing awareness by children of moral standards in the context in which they live, during their second year of life. They identified an increase in the use of vocabulary depicting moral judgements (eg. good and bad) and interest in flawed objects and events that differ from what is expected. Buzzelli (1992) suggested that children accept parental standards and abide by them, not out of fear of punishment, but rather from a desire to be like the parents who love and nurture them.

Other studies of young children's moral development have shown that in fact relationships between children and adults are in fact multi-dimensional and dependent upon an environmental context (Turier, 1983; Laupa & Turiel, 1986). Further research suggests that children as young as pre-school age can make distinctions between true, moral transgressions and conventional rules (Nucci & Turiel, Weston & Turiel, 1980 in Berrick, 1991). Smetana and Braeges (1987)
describe the difference between true moral transgressions and conventional rules.

Moral transgressions can be described by their intrinsic value or the consequences of the action (eg., those pertaining to inflicting harm or pain on people). Conventional rules are based upon social standards of practice (eg., manners, dress code) (In Berrick, 1991, p6).

Regardless of children’s age, studies by Nucci & Nucci (1982) found that most subjects view moral transgressions negatively. Further to this, Smetana (1985, in Berrick, 1991) found that pre-schoolers view conventional transgressions as more permissible in the absence of a rule and that it is the rule that defines the boundary for the action, not the action itself.

Egan (1994) argues that through storytelling and exploration of children’s imagination, features of children’s learning that are often ignored can be exposed. He states:

We are familiar with claims that young children are concrete thinkers. Perhaps if one focuses on just a narrow range of their logical skills, this may be so. But, observing the simplest of their imaginative engagements brings out vividly that young children’s thinking also involves constant use of abstractions. Indeed, it seems the most powerful organising concepts they use are among the most abstract we ever learn - good and bad, for example. It seems clear a typical
young child uses profound abstract concepts in order to make concrete concepts meaningful (Egan, 1994, p28).

Egan (1994) believes that the concepts in fairy tales such as good and bad, safe and unsafe, security and danger are known to children and that these concepts are both abstract and affective.

The touch continuum, using terms such as safe and unsafe, may be understood by young children when unsafe is described in terms such as touches that hurt our bodies or our feelings (Beland, 1986 in Berrick, 1991). This definition would appeal to the child’s sense of moral transgressions. However, most child sexual abuse prevention programmes go further than this and introduce touches that are ‘uncomfortable’, ‘say no’, or ‘feel funny’. These touches relate to sexual touches that may not cause pain and may actually feel somewhat pleasurable for a time (Beland, 1986 in Berrick, 1991). If the touch is not painful it may not be viewed by the child as a moral transgression.

A study by Gilbert (1988, in Berrick, 1991) with pre-school children demonstrated that the children were able to describe reactions at the extremes of the continuum but showed difficulty with the middle area. Two pictures of animals, one hugging and the second hitting scored highly, with children’s responses clustering around the extremes of the continuum. While responses to a range of pictures were divided on either end of the spectrum, no responses were found in the central area of the touch continuum.
The study found that young children can describe feelings attached to experiences of extreme sensation (moral transgressions). They can and do recognise situations and feelings that are obviously 'good' or 'bad'. However, confusing feelings cannot be identified by the children (Gilbert et al, 1988, in Berrick, 1991).

The puzzling question arising from the literature continues to be whether young children are able to understand the concepts of safe and unsafe and the precise nature of the touch. For the young child to benefit fully from prevention education they must be able to understand these concepts.

3.3 The Competent Child

In developing an inquiry of this type the perspective taken to studying young children is that of the competent child. Post developmental theories of cognitive and moral development focus on the knowledge and skills that young children possess; the capabilities of young children rather than their deficiencies. As the foregoing research demonstrates, young children are able to attain many of the developmental levels at a younger age than first believed (Hoffman, 1975, in Bjorklund, 1989; Lamb, 1991; Kagen, 1992; Buzzelli, 1992; Berrick, 1992) and they are not limited to the narrow constraints of the developmental theories of Piaget and Kohlberg.
CHAPTER FOUR - RESEARCH DESIGN

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter the design of the study, is outlined and ethical considerations are explored. The setting for the study is described, including the school, the school's curriculum and the participants. Finally, each of the six data gathering sessions is outlined.

4.1 Case study design

A case study design is used for this qualitative research investigation. Burns (1991) states that case study design is appropriate when 'how', 'why' or 'what' questions are being asked and should focus on a bounded system/subject that is either very representative or extremely atypical.

Yin (1990) defines a case study as an empirical enquiry that:

- investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real context; when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (Yin, 1990, p 14).

Yin also notes that the case study design is preferred in examining contemporary events, but when the relevant behaviours can not be manipulated. This research study aimed to explore 'what' decisions the children made about the relative safety of a given situation, 'how' that decision was made and 'why' they judged a situation to be either safe or unsafe. The contemporary phenomenon was the introduction of Prevention Education
Programme and the understanding required about the concepts of safe and unsafe inherent in the programmes. Therefore a case study design was chosen to explore descriptively young children's responses to a number of scenarios presented to them.

4.2 Ethical considerations

Interest in the area of sexual abuse and how to protect children from abuse has continued to develop over the last decade. The use of prevention programs as a potential means for protecting young children is an area that demands ongoing research. Due to the sensitive nature of this research, ethical issues were critically examined by the researcher throughout the study.

The material chosen for use in the study was taken from two widely accepted prevention programmes: the WA Health Education Syllabus Prevention Education Supplement (1990) and Keep Children Safe (Briggs, 1988). The scenarios chosen were ones that the children would be exposed to in whole class lessons and discussions as a normal part of the year health programme. Several of the stories were changed to avoid negative associations with family members. The scenario in session four depicting a child uncomfortable with a kiss he is receiving from an adult was changed from the boy's uncle to a family friend. An additional session was dropped from the study as it included a sexual touch by an adult relative and was felt to be unnecessary for the purpose of exploring young children's understanding of safe and unsafe.

The researcher considered the material to be used in the study carefully. Each session was chosen to explore a type of touch or feeling. However it was
necessary to include scenarios depicting an uncomfortable kiss from an adult, and a babysitter wanting to play a touching game that required the child to take off her clothes. Concern over exposing the sample group children to two hypothetical situations that they may otherwise not have encountered made it extremely important that the children feel that these situations were resolved positively and without harm to the hypothetical child involved. This was achieved by completing each session with the children following the scenario through to a positive outcome with the researcher. This reinforced that the child was not at fault and that the adult caregivers of the child (in both cases the child’s parents) supported the child’s decision to either say no to the touch and get help, or to report the situation to an appropriate adult.

The researcher chose to conduct the research at the school at which she taught, with the parents and children of the pre-primary/year one class in which she taught. This was to maximise the opportunity to maintain an environment of familiarity, comfort and care for the children.

The school council and parent group was in full support of the research. They were invited to read all of the proposed stories and interview prompts and to examine the picture talks in the study. Written permission was sought from the school council (governing body) and the school coordinator (principal) for the research to be carried out at the school. Each parent of the children chosen to participate in the study met with the researcher and discussed the basis of the research and the proposed sessions. The parents were invited to read the research proposal and examine all of the material to be used in the research.
Further to this, the researcher sought written permission from the parents of each of the four sample group children and parents were informed that they could withdraw their child from the study at any time. The verbal feedback from the parents was positive and all of the parents were interested in feedback from the researcher about their child’s responses to the questions explored in the interview sessions.

4.3 The context

The context for this case was in a small inner city community school. The school has four classes, each split into two year levels and a total of eighty students in the school. The school is in a large converted building with three levels: below ground, ground and a second storey. The school aims to focus on child-centred education where individual differences in learning and development are recognised and catered for. The teachers and children are on a first name basis and the children play an active role in the school’s decision making such as classroom rules, themes, yard usage and optional areas of study. The school has a focus on peaceful resolution of conflicts and students’ social strategies.

The pre-primary/year one class (P-1) has twenty two students, twelve of the children being in year one and ten of the students in pre-primary. The classroom teacher has taught at the school for five years in the P-1 group. The children spend two years with the same teacher. The year 2/3 class is on the same floor and is separated by book shelves and pin-up boards. The P-1 class has many learning areas such as a block corner, puzzles, manipulative games,
painting, craft, writing, dress-up and home play, as well as science tables and a small group of desks and chairs.

4.4 The curriculum

The school’s curriculum is based on the Western Australian Ministry of Education syllabus material. However the school does choose additional areas of focus. Over the past two years the school has adopted a social strategies focus. Based on models established by Bill Rogers (1995) each class works on establishing rights, responsibilities and rules. As part of the school’s social strategy programme, a ‘stop’ message is taught and used by students who encounter an uncomfortable or harmful situation, feeling or touch. The children are encouraged to say ‘stop’ (i.e., ‘stop hurting me’ or ‘stop saying that’) to the other child involved and access help from an adult if their stop message is not listened to or they believe they require further help. All of the children, who had participated in this study had role-played the use of stop messages.

Prevention education is taught throughout the school as part of the health education programme. The school council and coordinator endorse the inclusion of prevention education in all classes. The children in the P-1 group had participated in social strategies lessons but they had not yet been exposed to the prevention education lessons.

4.5 The Participants

The participants were drawn from the pre-primary/Year one group (P-1). Four children were chosen by age and gender as representative of the group. The researcher decided on four children so that both grades and genders were
represented. Therefore a male pre-primary child, a female pre-primary child, a male year one child and a female pre-primary child represent the four participants. The selection of participants followed a whole classroom prevention education session (as outlined in section 4.6).

The children’s guardians/parents were approached by the researcher and a letter outlining the study was sent to each of them. As outlined in section 3.2 the parents were invited to meet with the researcher to view the picture talks and interview questions (as outlined in section 3.4) and read the research proposal. The parents were explicitly told their choice would be respected and that if they chose to proceed they could withdraw their permission at any point of the study and the data would not be used. All parents of the four children agreed that their child could take part in the study.

4.6 The sessions

An initial whole group session took place with the class, where the children participated in a discussion about what the words ‘safe’ and ‘unsafe’ meant. Children were asked to give examples of what they thought was a safe situation and an unsafe situation. Following discussion, the children were asked to draw two pictures. The first picture was when they felt safe and the second picture was when they felt unsafe. Following the whole group session, the parents of the four participants were approached about the specific data gathering sessions. The participants were then invited to take part in the activities.

These children took part in six data gathering sessions, over a six week period. The six sessions were each conducted as a guided discussion/interview
between the researcher and the child in the classroom during class time. Each session used a picture talk or a vignette of a different situation to prompt discussion. In consultation with parents, the range of situations was chosen from the *WA Health Education Syllabus, Prevention Education Supplement* (1990) and from a prevention education text, *Keep Children Safe* (Briggs, 1988). The six situations represent a range of circumstances which may result in a child feeling unsafe. Examples included a child being tickled too hard, a child being bullied in the classroom and a babysitter wanting a child to play a touching game. As outlined in section 3.2, emphasis is given to a positive resolution of each situation in all incidents adopted for use in the study. Each of the situations is outlined in detail in the subsequent sub-sections 3.4.1 and 3.4.6.

The main data gathering techniques used in the study were guided interviews with the children as individuals and children's drawings of safe and unsafe situations. The level of safety of each situation was also represented by each child through the use of the 'touch barometer' (WA Prevention Education Supplement). This allowed the researcher to gauge whether the verbal response of safe or unsafe given by each child was also represented on the continuum from safe to unsafe.

The six data gathering sessions were approximately twenty to thirty minutes in duration. The interview component took place in the P-1 class as a part of the afternoon language session. One child was interviewed each day during the language session, so that all four children were interviewed once a week over
six weeks. It is not unusual for the children to work one on one with the teacher or teacher's assistant. However, other one on one activities were included as part of the six week language session so that the children did not feel singled out.

The case study participants were shown how to use the touch barometer and asked to show the researcher how safe they were feeling at that time. The researcher then explored, through games, the children's capacity to represent their understanding of situations on the touch barometer. For example; the researcher asked the children how safe they felt today and the children then represented their feelings on the touch barometer. The children were then asked to represent the feelings associated with the initial drawing they did for safe and unsafe situations.

The researcher also demonstrated the small tape recorder used for data gathering to the children. The researcher and each child played with it by sending messages to each other. The researcher sat with each child and established a dialogue to ensure the child was comfortable and relaxed before beginning the data collection.

The duration of each session was between ten and fifteen minutes. Each session was audiotaped to ensure accurate recording of the children's responses. The children's illustrations were also collected and are presented in the data chapter. A record was kept of the ratings given by children using the touch barometer.
Each of the sessions aimed to cover the two areas addressed in the research questions: their understanding of the construct of safe/unsafe and the explanation given by the child in making a judgement about the safety of the situation. In addition, the child was asked what rules, if any, they thought were being violated in the scenario. The six sessions covered a variety of situations through pictures, stories and topics ranging from an uncomfortable touch to a potential intrusive sexual touch. Each of the situations was resolved in a positive manner with the children.

4.6.1 Session One

The first session was based on a 'picture talk' and story. The picture (refer Appendix A) was selected from activities proposed by Briggs (1988) and shows an adult male with his hands on a female child, tickling her. The children were asked what they thought was happening in the story and how the child was feeling. A list of interview prompts used with this picture is outlined in Appendix B. After discussion of the picture the child was asked to show the feeling of the child on the touch barometer.

The child was then read a short story based on the incident described by Briggs (1988), outlining what was happening in the picture. The story was shortened to exclude the resolution of the problem.

Jacky is about the same age as you. Jackie’s Dad likes to cuddle her and
Jacky likes to be cuddled. Sometimes he tickles her. Jacky giggles and
giggles when she is being tickled. She likes it. But sometimes Jacky's Dad tickles her too hard and then she doesn't like it. It starts to hurt her.

Following the first part of the story each child was asked again to describe how Jacky feels and again to use the touch barometer to reflect Jacky's feeling. The story was then concluded, giving the resolution of the situation.

Jacky is sad that the tickling game is hurting and she wants the game to stop. Jacky says to her Dad "Please stop it, you are tickling me too hard."

Jacky's Dad stops tickling her straight away. He says he is sorry that he was hurting her and that he would be more careful next time. Jacky was happy that her Dad listened to her stop message and glad that they could still play the tickling game.

4.6.2 Session Two

The second session was based on another picture taken from Briggs (1988). The illustration shows two large boys and a small boy. One of the big boys has his hands on the top of the small boy and both big boys have fierce expressions on their faces. The smaller boy is holding a ball (refer Appendix C).

Each child was shown the illustration and then asked to give their interpretation of the picture. The child was then asked if the small boy was feeling safe or unsafe and to show this on the touch barometer. Each child then took part in a discussion about their response to the picture, how they made their judgement and what the children in the picture should do. The discussion was focused through the use of questions set out in Appendix D. The discussion also
included asking each child how they thought they would feel and what they thought they would do if they were in the same situation. The children were asked to draw a picture of the young boy in the picture that showed how he was feeling.

As part of the discussion the researcher talked to the children about how the young boy resolved the situation.

_The little boy Max, tried a stop message, but the older boys did not listen._

_Max left his ball with the older children and went straight home and told his parents. His parents were very pleased with him for trying a stop message and then getting away from the situation when he was not listened to. Max's Dad went to the park and talked to the older boys and retrieved the ball. Max was very pleased that he went straight home and got help from his Mum and Dad._

### 4.6.3 Session Three

The third session involved telling the children a story and then interviewing them about their responses to the story. The story was written by the researcher, based on examples given in the W A Health Education Syllabus, Prevention Education Supplement (1990).

_Tony is at school playing in the block corner. He has made a big tower and is very happy playing with it. The rest of the class is busy doing activities and playing with the playdough and puzzles. Tony's teacher is working on the other side of the classroom with a small group of children._
Julie, Tyson and Simon run into the block corner and knock over Tony’s big tower. They start to laugh at all of the blocks on the floor. Tony starts to cry and tells them they shouldn’t have knocked over his building. Julie says “You’re a cry baby” and Simon says “It was a stupid building anyway cry baby.”

Tony does not know what to do. He is very upset that they knocked his tower down. He sits in the block corner and cries. Julie, Tyson and Simon run out of the block corner laughing.

The responses of each child were sought in an informal interview session. The questions used to prompt this informal discussion are listed in Appendix E. The questions address the children’s perceptions of why the child was being bullied and what he should do about it. Each child was then asked to describe how Tony was feeling and to show this on the touch barometer. The discussion included a talk about the rules that were violated and what should be done about it.

Following the discussion the children were read the resolution of the story.

One of Tony’s friends tells the teacher that he is in the block corner crying. The teacher goes to the block corner to talk to Tony. Tony stops crying and tells the teacher that Julie, Tyson and Simon knocked over his special tower and then called him names. The teacher is sad that Tony’s building
has been knocked over and his feelings hurt. She helps Tony to tell Julie, Tyson and Simon how he feels about his building being knocked over and his feelings hurt. The teacher talks to Julie, Tyson and Simon, reminding them about the class rules. They help Tony to build his tower again and Tony knows that next time he will go and get help from the teacher.

4.6.4 Session Four

The fourth session was based on a picture talk and short vignette. The picture was taken from Briggs (1988) and shows an adult male kneeling down next to a small boy. The man has one arm around the child and one hand under the boy’s chin. The young boy’s face is turned away from the man. The picture is reproduced in Appendix F.

Each child was shown the picture and during an informal discussion was asked to describe what they thought was happening and how they thought the boy was feeling. Using the interview prompts outlined in Appendix G the children discussed the picture with the researcher and represented the boy’s feelings on the touch barometer. The children were then told the short vignette based on the story in Briggs (1988). As outlined in section 3.2 the adult in the story was changed from an uncle to an adult friend.

Jake goes to see his grown up friend Tom quite often. Jake likes his friend because he plays and gives Jake treats and presents. But Tom likes to kiss Jake on the mouth and Jake doesn’t like that.
Jake likes his friend Tom because he’s kind and fun to be with. But he doesn’t like the way Tom touches him.

Following the story each child took part in an informal discussion based on discussion prompts set out in Appendix G. The discussion included issues such as whether Jake had to kiss Tom and what he should do. Each child was asked to show how Jake was feeling on the touch barometer. At the end of the interview each child was asked to draw a picture that showed how Jake felt.

Following this, the researcher told the children the rest of the story that resolved the situation.

Jake decided to tell his mum that he doesn’t like the way Tom kisses him. Jake’s Mum looked sad when Jake told her. She gave Jake a big hug and told him that he had done the right thing by telling her. Jake’s Mum told him that it was his body and if something did not feel good he did not have to do it. She said she would talk to Tom and ask him not to kiss him anymore.

Jake was worried that he would not get to play with Tom anymore. Jake’s Mum said he could still play with Tom but from now on Mum or Dad would be there too. Jake was glad he had told his Mum.

4.6.5 Session Five

The fifth session was based on a story from Briggs (1988) and involved a babysitter wanting to play a touching game with the young girl he is caring for. The story shared is as follows:
Sophie’s Mummy and Daddy went out to dinner leaving Sophie with a babysitter. Before they left, Sophie’s Mummy and Daddy told her to be a good girl and do whatever the babysitter said.

When they’d gone, the babysitter said, “Sophie you can stay up late and watch television with me if you want to. We’ll play a new game together.” Sophie wanted to stay up late and watch television and the promise of a new game sounded fun.

Then the babysitter said that, for the new game there were two rules. Firstly, Sophie must take all her clothes off. Secondly, she must keep the game a secret. She mustn’t tell her Mummy and Daddy or anyone because she’d get into trouble for staying up late.

Following the story, each child took part in a discussion about the safety of Sophie and what Sophie might do. The interview prompts are outlined in Appendix H and aimed to explore each child’s understanding of the situation and whether Sophie had to accept the babysitter’s conditions for participating in the ‘game’. Each child was asked to show how Sophie was feeling on the touch barometer. Further to this, each child discussed with the researcher what they thought they could do if they were in a similar situation.

Following the discussion, the children listened to the end of the story and talked informally about the outcome. The end of the story shared is as follows:
Sophie was really worried about the game. She knew she wasn't supposed to stay up late and her Mum had told her that she should not show her private parts. Sophie felt unsafe. She told the babysitter that she did not want to play the game and she wanted to go to bed now.

When Sophie's Mum and Dad came home they came into her room to check on her. Sophie woke up and was still feeling sad and unsafe about the babysitter. She told her Mum and Dad about the game. Sophie's Mum and Dad were upset and said that it was very wrong of the babysitter to ask Sophie to take her clothes off and keep it a secret. They told Sophie she was right to say no and to tell them.

Sophie's Mum and Dad said that the babysitter would not be allowed to look at. Sophie anymore and they would find someone with whom Sophie could feel safe. Sophie's Mum was really glad that Sophie had remembered that it was her body and that she should not show her private parts. Sophie felt much better and went straight to sleep, feeling safe.

4.6.6 Session Six

In the final session, the researcher described for each child five short scenarios and asked each child to show on the touch barometer how safe or unsafe they thought they might be in the particular situation. The aim of this was to compare the rating given on the touch barometer for these situations, with those given in the previous five data collection sessions.
The five situations were based on examples from the WA Health Education Syllabus, Prevention Education Supplement (1990) and from Briggs (1988). The situations are outlined below.

1. You are stuck in the high cubby and can't get down
2. You are being teased by big kids
3. A grownup wants to play a touching game with you but you have to keep it a secret
4. A stranger offers you a lift home from the park in their car
5. You are lost in a big shopping centre

Each child was asked to show how they felt about the five situations on the touch barometer and to talk briefly about why they would be feeling this way. The children then informally discussed what they would do in the various situations. The researcher praised the children for their suggestions, and using prompts, helped them to find an appropriate and safe resolution to each situation.

These included;

1. Calling out for help from your parent or teacher, or asking a friend to get help for you.
2. Walking away and telling a teacher, parent or adult who is looking after you.
3. Saying no, phoning home, or going home if you are able, and telling your Mum or Dad what happened.
4. Saying no and going straight to your parents, or going and telling another adult with children at the park and asking them to walk you home or phone your parents.
5. Going to the closest shop and telling the person who works there that you are lost and staying there until they have found your parents.

At the end of this session, the children were asked to complete drawings as they had done in the initial whole class session, of a situation that would make them feel safe and a situation that would make them feel unsafe. This was to see if they chose similar or different situations, having discussed a range of safe and unsafe situations in the six data collection sessions. These diagrams are reported in Chapter 5.
CHAPTER FIVE - RESULTS

5.0 Introduction

The results from the data collection sessions with the four children are presented individually.

Pseudonyms are used for the four children to ensure anonymity. The four sessions are reported in the following order:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5.1.1</th>
<th>Sam</th>
<th>6 years 1 month</th>
<th>One</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.2.1</td>
<td>Nicky</td>
<td>6 years 10 months</td>
<td>One</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3.1</td>
<td>Brian</td>
<td>4 years 2 months</td>
<td>Pre-Primary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4.1</td>
<td>Carry</td>
<td>4 years 6 months</td>
<td>Pre-Primary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Detailed outlines of each data collection session can be found in Chapter 4. Selections of interviews are included as well as diagrams drawn by the children. The rating given to each situation on the 'touch barometer' is also reported.

5.1 SAM - Background

Sam is six years and one month of age. A small boy with short dark hair and a thin body, he is energetic and runs most of the time. He is popular with his peers and is often the instigator of games and their rules. He has a happy disposition and readily accepts consequences for his behaviour. When hurt physically, he is quick to cry but recovers quickly after a cuddle.

Sam is a competent student who is enthusiastic about all activities at school. He engages most often in physical play such as rough and tumble games and 'chasey'. During indoor time, Sam chooses construction games such as block
corner and building with manipulatives. He is a prolific writer who enjoys making up stories about the police and 'good guys and bad guys'. Rockets and dragons are also favourite topics in his stories. Sam reads simple books and appears confident about his abilities in all areas of his school work.

Sam lives with his father for five days of the week and spends two days with his mother and step-father. Both his parents are interested and involved in his school life, regularly attending camps and social activities. His father comes in to school once a week to listen to children read. Sam's parents were enthusiastic about his part in the research and were eager to hear about the contents of the data collection sessions.

5.1.1 Sam - The Whole Group Session

Sam took part in the whole group prevention education session which involved a whole class discussion about the meaning of safe and unsafe. Sam took part in the discussion and gave examples of both safe and unsafe situations. Following the discussion, the children were asked to draw a picture of a situation in which they felt safe and unsafe. This was to assist in choosing the children who would take part in the study. Sam's safe picture shows him at home with his father where he is safe because he is inside and no-one can get in.
Sam's unsafe picture was of an imaginary situation. Sam is swimming in the ocean. Then he is drowning and a shark is coming to get him (Diagram 1.2).

Sam said "I would feel very unsafe." When he was asked if he had been in a real situation where he had felt unsafe, he said that when he got hurt he did not feel safe.
"I am drowning. A shark is coming to get me."

5.1.2 Sam - Session One

Session one required Sam to look at a picture of a young girl being tickled by her father. The picture does not clearly show the relationship between the girl and the man. Sam was asked to rate the situation on the touch barometer and talk about what he thought the girl was feeling. Sam originally judged the situation to be a seven on the touch barometer. He said that the girl may have been hurt and the man may be trying to help her.

Following the initial discussion, Sam listened to the story which explains the relationship between Jacky and her father and Sam changed his setting on the touch barometer to a ten, the highest unsafe setting. During the discussion Sam chose to change the setting to five.
Researcher: Now that you have heard the story, how do you think Jacky is feeling?

Sam: Unsafe

Researcher: Why do you think she might be feeling unsafe?

Sam: Because she might not be able to breathe

Researcher: Do you think Jacky’s Dad should tickle her like that?

Sam: No

Researcher: Do you think Jacky’s Dad wants to hurt her?

Sam: No, I think it is by accident (Sam changed the setting to a five)

Researcher: So what do you think Jacky should do?

Sam: Say “stop”.

5.1.3 Sam - Session Two

In the second informal data collection session, Sam was shown the picture of two big boys and a smaller boy. Sam was asked to judge the safety of the situation and to describe what he saw in the picture. Sam judged the situation to be a seven on the touch barometer.

Researcher: What do you think is happening in that picture?

Sam: Looks like he’s going to get bashed up by those big boys and wreck his game

Researcher: How do you think he feels?

Sam: (puts the touch barometer on seven)

Researcher: How can you tell he’s feeling that way?

Sam: Because he doesn’t want to get bashed up by those big boys

Researcher: What in the picture tells you that?

Sam: It looks like he’s pulling on his T-shirt to make him move
Researcher: How does he look?

Sam: Unsafe

Once Sam had outlined his initial description of the situation, he started to formulate ideas about why the older boys might be threatening the younger boy.

Researcher: What else do you think he might be feeling?

Sam: I tell you what, they might be his brothers and they're just getting carried away with the game. Maybe they think he's cheating.

Sam was asked what the big boys were doing wrong and he said “They shouldn't be hurting kids”. He believed the big boys should have to go to their rooms for bullying the small boy. During the discussion, Sam talked about how he would feel if a similar thing happened to him.

Sam: I would tell my Mum or Dad

Researcher: What would you tell them?

Sam: Okay; there's these two big boys about to bash me up and I don't want them to. I already said 'stop' and they keep doing it.

Sam drew a picture of how he thought the young boy might be feeling and what he thought he might be thinking.
Diagram 1.3

I am shivering because I am unsafe
Two big boys are about to bash me up!

5.1.4 Sam - Session Three

The third session involved telling Sam the block building story (refer 4.3.3).
Sam stated that Tony was sad but that he was not unsafe. Although he judged
the situation as a ten on the touch barometer he was clear it was to represent
Tony feeling 'very sad but not unsafe'. Sam outlined this and a logical course
of action for Tony to follow.

Researcher: How do you think Tony feels?
Sam: It's not unsafe; it's just sad.

Researcher: Show me on the touch barometer
Sam: (Puts the arrow on ten) Not unsafe but very sad.

Researcher: How do you know how he's feeling?
Sam: Because it was a real good building and he liked it but he didn't
like that it got bashed down.

Researcher: How would you feel if someone did that to you?
Sam: Sad and also I would feel unhappy that I don’t get to play with it anymore and you don’t know how to make one the same.

Researcher: What do you think Tony should do?

Sam: Tell the teachers, because they bashed down the building and he couldn’t say ‘stop’ because it was too late.

Sam believed that the children who knocked the building down knew it was wrong and was clear about the rules he believed the children had broken. He said, "You’re not allowed to bash people’s buildings down and not allowed to say names."

5.1.5 Sam - Session Four

In the fourth session Sam was shown the picture of an adult male kneeling down next to a boy (refer Appendix F). Following the initial discussion, Sam listened to the story describing the boy’s relationship and how the boy, Jake, felt about being kissed by Tom. When Sam judged the situation after looking at the picture, he chose a setting of five on the touch barometer. He believed that the boy was hurt and "sort of unsafe". After hearing the story, Sam changed the setting to three.

Researcher: What do you think is happening in this picture?

Sam: The man is helping the boy because he got hurt.

Researcher: How do you think the boy is feeling?

Sam: (Puts arrow on five) I think he is hurt and he wants to get better.

Researcher: You have put the arrow on five, do you think it is a safe or an unsafe feeling?

Sam: Sort of unsafe, in-between.
Researcher: (Tells Sam the story) Now that you have heard the story, how do you think Jake is feeling?

Sam: He doesn't like being kissed (moves the barometer down to three).

Researcher: So how do you think he is feeling?

Sam: Like he doesn't want to do it, he doesn't like it, he wants to have his own way of touching himself.

Researcher: So why have you moved it down?

Sam: Because he's still okay. But he doesn't like it.

During the discussion Sam talked about Jake's feelings and what he thought Jake should do. Sam suggested that Jake should "say stop" and that he should tell his Mum and Dad "look I've tried 'stop' and he isn't responding."

Sam talked about the kissing and whether you should have to do something that you don't like. He also discussed Tom's feelings and what he thought parents could do to help.

Researcher: Is it okay to kiss someone?

Sam: Not if they don't want to.

Researcher: What do you think you should do if someone wanted to kiss you and you didn't like it?

Sam: Say 'stop'.

Researcher: If that didn't work?

Sam: Go and tell Mum or Dad or a grown-up.

Researcher: Do you think Jake is being silly because he doesn't want to be kissed?
Sam: No. I don’t think it’s okay.

Researcher: Do you think Tom would be angry if Jake told his parents?

Sam: I think he would be pretty sad that he didn’t get to do it.

Researcher: Does Jake have to let Tom kiss him?

Sam: ‘Nup’.

Diagram 1.4

Jake is unhappy because he doesn’t like his grown up friend kissing him.

5.1.6 Sam - Session Five

The fifth session involved Sam listening to the story about Sophie who is being looked after by a babysitter. After listening to the story Sam took part in a guided discussion. Sam was asked to rate the safety of the situation and talk about the game.

Researcher: Does that sound like a good game?

Sam: Uh Uh (shakes his head, no).

Researcher: Why not?

Sam: Because it is not okay to show some one your private parts.
Researcher: Do you think Sophie should play the game?

Sam: No.

Researcher: Do you think Sophie would be feeling safe or unsafe?

Sam: (Puts the setting on two).

Researcher: If Sophie played the game with the babysitter how do you think she might be feeling then?

Sam: Unsafe; they will get into trouble from her parents (moves the arrow to seven).

Researcher: Is that because she would get into trouble?

Sam: Yes.

Researcher: How do you think the game would make her feel?

Sam: (Moves the arrow to two) She's okay except she's nervous.

Although he did not judge the situation to be unsafe Sam was clear that the game was not good and that Sophie should not play. Sam believed that Sophie needed to tell her parents and that the babysitter would get into trouble.

Researcher: Sophie's parents told her she had to do what the babysitter said, so does she have to play the game if he says so?

Sam: No.

Researcher: How come?

Sam: It is not a good one.

Researcher: Is it okay to say no?

Sam: Yes

Researcher: What do you think Sophie should do?
Sam: Say 'stop. I don’t want to play this game with you.'

Researcher: Do you think the babysitter would get into trouble for wanting Sophie to play the game?

Sam: Yes, he should.

Sam discussed how he thought he would feel if he was in the same situation. He said “I wouldn’t really like doing it and I don’t want to play it.” He believed that his parents would tell the babysitter that he could not come over unless he could cooperate. When asked what he meant by “cooperate”, Sam said the babysitter would have to, “not play games that aren’t okay and not say that you could stay up late.”

5.1.7 Sam - Session Six

Sam was asked to think about how he might feel if he was in various given situations. Following each scenario, Sam and the researcher discussed the ways in which Sam could resolve each situation positively. Sam ranked each situation on the touch barometer.

1. Stuck in a high cubby 7
2. Being teased by bigger kids 5
3. Touching game with a grown up 6
4. Stranger offering a lift home 10
5. Lost at a shopping centre 10

The last two situations were ranked as ten; the highest setting on the touch barometer. Sam said that being offered a lift home by a stranger was very unsafe because "they might be lying and taking you somewhere else, like to their house or something. They might give you some poisoned lollies." Sam
rated being lost in a shopping centre as a ten on the touch barometer because "no-one would notice that I am there and they might lock me in."

To conclude the sessions with Sam he was asked to draw 2 pictures, one in which he felt safe and the other unsafe. The safe picture was similar to that drawn in the whole group. Sam is at home with his Mum (refer Diagram 1.5).

Diagram 1.5

In the unsafe picture, as with the drawing from the whole group session, Sam is in the ocean and he is drowning (refer Diagram 1.6).
5.2 NICKY - Background

Nicky is six years and ten months old. She is in Year One. She is a small girl with thick dark hair and a slight speech impediment which turns "th" into "f" and "r" into "w". She is friends with most of the children in the class but plays mostly with a small group of girls. She is quiet in class and very serious about the tasks she is given. She is independent in her self care routines such as dressing, eating and toileting.

Nicky finds reading and writing tasks difficult and takes part in remedial language activities in the class. She is happy to keep trying and works hard at learning her letters and sounds to help with her reading and writing. Nicky writes mostly 'recounts', talking about her pregnant guinea pigs and their antics. She takes home simple repetitive reading books chosen by herself from a range of appropriate material. She also takes home extra language work and is committed to completing the set tasks on a nightly basis. Nicky enjoys singing.
and dancing and attends belly-dancing lessons one day each week after school.

Nicky lives with her mother and her three and a half year old brother. She spends every second weekend with her father and his partner who live some distance from Nicky and her mother. Nicky’s mother is very supportive and is committed to helping Nicky overcome her early language difficulties by taking extra work such as games and activities home from school to support Nicky’s learning. Nicky’s parents were supportive of Nicky’s part in the study. Nicky’s father, a social worker, is often confronted with children from abusive situations.

5.2.1 Nicky - The Whole Group Session

Nicky took part in the whole group prevention education session. This session involved a discussion about the meaning of safe and unsafe. Following the discussion, the children were asked to draw a diagram of a situation in which they felt safe and one in which they felt unsafe. This was to assist in choosing the sample group children and to establish their initial understandings of safe and unsafe.

Both of Nicky’s drawings depicting when she felt safe and unsafe were situated in her home. The ‘safe’ drawing was of Nicky in her bunk bed with her mother. Nicky is on the top bunk. Her mother is in the bunk with her (refer diagram 2.1).
Diagram 2.1

Mum is in bed with us. I like having snuggles with her.

Diagram 2.2.

I am in bed with my Teddy. A monster is above me.
Nicky's 'unsafe' picture is also set in her bedroom. Her drawing depicts a monster above her in bed. She is feeling unsafe but her brother is safe in the bottom bunk (refer diagram 2.2). Nicky was unable to name a time when she had felt unsafe in 'real life'.

5.2.2 Nicky - Session One

Session one required Nicky to look at a picture of a young girl being tickled by her father. Following the initial discussion, Nicky rated the situation on the touch barometer and then was read a short story (refer 4.4.1). Following the story, Nicky was asked to rate the situation on the touch barometer again and then discuss any changes. Nicky initially judged the situation as a '7' on the touch barometer scale. After hearing the story and finding out that Jacky is being tickled by her father, she changed the setting to 10.

Researcher: What do you think is happening in the picture?
Nicky: Her Dad is doing something not very good to her.

Researcher: What do you think he might be doing?
Nicky: Picking her up.

Researcher: How do you think she feels?
Nicky: Not very good.

Researcher: How can you tell that?
Nicky: By her face.

Researcher: What does the look on her face say?
Nicky: Not very good.

Researcher: Do you think that is a safe or an unsafe feeling?
Nicky: Unsafe feeling.

Researcher: Can you show me on the touch bar?
Nicky: (Puts it on 7).

Researcher: (Reads Nicky the story). Now that you have heard the story, how do you think Jacky is feeling?

Nicky: Not very good.

Researcher: Is it still the same on the touch bar?

Nicky: (Moves the marker to 10).

When questioned as to why she had judged the situation to be unsafe, Nicky would only say that Jacky was feeling “not very good”. The fact that Jacky looked unhappy and did not like being tickled were Nicky’s reasons for judging the situation as a 7 and then as a 10. When asked if she believed that Jacky’s Dad wanted to hurt Jacky, Nicky replied “no”, but still believed the touch barometer setting of 10 was appropriate.

5.2.3 Nicky - Session Two

In the second data collection session, Nicky was shown the picture of two large boys and a smaller boy. Nicky was shown the picture and then took part in an informal discussion with interview prompts used (refer Appendix D).

Nicky once again placed the touch barometer at the top level setting of 10. Nicky believed that the young boy was unsafe because the other boys were older and they were being mean to the younger boy. She believed that the football was the cause of the conflict and the young boy would not give the ball to the older boys. Once again Nicky used the picture to support her decision.

Researcher: How do you think the boy feels?

Nicky: Not very good, the two boys are being mean to the boy.
Researcher: How can you tell he’s feeling that way?
Nicky: By the look on his face.

Nicky based her judgement on the belief that you should not hurt other people and should be punished if you do.

Researcher: Do you think the older boys should be doing that?
Nicky: No

Researcher: Why not?
Nicky: Because its hurting the little boy and he doesn’t feel good.

Researcher: What do you think should happen to the big boys?
Nicky: Put them in time out (removal from the situation, which is used by Nicky’s mother) because they’re being mean and breaking a rule.

Researcher: What rules are they breaking?
Nicky: Hurting each other.

Researcher: Who should tell them to do that?
Nicky: The teacher, or Mumma or Dadda.

Nicky believed that the big boys should be punished, but she did not think that the little boy should “tell on” the big boy because “its not very good to tell.” However, when asked what she would do if the same thing happened to her, she said “tell...the teacher, Mumma or Dadda.” Once again punishment was thought to be the appropriate consequence. Nicky stated that if it happened to her, the teacher or her parents should “give them a spank or put them in time out”. Nicky drew a picture following the discussion to show how she thought the
young boy was feeling. She represented him as being sad because he is being bullied.

Diagram 2.3

The little boy is feeling sad because they are bullying him. They're hurting him.

5.2.4 Nicky - Session Three

The third session with Nicky involved the researcher telling her the story (refer 4.4.3) involving Tony's block tower being knocked over deliberately by three other children in the class. Nicky was asked to represent how the boy was feeling on the touch barometer and then respond to a range of interview prompts to promote discussion (refer Appendix E).

Nicky recorded the situation as a 7 on the touch barometer, which is a high unsafe setting. Tony was feeling "sad" and "not very good" as a result of his building being knocked down.

Researcher: How do you think Tony feels?

Nicky: Not very good, sad because they knocked his building down.

Researcher: Do you think that is a safe or an unsafe feeling?

Nicky: Not a good thing to do.

Researcher: Can you show me on the touch bar?
Nicky: (Points to 7)
Researcher: Do you think it is a safe or unsafe feeling?
Nicky: Unsafe feeling

The reasons given by Nicky as to why the situation was rated as an unsafe 7 were "because they were naughty" and "they bashed down the building." When Nicky was asked about the feelings and the motives of the children involved, she thought that the children were "happy that they did that" and then after some think time said, "maybe because they are big kids, maybe they don't like little kids." She added to this by saying, "maybe they didn't see the building".

The children who knocked Tony's building over were breaking a rule by "hurting other people's things". Nicky believed that the rule was made by teachers and Mums and Dads and other grown-ups. When asked what should happen to the children who knocked the building over, Nicky stated they should "sit in the kitchen (the area used for 'time out') or they could get a smack on the bum".

The guided discussion between Nicky and the researcher led to further discussion about a hypothetical situation at Nicky's house. The transcript below is the discussion between Nicky and the researcher. Nicky changed the touch barometer setting from 7 for Tony's building being knocked over at school, to a 10 if it happened to her at home.

Researcher: What would you do if it happened at your house?
Nicky: I would go and tell Mum and Dad
Researcher: Do you have rules at your house when people come over to play?

Nicky: (nods yes) about knocking people's buildings and about being nice

Researcher: Can you show me on the touch barometer how you would feel if it happened to you at your house?

Nicky: (Puts the arrow on 10)

Researcher: Why on 10 now?

Nicky: Because I feel that I'm not very safe

Researcher: Why at school is Tony feeling like this (points to 7) and at home you think you would be feeling like this (points to 10)?

Nicky: Because they'd be not at school, because there's not much adults at houses but at school there's lots.

The home situation was judged to be very unsafe on a setting of 10, because of the number of adults present to help in the situation, although the strategy (viz to get help from an adult) was the same.

5.2.5 Nicky - Session Four

In the fourth session, Nicky was shown the picture of an adult male kneeling down next to a boy (refer Appendix F). Nicky talked about what she thought was happening in the picture and gave a rating on the touch barometer. Following this, Nicky was read a short story (refer 4.4.3) and then talked with the researcher about what the story told her concerning the people in the diagram.
Nicky initially judged the situation to be a 5 on the touch barometer after looking at the picture. She could not decide if the situation was safe or unsafe.

Researcher: What do you think is happening in this picture?
Nicky: His Daddy is tickling him and he doesn’t like it.

Researcher: How do you think the boy is feeling?
Nicky: Not very happy.

Researcher: How can you tell he doesn’t feel happy?
Nicky: By the look on his face.

Researcher: Do you think he’s feeling safe or unsafe?
Nicky: I don’t know.

After hearing the story, Nicky changed the setting on the touch barometer to 7 but she did not describe the child’s feeling as safe or unsafe. She said the boy was feeling “not very good” and “sad”. When asked if the boy was feeling safe or unsafe, she would only point to the setting on the touch barometer.

Nicky referred to the picture and the story to support her judgements about the situation. The boy was feeling “not very happy”. This was evident by the look on his face. Following the telling of the story, Nicky used the information from the story to support her judgements that the boy was feeling “not very good” and “sad” and the setting of 7 on the touch barometer.

Researcher: Now that you have heard the story, how do you think Jake feels?
Nicky: Not very good.

Researcher: Why does he feel ‘not very good’?
Nicky: Because he doesn't want his big grown up friend to kiss him on the lips.

Researcher: Can you show me on the touch barometer how you think Jake is feeling?

Nicky: (Moves the arrow from 5 to 7).

Researcher: Why have you moved it to 7?

Nicky: He's sad.

Nicky felt that Jake had a right to say no to Tom, and that he should tell Tom that he doesn't like being kissed on the mouth. She believed that it was all right to kiss someone but not if they didn't like it.

Researcher: Should Jake let Tom kiss him?

Nicky: No.

Researcher: Why?

Nicky: Because he doesn't want to be kissed on the lips.

Researcher: What do you think Jake should do?

Nicky: Say 'stop kissing me on the lips'.

Researcher: Do you think he has to kiss Tom?

Nicky: No.

Researcher: Is it okay to kiss someone?

Nicky: Yes.

Researcher: So why isn't it okay for Jake's friend to kiss him?

Nicky: Because he doesn't want him to kiss him.
Nicky did not believe that Tom was breaking any rules by kissing Jake on the lips. She felt that Tom should listen to Jake's 'stop' message, then Jake should tell his parents so that they could "tell him to listen to the stop message". Nicky's drawing of Jake (refer Diagram 2.4 below) shows him crying.

Diagram 2.4

Jake is feeling sad because his friend might think he doesn't like him. Tom won't listen to the stop message.

5.2.6 Nicky - Session Five

The fifth session involved reading Nicky the story about Sophie who is asked by her babysitter to play a touching game. After listening to the story, Nicky took part in a discussion. The researcher used interview prompts to lead the discussion. Nicky was asked to show how she thought Sophie would feel on the touch barometer. Following the session, the researcher read the rest of the story describing the positive resolution of the story to Nicky (refer 4.4.6).

Nicky was clear that the game would make Sophie feel bad and that it was "not a good game" because "you have to take your clothes off". She ranked the situation as a 7 on the touch barometer. During the initial part of the interview,
when questioned as to whether Sophie should play the game, Nicky repeated several times that Sophie should "just watch telly". She did not supply an answer to the question 'How would Sophie feel if she did play the game?', stating that she didn't know. When questioned about whether Sophie should keep the game a secret, Nicky was able to answer the questions and give reasons for her judgements.

Researcher: Should Sophie keep the game a secret?
Nicky: No.
Researcher: Why?
Nicky: It's gooder to tell her parents.
Researcher: Why should she tell her parents?
Nicky: Just in case they don't like the game the babysitter told her to play.
Researcher: Who do you think Sophie should tell?
Nicky: Her Mum or Dad.
Researcher: Do you think Sophie would get into trouble if she told her parents?
Nicky: No.

Nicky was clear in her answers that Sophie should tell her parents, even though she had not played the game with the babysitter. When questioned about why the babysitter wanted the game to be kept a secret and what should happen to the babysitter after the parents were told, Nicky took a long time to answer.
Researcher: Why do you think the babysitter doesn't want Sophie to tell her parents?

Nicky: (shakes her head, indicating no).

Researcher: (restates the question).

Nicky: Because the babysitter might get into trouble.

Researcher: Do you think the babysitter should get into trouble?

Nicky: I don't know.

Researcher: Have a think, (repeats the question).

Nicky: No, he should just never go there again.

When Nicky was asked about whether the babysitter was breaking any rules, the conversation changed to Sophie's role. Nicky was at first unsure if Sophie had to play the game. At first she said that Sophie would have to play the game because she was told to do as the babysitter asked and the babysitter was older than her. Nicky, although unsure of the babysitter's control and authority over Sophie, still came to the conclusion that Sophie should not play the game.

Researcher: Is the babysitter breaking any rules?

Nicky: I don't know, (pauses), telling her what to do.

Researcher: Is that breaking a rule?

Nicky: If it's a grown up he could tell her what to do.

Researcher: If it's a grown up and they want Sophie to play the game, should she?

Nicky: She should watch telly instead.

Researcher: What should Sophie do?
Nicky: Tell the babysitter, 'Why do you have to take your clothes off?'

Researcher: Sophie's parents told her she has to do what the babysitter said, so does she have to play the game if he wants her to?

Nicky: Yes.

Researcher: Even if it makes her feel unsafe?

Nicky: Mmmm, No. (long pause) She doesn't have to play.

5.2.7 Nicky - Session Six

In the final data collection session, Nicky was asked to rank six different situations on the touch barometer. Nicky was asked to think about how she might feel if she was in the various situations. Following each situation, the researcher and Nicky discussed positive ways of resolving each one. Following this, Nicky was asked to draw a picture of herself when she felt safe and when she felt unsafe. This was to compare the pictures from the whole group session to see if the situations had changed. Nicky rated the situations on the touch barometer as outlined below:

1. Stuck in a high cubby 7
2. Being teased by bigger kids 7
3. Touching game with a grown up 5
4. Stranger offering you a lift home 10
5. Lost at a shopping centre 10

In situation 4 and 5, both ranked as a 10, Nicky stated that she was alone and scared. She stated she was afraid that she might get hurt. In the case of the touching game, Nicky described her feeling as "angry" because "I don't want to take my clothes off".
Nicky's two pictures showed different images, although they were set in her house as they had been in the whole group session pictures. The first was a picture of Nicky feeling safe at Christmas time. In both 'safe' pictures she is with her mother. Nicky's second picture was of Nicky alone in the house. In the first unsafe picture, Nicky is in bed with her Teddy and a monster is above her. Both unsafe pictures were set at the mother's house as were her safe pictures.

Diagram 2.5

I am buying a Christmas Tree. I am with Mummy. I feel happy.
5.3 BRIAN - Background

Brian is four years and two months old. He is in Pre-Primary in a mixed Grade One/Pre-Primary class group. He is a small boy with dark hair and eyes. He is a quiet boy who prefers creative and manipulative activities to rough or physical play. He is friends with a small group of children in Pre-Primary and particularly with a young girl, Holly, who attended day care with him in previous years. They have developed a secret language or code they call "Wooshi" and enjoy talking it when playing in home corner or creative play.

Brian is very imaginative and creates an interesting variety of buildings and machines using manipulatives such as Lego, Mobilo, Interstar and blocks, as well as box construction. He joins in all group activities such as music and movement and mat time, as well as regularly bringing news and items from home to share with the groups.

Brian lives with his mother and spends two nights a week at his father's house. Brian's mother is a counsellor and was supportive of Brian's participation in the
study. She regularly checked on Brian's sessions and was interested to hear how he judged situations and his responses to the data collection questions.

5.3.1 Brian - The Whole Group Session

When asked what he thought safe was, Brian talked about not being hurt or being happy. When asked to draw a picture of a safe situation, Brian drew himself at home near his pool with his mother (refer Diagram 3.1). Brian's unsafe situation was also set at home where he had fallen into the pool. Brian is not able to swim and is quite anxious around water (refer Diagram 3.2).

Diagram 3.1

I am standing near the pool. Mum is with me.
I have fallen into the pool. I am trying to get out and I can't.

5.3.2 Brian - Session One

Session One required Brian to look at the picture of a young girl being tickled. Brian was very unsure in answering the questions. During the discussion, he often needed prompting to talk about the judgement that he had made. Brian judged the first situation to be a 7 on the touch barometer after looking at the picture. He described the girl's feelings as sad, but did not know if the girl felt safe or unsafe.

Researcher: What do you think is happening in this picture?
Brian: Umm, a bit sick.

Researcher: What makes you think that?
Brian: Because the man's pressing her tummy.

Researcher: How do you think she feels?
Brian: Sad.

Researcher: Do you think that's a safe feeling or an unsafe feeling?
Brian: (Puts the touch barometer on 7), don't know, just sad.
After hearing the story, Brian felt the girl was feeling unsafe, but left the setting on seven on the touch barometer.

Researcher: Now that you have heard the story, how do you think Jacky is feeling?

Brian: I think she is crying.

Researcher: The same as before?

Brian: Nah.

Researcher: Tell me how you think she feels.

Brian: Unsafe.

Brian did not believe that Jacky’s dad would hurt her. “It could be an accident”, but when asked again how Jacky was feeling, he said “very unsafe”. He also believed that Jacky’s dad would stop if Jacky asked him to.

5.3.3 Brian - Session Two

In the second data collection session, Brian was shown the picture of three boys. Brian judged the second situation as a 9 on the touch barometer, after looking at the picture of the bigger boys bullying the younger boy.

Researcher: What do you think is happening in the picture?

Brian: Two boys are trying to snatch the ball off him.

Researcher: How do you think the little boy feels?

Brian: Unsafe; sad.

Researcher: Can you show me on the touch bar?

Brian: (Puts arrow on 9) Very unsafe (refer Diagram 3.3).
The boy is feeling cross.
He is feeling very unsafe because
they are hurting him badly.

Brian used the picture to justify his judgements about the situation, saying that
he can tell "by his mouth". He said the older boys’ behaviour was not
appropriate.

Researcher: Do you think the big boys should be doing that?
Brian: Nup.

Researcher: Why not?
Brian: Because it makes bad feelings.

When Brian was asked about the rules the bigger boys were breaking, he made
up rules to fit the situation. He said, "The teacher said they're not allowed to
take the ball". When asked what rules the boys would be breaking if they were
not at school, Brian could not name any. He said that if it was happening to
him, the boys would be breaking "my mum's rules. My mum said they can't
have the ball because it's my own ball."

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5.3.4 Brian - Session Three

The third session involved Brian listening to the block tower story and then taking part in a discussion. Brian was asked to represent the young boy's feelings on the touch barometer.

Researcher: How do you think Tony feels?
Brian: Sad.

Researcher: Why do you think he's feeling sad?
Brian: Because he liked his building.

Researcher: So do you think he is feeling safe or unsafe?
Brian: Safe.

Researcher: Show me on the touch bar.
Brian: Sad, but safe.

Researcher: Would he be feeling safe or unsafe?
Brian: Safe because it's not too bad.

Brian became confused when asked the rules the children were breaking. As in the data collection session two, Brian made up rules to fit the fictional situation, but could not think of what general rules of behaviour would fit the situation. He knew it was the children who had knocked the building down who were wrong, but he could not say why. The researcher related the situation to Brian's own class, but he was still confused as to who had done the wrong thing and the rules that were broken.

Researcher: What rules do you think the children were breaking?
Brian: He used too many blocks.
Researcher: Who broke the rules then; Tony or the children who knocked over the building?

Brian: The children who knocked the building over.

Researcher: What rule did they break?

Brian: There wasn't many blocks left because he wanted to make a big building.

Researcher: So who broke the rules?

Brian: The kid's who smashed it down.

Researcher: So what rule did they break?

Brian: Can't remember, (pause). Teacher said, "No block corner, only one person at a time."

Researcher: Think about the rules we have at school, would they be breaking any of our rules?

Brian: Nup.

Brian was unable to identify the action of knocking the building over as the rule the children had violated. Instead he focused on Tony and his part in the incident. As the discussion continued, Brian made up rules that may have applied to Tony. "Jane said not many blocks left"; "only one person at a time in block corner." Brian seemed unsure as to who had broken the rule and could not apply the situation to his class and decide on what the children had done wrong.
5.3.5 Brian - Session Four

In the fourth individual session with Brian, he was shown the picture of an adult male kneeling down next to a boy (refer Appendix F). Brian took part in an informal discussion about the picture. He then listened to the story describing the man's relationship with the boy (refer 4.4.3).

Brian initially judged the safety of Jake to be a 6 on the touch barometer. Following the story, he changed this to 10. He thought the man was a dad and was accidentally hurting his son. The boy felt "sad" and "unsafe". Following the story, Brian described Jake's feelings as "miserable because he doesn't like being kissed". Brian seemed unsure of whether Jake should have to kiss Tom. During the discussion, Brian wavered on this point.

Researcher: Should Jake let Tom kiss him?
Brian: Yep.

He knew Jake did not like the kiss, but said because Tom was a grown-up he felt Jake had to do what Tom said. When asked "even if he doesn't like it?" Brian said "Yep". Brian felt that Jake was unsafe and judged the situation as a 10. He also said that Jake should "run home and tell his mum or dad". Brian was confused between Jake doing what he was told by an adult and the belief that Jake was not safe and should get away. Brian drew Jake feeling very unhappy (see Diagram 3.4 below).
Diagram 3.4

Jake is feeling sad. He has tears running down. He is sad because he doesn't like being kissed.

5.3.6 Brian - Session Five

Session five involved Brian listening to the story about Sophie who is being looked after by the babysitter. Brian listened to the story describing Sophie and her babysitter and had some difficulty deciding whether Sophie should play the game or not. He initially said she should and then changed his mind.

Researcher: Does that sound like a good game?
Brian: Mmmm, think it will.

Researcher: Do you think Sophie should play that game?
Brian: Umm, yep.

Researcher: What did Sophie have to do in the game?
Brian: Take her clothes off.

Researcher: Why do you think the babysitter would want her to take her clothes off?
Brian: I don't know.
Researcher: What were the two rules for the game?

Brian: One was you had to take your clothes off and the other one I can't remember.

Researcher: The other was she had to keep the game a secret. She wasn't allowed to tell anyone about the game.

Brian: It could be private.

Researcher: Do you think Sophie is feeling safe or unsafe?

Brian: (Puts the arrow on eight).

Researcher: Why is she feeling unsafe?

Brian: Because she doesn't like it.

Researcher: What doesn't she like?

Brian: Umm, taking her clothes off.

Researcher: Do you think its a good game?

Brian: Nah.

Researcher: Do you think Sophie should play the game?

Brian: Nah.

Brian also changed his mind about whether Sophie should keep the game a secret. When he was first asked, he said "yes, she should keep it a secret". When asked why, he said "because it might be private". He then changed his mind and said Sophie should tell someone.

Brian did not believe that the babysitter was breaking any rules and could not give a reason why he judged the situation to be unsafe. However, he did believe that the babysitter should "get told off and just stay out of the house".
When Brian was asked what he would do if the same thing happened to him, he said he would not play the game and he would tell his parents, Jane and Kevin.

5.3.7 Brian - Session Six

In the final data collection session, Brian was asked to judge six different situations on the touch barometer. Brian was asked to think about how he might feel if he was in the various situations. Following each situation, the researcher and Brian discussed positive ways of resolving the situations. Brian ranked the situations on the touch barometer as follows:

1. Stuck in a high cubby 8
2. Being teased by bigger kids 8
3. Touching game with a grown up 9
4. Stranger offering you a lift home 6
5. Lost at a shopping centre 9

Situation three was judged as a nine, which is very unsafe on the touch barometer. Brian described his feelings as “I feel a bit cross and unsafe” because “I don’t like it, I don’t like keeping secrets.” Brian also used the word cross to describe situation two and situation four. In situation two, Brian said “I feel cross because I don’t like going back to someone’s house.” In response to situation four, he said, “I feel a bit cross and a little bit sad.” Being lost at the shopping centre was judged as nine, because of the fear of strangers and the belief that they might come and take him from the shopping centre.

Brian was then asked to draw two pictures. One of the pictures was to show a situation in which Brian felt safe and the other a situation in which he felt
unsafe. Brian's safe picture was similar to his first picture drawn at the beginning of the data collection sessions. It shows him at home with his mother (refer Diagram 4.5). In Brian's unsafe picture he is with a stranger and he fears that he might be taken away (refer Diagram 4.6.)

Diagram 4.5.

I am at home under my bed. Mum is at home with me.

Diagram 4.6

A stranger is coming to get me. I want my Mum. He might take me away.
5.4. CARRY - Background

Carry is four years and six months old. She is in Pre-Primary. She has blonde hair and fair skin. She has attended day care prior to Pre-Primary with several of the other children in the class and has firm friendships with those children. She has started to develop friendships with other children in the class and is happy to play with a variety of children. She is independent in class and in self care such as toileting, eating and dressing. She is self-directed in her activities, often initiating games and activities during play times.

Carry enjoys language tasks and spends time at the writing table. She is beginning to imitate writing, copying words from around the class and using inventive spelling to write simple phonetic words. She joins in all class activities and particularly likes drawing, painting and activity time where she uses a variety of art media.

Carry lives with her mother. She spends two nights a week with her father, step-mother and three step-siblings. Carry attends an out of school care facility for three days after school. Carry has difficulty separating from her parents in the mornings when dropped at school. She often cries and needs consoling when they leave. Carry’s mother works with families in crisis and families who need help caring for their children. She runs parenting courses and works with parents, teaching them about child development and how to play with their children. She is supportive of child abuse prevention programmes. Carry’s mother is her legal guardian and was supportive of Carry’s role in the study.
5.4.1 Carry - The Whole Group Session

Carry took part in the whole group prevention education session. The session involved a discussion about the meaning of safe and unsafe. Carry contributed to the group talk by giving examples of both safe and unsafe situations. Following the discussion, the children were asked to draw a diagram of situations in which they felt safe and unsafe. This was to assist in choosing the case study children and to establish each child’s initial understanding of safe and unsafe. Carry’s safe picture shows her at her mother’s house. She is outside playing and her mother is in the house (refer to Diagram 4.1).

Diagram 4.1

I am in the sun. Mum is inside. I feel safe.

Carry’s unsafe picture shows her swimming in the water at the beach. She is with her father and he is somewhere on the nearby jetty. Carry is drowning and her father is trying to save her (refer Diagram 3.2). When asked if she had ever been in a situation where she had felt unsafe, she said she was with a big kid, Emma on the pavement and a bad dog started to bark at them.
I am in the water and dad is on the jetty trying to save me.

5.4.2 Carry - Session One

Session one required Carry to look at the picture of Jacky being tickled by her father. After looking at the picture, Carry judged the situation as a seven on the touch barometer. After hearing the story, Carry kept the arrow on seven but said that Jacky’s feeling was different.

Researcher: What do you think is happening in that picture?
Carry: She’s hurt herself.

Researcher: What makes you think that?
Carry: Because she has got an unhappy smile on her face. I think her Dad’s helping her.

Researcher: How do you think she feels?
Carry: Sad

Researcher: Do you think that is a safe or unsafe feeling?
Carry: Unsafe (puts the arrow on seven).
Researcher: Now that you have heard the story, how do you think Jacky is feeling?

Carry: Sad.

Researcher: The same as before?

Carry: Different.

Researcher: Tell me how you think she feels?

Carry: I would feel sad

Researcher: Is it still the same on the touch bar?

Carry: Yes.

When Carry was questioned about the tickling, she was clear that it was not appropriate for Jacky's father to hurt her. Carry was asked, "Do you think that Jacky's Dad should be tickling her like that?" She replied "It could hurt her and when she's an adult she might do that to her kid and it could keep going." She believed that Jacky's dad would stop if he knew that it made Jacky feel sad and that if Jacky gave her dad the 'stop' message he would stop tickling her.

5.4.3 Carry - Session Two

In the second data collection session, Carry was shown a picture of two large boys and a smaller boy. Carry judged the situation as a seven on the touch barometer after looking at the picture. She was clear about what was happening in the picture and how each of the boys felt. She said that the little boy was feeling sad and unsafe and the bigger boys were feeling proud (refer Diagram 4.3).

Researcher: What do you think is happening in that picture?
Carry: The boys are bullying another boy. This boy is bullying that boy and that one is smiling because he is proud that that one is bullying that one (pointing to the boys in the picture).

Researcher: How do you think the little boy feels?
Carry: (Puts arrow on seven), unsafe and sad.
Researcher: How can you tell he’s feeling that way?
Carry: His face looks like he’s feeling sad.

Carry based her judgements of the safety of the situation by using the picture as a reference. The boys’ faces showed they were feeling sad, unsafe and proud. She also judged the situation, using her beliefs about behaviour. The big boys were not meant to be hurting the little boy because “it hurts other people’s feelings”. When asked if the bigger boys were breaking any rules, Carry said they were breaking the “caring rule”. The caring rule is “You love other kids, not in your family, but friends,” and therefore you should not hurt their feelings. Carry believed that the bigger boys should have time out because they hurt the smaller boy’s feelings.
As part of the discussion, Carry was asked to describe what the young boy could do to fix the situation. Carry believed that if a teacher was present they would be able to fix the situation. It was "you, the teacher", that made the caring rule and if the little boy "called out for a teacher" he would be all right. Carry said that if there was no teacher around then the little boy should give the big boys a 'stop' message and go and "tell the teacher, or Mum or Dad, or someone who was looking after him.

5.4.4 Carry - Session Three

The third session involved telling Carry the story (refer 3.4.3) involving a young boy’s block tower being knocked down by three other children in the class. Carry was asked to represent how the boy was feeling on the touch barometer. Carry picked a high setting of nine on the touch barometer to show how Tony was feeling when his building was knocked down. She described Tony as being "sad, sad about his building" and "unsafe". She based her judgement on the story, saying that Tony felt sad and unsafe because the "people knocked his building over". When asked how she would feel if it happened to her, she
said she would feel sad and put the touch barometer on seven. She did not give an explanation for the difference in the setting between Tony and herself.

Carry believed that the other children felt happy that they knocked Tony's building down, because "they wanted to do it". When asked if what the other children did was wrong, Carry talked about school rules.

Carry: They break the school rules, they breaked the building down.

Researcher: Which school rules?

Carry: Hurting other people's feelings.

Researcher: Who makes those rules?

Carry: The teacher, mum and dad could have made the same ones.

Researcher: What do you think should happen to the children who knocked Tony's building down?

Carry: They should go to time out.

When questioned about the same situation happening at home, Carry said that the children would be breaking her Mum's rules. "She doesn't like it when people knock my buildings down." The perceived solution to the problem was slightly different for Tony and for herself. Carry believed that Tony should go and get the teacher and tell him/her that "the kids were running and knocked over the building". When asked what she would do if the same thing happened to her, she provided more options. "I could tell mum, or sort it out first or I could make another one."
5.4.5 Carry - Session Four

In the fourth session with Carry, she was shown the picture of an adult male kneeling down next to a boy (refer Appendix F). Carry was asked to describe what she saw in the picture and then listened to the accompanying story. Carry changed her judgement to a lower score after hearing the story. She initially judged the situation to be a nine and then changed the setting to a seven. When Carry thought the man was a stranger, she chose the higher setting because the man might have posed a risk to the boy. Upon finding that the man was a friend of Jake and his family, she judged his feeling to be safe but sad.

Researcher: What do you think is happening in this picture?
Carry: The boy is hurt.

Researcher: How do you think the boy is feeling?
Carry: Sad.

Researcher: How can you tell that by looking at the picture?
Carry: The look on his face.

Researcher: Can you show me on the touch bar?
Carry: (Puts it on nine).

Researcher: Is that a safe or an unsafe feeling?
Carry: Unsafe and it looks like he might be a stranger.

Researcher: Why would he be feeling unsafe?
Carry: Because he might, because you shouldn’t go near strangers.

Researcher: Why’s that?
Carry: Because they could bring you away or ask you to come in their car. They could be bad and they could lock you in the car.
Researcher: Now that you have heard the story, how do you think Jake feels?

Carry: Sad.

Researcher: Show me on the touch bar.

Carry: (Moves arrow to seven).

Researcher: Is that a safe or unsafe feeling?

Carry: Safely unsafe.

Researcher: So how is Jake feeling?

Carry: Well, he's not feeling unsafe, he's sad.

Carry based her second judgement on the fact that the man was considered a friend and therefore Jake was sad but not unsafe. He was judged to be sad because he did not like being kissed. Carry was initially clear that Jake did not have to let Tom kiss him even though he was an adult and a friend. However, when asked again as to whether Jake had to let Tom kiss him, Carry paused for some time and then said "I don't know, it's hard."

Carry believed that Jake did not have to let Tom kiss him because he didn't like it and "if he doesn't want to he shouldn't have to". She based her judgement on her belief that you shouldn't have to do something that makes you feel "sad or bad". Carry knew it was okay to kiss someone if you like it and you want it, but not if you don't. Carry's picture shows Jake's unhappiness (refer Diagram 4.4)
Diagram 4.4

Jake is feeling sad. He doesn't want Tom to kiss him.

5.4.6 Carry - Session Five

In the fifth session, Carry listened to the story about Sophie. After listening to the story, Carry took part in a discussion. Carry judged the situation as a ten: the highest setting for the five data collection sessions. She was clear that the situation was unsafe and that Sophie should not take part in the game or keep the game a secret.

Researcher: Does that sound like a good game?

Carry: No.

Researcher: How come?

Carry: Because it's not very nice taking all your clothes off.

Researcher: Why's that?
Carry: Because it's not very fun having a game when you don't have your clothes on.

Researcher: Can you show me on the touch barometer how Sophie is feeling?

Carry: It looks about (puts it on ten).

Researcher: Do you think Sophie should play the game?

Carry: Umm, no but if it was a game like dominoes that would be all right.

Researcher: Do you think Sophie is feeling safe or unsafe?

Carry: Unsafe (points to the touch bar).

Researcher: Should Sophie keep the game a secret?

Carry: No.

Researcher: How come?

Carry: Because it wouldn't be very nice not to tell her mum or dad.

Researcher: Do you think her mum or dad would want to know?

Carry: But they do because my mum always wants me to tell her what I don't like about. Sometimes when I go to school, sometimes she wants me to tell her if I've been hurt at school or something.

The game was unsafe because you had to take off your clothes. Carry based her judgement on the belief that "it's not very fun playing a game when you had all of your clothes off". When asked what Sophie should do, Carry suggested that she should go and tell the next door neighbour or mum and dad when they got home. Carry was concerned that Sophie would get into trouble from the babysitter.
Carry: She would get into trouble because the babysitter didn't want her to do that (tell mum and dad).

Researcher: Why do you think the babysitter doesn't want Sophie to tell?

Carry: Because the babysitter would get into trouble. Because it's not a very nice game.

Researcher: What do you think should happen to the babysitter?

Carry: I think he should go home and she should get another babysitter.

Carry talked about the babysitter wanting Sophie to take her clothes off. She said the babysitter was breaking a rule "because it's not nice, it's not nice to take all your clothes off, only at bedtime when you're getting into your pyjamas". Carry was creative in her solutions when she was asked about what she would do in Sophie's situation.

Researcher: So if you had a babysitter who wanted to play the game, what would you do?

Carry: If I was on a farm I could get the horse and run away.

Researcher: What if you were at your house?

Carry: I would get into the guinea pig cage and lock it up.

Researcher: So if it happened to you, who would you tell?

Carry: I could go tell the next door neighbours because I know them both. I know Jenny and Natasha.

5.4.7 Carry - Session Six

Carry was asked to think about how she might feel if she was in various situations. Following each situation, the researcher and Carry discussed
positive ways of resolving them. Carry ranked each situation on the touch barometer as follows:

1. Stuck in a high cubby 9
2. Being teased by bigger kids 6
3. Touching game with a grown-up 8
4. Stranger offering a lift home 6
5. Lost at a shopping centre 9

Situation one was judged to be a nine, because according to Carry, "I might think that I'll never be able to get down and I'd have to stay there." Situation five was also judged as very unsafe, with a score of nine, because "I've done that before at a really big shop with a giraffe, well I was crying and I went to the shop keeper."

To conclude the sessions with Carry, she was asked to draw two situations, one in which she felt safe, and the other in which she felt unsafe. The safe picture shows Carry at home. She is happy because she is allowed to sleep at a friend's house (refer Diagram 4.5). In the unsafe picture, Carry has fallen over and hurt herself (refer Diagram 4.6)
Diagram 4.5

I feel safe. My mum said I could sleep over at my friend's house.

Diagram 4.6

I feel unsafe. I fell down on the ground. I got a big bleeding leg. I feel sad.
CHAPTER SIX - DISCUSSION

6.0 Introduction

In this chapter, each of the four participant’s results is discussed in turn. The six data gathering sessions are addressed separately and links are made to the literature reviewed in chapters two and three. Finally, the discussion is summarised, bringing together the outcomes that were similar for all of the four participants.

6.1 Sam

Sam is six years and one month of age and would traditionally be viewed as belonging to the pre-operational stage of cognitive development, as outlined by Piaget (1932, in Berrick, 1991) and the pre-moral stages of development as outlined by Piaget (1932/1969), Kohlberg (1969) and Freud (1961). During the discussion of Sam’s judgements from the data gathering sessions, it is demonstrated that the traditional method of labelling children aged between two and seven as pre-operational and pre-moral is not appropriate to Sam. Although it would appear that Sam, in making his judgements initially, used pre-moral reasoning, a further examination of Sam’s subjective reasoning indicates that he is able to identify ‘true’ moral transgressions.

6.1.1 Session One

On viewing the picture, Sam judged the situation as extremely unsafe with a setting of ten on the touch barometer. Following the story, Sam was able to recognise that Jacky’s father was probably not aware that he was hurting Jacky during the tickling game. Sam demonstrated subjective reasoning skills.
consistent with a young child moving from a pre-moral stage of development. He recognised that although Jacky was sometimes hurt in the game, the father's motivation was not to hurt Jacky, but to have fun and Sam changed his judgement to five to reflect this. This is consistent with a young child who is moving beyond pre-moral/pre-operational thought. Sam was able to see beyond the immediate outcome; (ie, Jacky being hurt), and to reason as to her father's motivation. Sam clearly judged the act on its merits. Traditionally a pre-moral child would focus on the outcome and not the intent (Cole and Cole, 1993) and would judge the action as bad.

6.1.2 Session Two

In the second session, Sam was able to judge the situation as potentially unsafe and put the touch barometer on seven. Lamb (1991) and Kagan (1992) found young children have an awareness of potential moral transgressions and a vocabulary to reflect this. Sam recognised the risk and could describe possible scenarios to fit the picture, "Looks like he's going to be bashed up by those big boys and wreck his game." He identified that the older boys were a potential threat to the young boy and could outline an appropriate course of action for the boy to take.

6.1.3 Session Three

Sam judged Tony's safety as a ten on the touch barometer after hearing the story. The setting of ten should reflect an extremely unsafe situation. However, Tony was not unsafe, but just upset. Choosing this setting would suggest that Sam is in the Punishment and Obedience stage of moral development as outlined by Kohlberg (1969). A child in this stage of moral development has not
yet formulated an internal, autonomous conscience and is unable to judge a situation on merit alone (McInerney and McInerney, 1994).

When Sam was questioned about the setting of ten, it was clear that he was able to judge the safety of the situation based on individual merits. Sam explained that Tony was "...not unsafe but very sad...because it was a real good building and he liked it and he didn't like that it got bashed down." Sam used the touch barometer as a reflection of Tony's feelings and not safety. Sam demonstrated an understanding of rules. Then he said the children had broken a school rule by knocking the building over and felt that Tony should tell the teacher. The use of rules to make moral judgements is consistent with pre-moral development.

6.1.4 Session Four

On viewing the picture in session four, Sam judged the situation as five on the touch barometer and he said that the boy was "sort of unsafe, in between". Gilbert (1988 in Berrick, 1991) found that pre-school children had difficulty with the middle area of the continuum, but were able to describe reactions at the extremes of the continuum. Sam is in year one and demonstrated that he was able to reflect his doubt about the situation by choosing a setting in the middle of the continuum.

After hearing the story, Sam moved the setting to a three. Despite the risk of potential sexual abuse, "he's okay but he doesn't like it". This is consistent with DeYoung's (1988) assertion that young children are unable to make a judgement of an event only on the basis of its outcomes and consequences,
such as in cases of non-intrusive sexual contact as in session four. Further discussion with Sam revealed that although he did not believe that Jake was unsafe, he did think that Jake did not have to let Tom kiss him. Sam was clear that Jake could say no to an adult. This would suggest that Sam had moved beyond the pre-moral stage of development where Tom's position as an authority figure would command Jake's compliance (Kohlberg, 1969). Furthermore, by recognising that the kiss was not appropriate and suggesting that Jake say "no", Sam demonstrated that his moral reasoning was not based purely on his unilateral respect for authority figures, as suggested by Kohlberg (1969).

6.1.5 Session Five

The risk of potential sexual abuse, in the vignette of Sophie and the babysitter, was not recognised by Sam. He gave the initial setting on two of the touch barometer, which was a safe setting and lower than Jake being kissed by Tom and not liking it. When asked how Sophie would feel if she did play the game, Sam moved the setting to seven. However, the setting of seven did not reflect the potential for sexual abuse, rather it was the fear that Sophie would get into trouble from her parents, because she broke a rule and stayed up late. This would further support DeYoung's belief that young children are unable to make a judgement that non-intrusive sexual abuse is unsafe (1988). Sam did not judge the situation as unsafe, even though Sophie had to take her clothes off and play a game that involved touching.

During further discussion, Sam did say that Sophie would be "nervous" and knew that the game was "not a good one". Liang (1991) found that young
children were often unable to recognise why a situation was abusive, even though they demonstrated the ability to reject the abuser and leave the situation. Sam’s focus was on whether Sophie would get into trouble for staying up late and not on the game itself and this is consistent with the behaviour of a child in the pre-moral stage of development.

6.1.6 Session Six

In the final session, Sam was asked to judge the safety of five different situations. He was able to give appropriate responses to all of the situations based on a threat to his physical safety. Being lost in a shopping centre and a stranger offering you a lift home, were both judged to be extremely unsafe, with a setting of ten. In both of these situations, Sam was able to reason subjectively to justify his judgement by applying motive to the situations. This would suggest Beland’s theory (1986 in Berrick, 1991) that touches that cause pain are more easily viewed by young children as moral transgressions. Furthermore, by judging the touching game with an adult as six, Sam is consistent with his previous judgements that non-intrusive and therefore non-painful touching is not seen as unsafe, compared to threats to physical well being.

6.1.7 Summary of Discussion - Sam

Sam’s judgements throughout the data gathering sessions were consistent. He was able to make and justify the safety settings for all of the situations presented to him in the study. In all of the situations that involved non-intrusive sexual touching, Sam chose relatively safe settings on the touch barometer. However, he was able to assert that the child involved should say “no” or
"stop", and that they should seek help from their parents to deal with the situation. This would initially seem to suggest that Sam did not recognise the situations as abusive and therefore unsafe, as is suggested by DeYoung (1988). In addition, it would support Gilbert's (1988 in Berrick, 1991) belief that young children have difficulty identifying touch that does not cause extreme sensation such as physical pain, as being unsafe or abusive.

On further examination of the sessions, it is clear that although Sam did not judge the situations to be unsafe, he was able to suggest that the children involved should take action to avoid or report the incident. Sam considered the threat of physical harm as extremely unsafe. However, he also knew that it was "not okay" to kiss an adult on the lips if it made you feel uncomfortable, or play a game that involved taking off your clothes and keeping it a secret. Perhaps this reflects the fact that Sam was able to recognise that these were moral transgressions, which would support research that suggests that young children can make distinctions between true moral transgressions and conventional rules (Nucci and Turiel, Weston and Turiel, 1980 in Berrick, 1991). It would also support post-Piagetian research on moral development which found increased awareness of moral understandings in young children.

6.2 Nicky

Nicky is six years and ten months old, the oldest of the children in the sample group. Nicky would traditionally be viewed as a young child moving from the pre-operational to concrete operational stage of cognitive development (McInerney & McInerney, 1994). Nicky is viewed by her teacher, the researcher, as being less developmentally mature than the majority of the year
one group. She requires a considerable amount of one to one teaching time and has extra tuition at home.

An examination of Nicky's judgements throughout the discussion, reveals a focus on compliance to adult authority, rules and punishment for breaking rules. This is consistent with the pre-moral stages of moral development. However, a further examination of Nicky's explanations in relation to the action the children should take, provides evidence of the development of autonomous thought and the recognition of moral transgressions.

6.2.1 Session One

Nicky initially judged the situation as unsafe, saying “her Dad is doing something not very good to her”. After the story, Nicky increased the setting to a ten on the touch barometer. Nicky was unable to explain why Jackie was more unsafe. She just said that Jackie felt “not very good”. A setting of ten is the highest on the touch barometer and not appropriate to this situation.

Bjorklund (1989) stated that young children egocentrically and concretely attend to the visible outcomes in making their moral judgements. This is because of a young child's difficulty in evaluating the subtleties between good and bad, right and wrong (Bjorklund, 1989). This would explain why Nicky chose an unsafe setting, since her focus was on Jacky's feelings. Jacky felt “not very good" and was therefore unsafe. Nicky was unable to recognise the subtleties of the situation, that it was Jacky's father and that it was a game.

This is further supported by Gilbert (1988 in Berrick, 1991) who found that the responses to research questions about touch were given at the extremes of the continuum, such as feeling good and therefore safe, or bad and therefore
unsafe. Gilbert suggests that young children focus on the feelings associated with experiences, and do not necessarily attend to the subtleties of the situation. This would make it difficult for a young child to appropriately judge a situation.

6.2.2 Session Two

Nicky chose the highest setting of ten for the bullying scenario. The older boys were also seen as "not very good". Nicky used her knowledge of rules of behaviour to support her judgement. Smetana (1985 in Berrick, 1991) found that it is the rule that defines the boundary for the action, not the action itself. Nicky knew that "you're not allowed to hurt each other" and that the boys were breaking this rule. She found it difficult to decide if the young boy should get help because she believed "it's not very good to tell": another of her rules that governed her behaviour.

Further to Nicky's belief in rules, was her assertion that if you break a rule you should get punished. This is reflective of pre-moral development where the young child in the punishment and obedience stage (McInerney and McInerney 1994) views actions in terms of physical consequences and how to avoid punishment and obtain rewards. Nicky believed that the big boys should be "given a spank or put in time out because they're being mean and they're breaking a rule".

6.2.3 Session Three

During the discussion with Nicky for session three, she used the words "not very good" and "sad" several times to describe how Tony felt. This was
consistent throughout all the data gathering sessions with Nicky. The feelings of the child in the scenarios were Nicky's focus, and safe and unsafe were not words she used without prompting.

Egan (1994) suggests that young children are extremely familiar with abstract concepts such as good and bad, security and danger, because they are concepts used in stories, most commonly fairy tales. Nicky used the term "good" and "not very good" regularly and appropriately throughout the discussions.

Briggs and Hawkins (1994) found that the concepts of safe and unsafe were not attained by the majority of the children in the prevention education packages they reviewed. This is a central concern in the research on prevention education. Nicky, although unfamiliar with the terms safe and unsafe, used the children's feelings as an indicator of whether the situation was good or bad. She knew that Tony felt "not very good" about his building being knocked over, and therefore gave it an unsafe setting of seven on the touch barometer. The setting of seven was not reflective of his safety, but rather his feelings.

6.2.4 Session Four

Nicky found it difficult to judge the safety of Jake when Tom wanted to kiss him on the mouth. She stated several times that Jake felt "not very happy" and "not very good". Finally, with prompting, Nicky put the touch barometer on seven. However Nicky would not say if Jake was safe or unsafe. DeYoung (1988) argues that if a young child judges a situation on its outcomes and
consequences, in cases of non-intrusive sexual contact, or contact from someone they perceive as good, they may not be able to judge non-intrusive sexual contact as bad and therefore abusive. Nicky knew that Jake felt "not very good" and that he liked Tom and wanted to play with him. However she felt that Jake should say no to the kiss. She reasoned that an adult could be disobeyed if the situation felt "not very good". In addition, Nicky did not feel that Jake should kiss Tom because he was an adult, even though she previously demonstrated an orientation to obedience with adults.

6.2.5 Session Five

In the fifth session, Nicky found it difficult to judge the safety of the situation. She stated several times that Sophie should "just watch telly". However, even though she was unable to state that the situation was unsafe, she knew that it was "not a good game" because you have to take your clothes off. She said that Sophie should not play the game and that she should tell her parents.

Children in the pre-moral stage of development base their moral judgements on their unilateral respect for authority figures. Nicky's focus throughout the sessions on adult authority and rules, would strongly suggest heteronomous reasoning appropriate to pre-moral development. This created a conflict for Nicky, who believed that Sophie had to do what the babysitter said, because he held a position of authority, but she also knew that Sophie should not play the game. This suggests that Nicky is in fact moving towards subjective reasoning; demonstrating that she is able to judge the situation on its merits, indicating that she is formulating an internal, autonomous conscience consistent with a child moving from pre-moral thought (Berrick, 1991).
6.2.6 Session Six

Nicky ranked six different situations on the touch barometer in session six. The lowest ranking was given to playing a touching game with a grown up. The setting of five given to this situation was consistent with previous sessions. Nicky gave the highest setting to a stranger offering her a lift home and being lost in a shopping centre. These were both given a setting of ten because she was alone and scared. This is consistent with Bjorklund’s (1989) findings that children attend to the outcome that is visible and obvious in making moral judgements. The threat of being alone in two situations that made her feel scared, meant they were given appropriately high settings by Nicky. As with Sam, the potential for sexual abuse was not recognised or considered as being as unsafe as the potential for physical harm. This is consistent with Gilbert’s assertion that children describe as unsafe, feelings attached to experiences of extreme sensation such as pain. However, as in sessions four and five, Nicky knew that the touching game was not appropriate. She said it made her “angry” because “I don’t want to take my clothes off.” Hypothetically, Nicky demonstrated the ability to reject the abuser, even though she was unable to recognise the situation as unsafe or abusive.

6.2.7 Summary of Discussion: Nicky

Many of Nicky’s answers during the sessions were consistent with those of a child in the pre-moral stage of development. Nicky displayed a strong orientation towards obedience to rules and punishment. She linked many of her decisions to the rules that had been broken (Piaget, 1932/1962 in Berrick, 1991) and the belief that one would be punished if one broke them. Both behaviours are indicators of pre-moral development (Piaget, 1932;
Kohlberg, 1969, in Berrick 1991). As with Sam, Nicky's answers demonstrated that events that may lead to strong physical sensation such as pain, were judged as unsafe. However, unlike Sam, Nicky found it more difficult to recognise the subtleties and potential motives in specific situations, attending to how the children felt in each situation. If the child felt "not very good", then the situation was given a higher setting. However, like Sam, Nicky knew that kissing an adult on the lips if it made you feel uncomfortable, or playing a touching game that involved taking your clothes off and keeping it a secret, was "not very good". Therefore, you should say "no" or "stop". Nicky suggested that the children involved should reject the abuser and seek help, even though she didn't judge the situations as particularly unsafe.

6.3 Brian

Brian at four years and two months old was the youngest of the four children in the study. Brian found it difficult to understand and answer some of the questions asked of him during the data collection sessions. As a consequence, questions were rephrased to assist Brian in answering. Also, Brian frequently changed his answers when questioned about his reasoning.

Brian's focus throughout the sessions was on how the child felt and his judgements were mostly at the extreme end of the touch/safety continuum. Brian's focus is consistent with the pre-moral development that one would expect from a four year old child.
6.3.1 Session One

Based on the picture alone, Brian chose a setting of seven on the touch barometer. He could see the child was feeling sad and the setting he chose reflected this, but he was unable to say whether the child was feeling safe or unsafe. However, after hearing the story that Jacky's Dad was tickling her too hard in a game, Brian believed that Jacky was very unsafe, which was not reflective of the true safety of the situation. Cole and Cole (1993) believe that young children focus on the outcome of an action and not the intent, which would explain Brian's selection. He viewed the outcome as Jacky feeling very sad and crying and therefore he judged the situation as unsafe. Even though Brian thought it "could be an accident" and that Jacky's Dad would probably stop if she asked him, he still felt that Jacky was "very unsafe".

6.3.2 Session Two

In session two, Brian selected a setting of nine to reflect the young boy's safety in the picture. In this case, the threat of physical harm was the focus for Brian, as he was sure that the big boys would hurt the small boy "very, very badly". Brian was certain that the situation was very unsafe. This is consistent with Gilbert's findings that children describe feelings attached to experiences of extreme sensation. Therefore, the threat of physical harm, as in session two, was given a setting at the extreme setting of the touch barometer. This could be considered an appropriate safety setting for Brian, as he feared the small boy would be physically harmed. However, in session one, where there was no real threat to Jacky's safety, the setting of seven was not reflective of this fact. Gilbert (1986, in Berrick, 1991) believes that young children have difficulty
relating experiences to the middle ground of the continuum, where a touch is uncomfortable rather than pleasurable or painful.

6.3.3 Session Three

When Tony's building was knocked over, Brian again gave an extreme setting of ten: the highest on the touch barometer. However, like Sam, the setting was not a reflection of Tony's safety, but how upset he was feeling. Brian used the touch barometer to reflect how the child was feeling, not the safety of the situation. It would seem that the touch barometer is not always an appropriate tool for young children, whose focus is on the outcome of the situation, rather than the inherent safety of the situation. Although Brian chose high settings on the barometer in sessions one and two, he also stated that the children were feeling unsafe, which further supported his judgements.

The concepts of safe and unsafe have been questioned by several researchers. De Young (1988), Liang (1991) and Briggs & Hawkins (1994), all believe that young children have difficulty understanding the concepts of safe and unsafe. If a young child bases his/her judgement on the feeling a situation evokes, that is, the visible outcome, then they may be unable to judge a situation of non-intrusive sexual abuse as bad and therefore unsafe. Non-intrusive sexual touch may not produce a negative feeling or cause physical pain, especially if the abuser is someone the child perceives to be good such as a parent, close relative or friend (DeYoung, 1988).

6.3.4 Session Four

After viewing the picture in session four, Brian placed the barometer at six, stating that the boy is "sad" and "unsafe" because his Dad is accidentally
hurting him. Unlike session one, where Jacky's Dad was tickling her too hard without knowing, in this session Brian considers the intent of the action and not just the visible outcome. If this is so, it would support a growing belief that young children are able to make moral distinctions (Nucci & Turiel, Weston & Turiel, 1980 in Berrick, 1991).

After hearing the story about Jake and Tom, Brian changed the setting to ten, because "Jake is miserable because he doesn't like being kissed". Brian did not say if Jake was feeling safe or unsafe. Rather, he again judged the situation based on feeling. During the discussion, Brian demonstrated other characteristics consistent with pre-moral development. He knew that Jake did not like being kissed by Tom, but the authority of adults and the belief that they must be obeyed was greater. Brian stated that Jake must kiss Tom because you have to do what a grown up says. Brian oscillated throughout the discussion. He knew that Jake didn't want to kiss Tom and he suggested that Jake should run home and tell his Mum and Dad, but he still believed that Jake had to kiss Tom if Tom said so. Once again, there was conflict between Brian's developmental leaning towards obedience orientation and his emerging autonomous conscience (Kohlberg, 1969).

6.3.5 Session Five

In session five, Brian initially thought that it would be alright for Sophie to play the touching game with the babysitter. After he was asked about what the game involved, he changed his mind and said that Sophie should not play the game. Although many of Brian's answers in the sessions demonstrated pre-moral development, there were also indicators that Brian knew that certain
actions were not appropriate. He knew that Jake shouldn't kiss Tom because he didn't like it, even though he believed that Jake had to do what Tom said because he is an adult. In session five, Brian gave the situation an unsafe setting and said that Sophie should not play the game and that she should tell her parents. This would support research by Nucci and Nucci (1982) who found that most children view moral transgressions negatively. Brian was unable to identify why the game was unsafe, but was able to identify that it would make Sophie feel unsafe. This is consistent with Liang's (1991) findings that young children were often unable to recognise why a situation was abusive, even though they demonstrated the ability to reject the abuser and leave the situation.

6.3.6 Session Six

In the final data collection session, Brian gave the highest settings to being lost at a shopping centre and playing a touching game with a grown up and keeping it a secret. Brian said he would feel "a bit cross, unsafe" because "I don't like it and I don't like keeping secrets". Brian was able to recognise that the situation was potentially unsafe. He applied prior prevention knowledge to the hypothetical situation, saying that his Mum had told him not to take his clothes off "only when I'm getting dressed", and he knew that certain parts of his body were "private parts". This knowledge gave him a basis on which to judge the situation unsafe and to therefore say no. Kaiser, Wittier and Fryer (1989) suggest that young children in pre-school and kindergarten can learn to say no to unwanted touches. They suggest that young children may in fact learn these skills more easily, because the focus is on the attainment of skills, for example, to say no to any unwanted touches, rather than the understanding of concepts.
6.3.7 Summary of Discussion - Brian

Brian's answers to many of the questions, suggested that at four years and two months of age, he was in the pre-moral stage of development as outlined by Piaget, Kohlberg and Freud. Brian based many of his judgements on the observable outcomes of the situations, in that if the child felt sad, miserable or cross, then he gave a higher setting on the touch barometer. This is consistent with Nicky, who also focused on the feelings of the children in the sessions. In spite of Brian's focus on the outcomes, he was still able to recognise that certain situations were not appropriate and that the children should say no.

In all cases of potential sexual abuse, Brian gave a high setting on the touch barometer. Even though in session five, he was confused about Jake's right to say no to an adult, he was able to recognise that it was wrong (Liang, 1991). It would seem that even though much of Brian's discussion characterised a child in the pre-moral stage of moral development, he was able to suggest that the children involved reject the abuser. His moral understanding exceeded the limitations of a pre-moral child as outlined by Piaget, Kohlberg and Freud (in Barrick, 1991).

6.4 Carry

Carry is four years and six months of age and would traditionally be considered to belong to the pre-operational stage of cognitive development and the pre-moral stage of moral development. Carry's judgement throughout the sessions were at the extremes of the touch barometer and appeared to focus predominantly on the child's feelings, although she did appear to understand the terms 'safe' and 'unsafe' and used them in her answers.
Carry was able to recognise potentially abusive situations in session five and six and gave appropriately high settings on the touch barometer. Carry provided evidence of a developing awareness of moral transgressions and an ability to reject an abuser and seek help in hypothetical situations.

6.4.1 Session One

In session one, Carry used the feelings of the child to make her judgements, initially judging the child to be sad and putting the touch barometer on seven. A setting of seven would suggest the child being unsafe. However, Carry's comments indicate that the child has an "unhappy smile" and she thought the man is the child's Dad and he was probably trying to help her. This is consistent with Gilbert's (1988 in Berrick, 1991) findings that although young children could use a touch continuum, most of the children's responses were at the extremes of the continuum.

Bjorklund (1989) believes that young children egocentrically and concretely attend only to the visible outcomes in making moral judgements. This would explain Carry's choice of a setting of seven, as she was attending to the child feeling unhappy, which is the visible outcome. Furthermore, Carry does not adjust the setting after hearing the story. Her focus is still on the outcome, even though she believed that Jacky's Dad would stop if asked.

Carry's comments during the session, indicated that she had had some discussion or instruction about abuse. Carry was asked "Do you think that Jacky's Dad should be tickling her like that?" and Carry replied, "It could hurt..."
her and when she's an adult she might do that to her kid and it could keep going." When Carry's mother was reading Carry's responses, she commented that they had discussed domestic violence and the cycle of abuse following an incident they had witnessed. It would appear that Carry remembered this and applied it in this situation.

6.4.2 Session Two

Carry's responses in session two, demonstrated a strong orientation to obeying rules and expecting punishment if rules were broken. Like Nicky, Carry referred to the rules the boys were breaking and the need for punishment. Piaget (1932/1969 in Berrick, 1991) states that the pre-moral child believes in absolute and unchanging rules. Carry said that the boys were breaking the "caring rule" which is "you love other kids, not in your family, but friends."

Carry's classroom has a caring rule that states, 'We look after each other's bodies and feelings'. Carry stated that it was "you, the teacher, that made the caring rule" and that "you, the teacher should give the bigger boys time out as a punishment". Kohlberg(1969) believes that young children have an orientation to obedience and this leads them to follow rules or fear punishment when breaking them.

6.4.3 Session Three

As in session one, Carry chose a high unsafe setting for a relatively safe situation. Tony is at school, his teacher and teacher's aide are present and yet Carry put the touch barometer on nine. This would again support Gilbert's (1988, in Berrick, 1991) belief that young children have difficulty with the middle
area of the continuum. There is also support for Bjorklund’s (1989) belief that young children attend to the visible outcomes of a situation in making their moral judgements, such as Tony being sad and crying, because of the difficulty in evaluating the subtleties of a situation. Carry’s focus was on Tony’s feelings and this was reflected by the touch barometer selection.

Briggs and Hawkins (1994) found that the young children involved in the prevention education studies they reviewed, made the least progress in their ability to recognise feelings associated with safe and unsafe. This would be consistent with the children in this study who, in most cases, linked the safety of the situation to how upset or sad the children were feeling. DeYoung (1988) believes that if a young child is only able to make judgements of an event, based purely on the outcome and consequence, then in some cases like non-intrusive sexual abuse or sexual contact from someone they perceive as good, they may be unable to judge the contact as bad and therefore unsafe. Carry judges the situation as nine on the touch barometer, based on the outcome of Tony being sad and crying and the consequence of his building having been knocked down.

6.4.4 Session Four

Given an example of non-intrusive sexual contact in session four, when she is told the story of Jake being kissed on the mouth by Tom, Carry’s initial judgement of unsafe is based on the belief that Tom might be a stranger who could “bring you away or ask you to come in their car. They could be bad.” Based on her explanation, the unsafe setting would be appropriate. Following the story, Carry changes the barometer to a lower setting of seven, because
she believes that Jake is feeling sad but not unsafe. This would appear to support DeYoung’s (1988) belief that young children are potentially unable to recognise an abusive situation if the contact is non-intrusive, or from a person they believe is ‘good’. Carry believed that because Tom was a friend of Jake’s family, and it was only a kiss, then Jake was safe.

Further confusion occurs when Carry is unsure about Jake’s right to say no because there is an adult involved. Initially Carry says that Jake does not have to kiss Tom, which is consistent with Liang’s (1991) findings that children as young as three and four could demonstrate the ability to reject an abuser, even though they were unable to recognise the situation as abusive or unsafe. However, further discussion about Tom’s status as an adult, caused Carry to pause for some time before saying, “I don’t know, it’s hard”. The pre-moral child who has a unilateral respect for authority figures (Piaget, 1932/1969 in Berrick, 1991) believes that the adult must be obeyed. However, the young child with an increasing awareness of the distinction between true moral transgressions and conventional rules (Lamb, 1991; Kagen, 1992) is unsure, and like Carry, suggests that “if he (Jake) doesn’t want to, he shouldn’t have to”.

6.4.5 Session Five

In session five, Carry is told a story that involves a game where Sophie has to take her clothes off and keep it a secret. Carry chose the highest setting of ten and was very clear that the game was not good and that Sophie was unsafe and should not play. Carry knew that it was not appropriate to take one’s clothes off for a game. Like Nicky, Carry knew the game was bad. However, Carry’s reasoning was clearer than the other children in the study. Although all
of the children thought Sophie should not play the game, Carry was able to state that Sophie was unsafe and selected an appropriate touch barometer setting which reflected her belief. This would suggest that Carry, at four and a half years of age, was able to identify that the game was a moral transgression, which would support research that suggests that young children view moral transgressions negatively, and that they can make distinctions between true moral transgressions and conventional rules (Nucci & Turiel; Weston & Turiel, 1980, in Barrick, 1991).

Although Carry was able to make an appropriate judgement about the game, she was unsure as to the babysitter’s rights. She demonstrated pre-moral developmental behaviour when she was unsure whether Sophie should tell her parents, because “the babysitter didn’t want her to do that”. This obedience orientation as described by Kohlberg (1969), suggests that young children in the punishment and obedience stage of development, are unable to judge an individual act on its merits and that the orientation to obedience would make it difficult to say no to unwanted touch. Carry demonstrated that, even though she was still unsure about Sophie telling her parents about the babysitter, she was able to suggest that Sophie reject the babysitter and not play the game.

6.4.6 Session Six

Carry gave the highest settings of nine to being stuck in a high cubby and being lost at a shopping centre. Both of these situations were fearful for Carry. Carry chose high settings for the two situations to which she could relate. She had experienced being lost in a shopping centre and remembered it as a very frightening situation. Similarly, she could imagine being stuck in a high cubby
and feeling like she would never be able to get down. Carry selected a setting of eight for playing a touching game with a grown up, which was a high unsafe setting. As in session six, she was able to recognise that the situation was unsafe and that she should not play the game. This further supports research that suggests that young children have a greater understanding of moral dilemmas and a developing awareness of true moral transgressions than previously thought (Nucci & Turiel; Weston & Turiel, 1980 in Berrick, 1991; Lamb, 1991 and Kagan, 1992).

6.4.7 Summary of Discussion - Carry

Like the other children, Carry confused feeling and safety in several scenarios when using the touch barometer. This was particularly notable in session three, where she gave Tony's situation at school a high unsafe setting, even though there was no threat to his safety, although he was very upset. It appears difficult for Carry to separate the outcome, Tony feeling sad, from the actual safety of the situation. This is consistent with Bjorklund's (1989) belief that young children attend to the most visible outcomes of a situation in making their moral judgements. This is of particular concern, because often sexual touch that is non-intrusive, will not cause pain or discomfort and may not be judged as unsafe (DeYoung, 1988).

However, like the other children in the study, Carry demonstrated the ability to reject an abuser and seek help in the hypothetical situations presented to her. Furthermore, Carry was able to recognise that situations were unsafe and gave them appropriately high settings on the touch barometer. It is worthwhile to note
that Carry's mother had previously discussed forms of abuse with her and given Carry instruction in reporting incidents that make her upset or uncomfortable.

6.5 Summary of Discussion

When comparing the four individual participants, it is apparent that there were similar outcomes for all of the children. Although subtle differences arose in their individual answers and their selections on the touch barometer of how safe or unsafe they judged situations to be, the main areas of interest in the research reviewed were reflected in the children's responses. The research set out to provide a descriptive exploration of the reasoning used by young children aged four to six years in making moral judgements about selected events. Several issues of note emerge from the data collected.

The young children who participated in this study were not always able to give appropriate safety settings for the scenario involved. However, it is not possible to consider whether a young child recognises the potential threat in a situation without looking at their reasoning and suggested action. As outlined above, the young children in this study based the majority of their judgements about the safety of a situation on the feelings of the child depicted, and frequently the child's feelings did not correlate with their level of safety. Jacky felt bad, but there was no real threat to her safety from the tickling game, and yet it was judged by the participants to be unsafe. Tony was crying because his building was knocked down, but because he was at school with his teacher present, he was quite safe, yet the participants gave him a high unsafe setting.
on the touch barometer. Sophie faced a threat of sexual abuse from her babysitter, and yet three of the children gave relatively safe settings on the touch barometer.

However, as one delves further, one gains a greater insight into why these situations were judged as they were by the children. In session three, the children all stated that Tony was not unsafe, although it was acknowledged he was very upset and thus the high settings given were not in fact a reflection of his apparent level of safety. In session six, all of the children said the game was not good and that Sophie should not play. However, Carry was the only participant to recognise that the situation was unsafe and give it a high setting to reflect this knowledge.

It must be reiterated that the children in this study were introduced to the terms ‘safe’ and ‘unsafe’ on one occasion only in a whole group session, at the commencement of the research project. As a consequence, this research study also, by association, explored the children's understanding of the terms ‘safe’ and ‘unsafe’ before they took part in the developmentally designed lessons in the Prevention Education Supplement (1990).
CHAPTER 7 - SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.0 Introduction

The intention of the research project was to explore the reasoning used by young children in making judgements about the safety of selected scenarios. The research took the form of guided interviews/discussions with four young children taken from a pre-primary/year one class at a small community school. The researcher was the class teacher, who chose the four children from her class, in order to maximise the opportunity to maintain an environment of familiarity, comfort and care for the children.

The children in the study were aged between four and six years and would traditionally be viewed as belonging to the pre-operational stage of cognitive development, as outlined by Piaget (Inhelder and Piaget, 1958 in Boulton, Catherwood and Lewis, 1994) and the pre-moral stage of moral development, as outlined by Piaget (1932/1962, in Berrick, 1991); Kohlberg (1969) and Freud (1961).

The researcher reviewed studies that supported the positive effects of prevention education programmes in primary school aged children. However, there was a range of studies which questioned the effectiveness of prevention programmes with young children. The research reviewed highlighted the two main areas of concern of the ability of young children to understand the concepts of safe and unsafe, as well as the range of touch and safety along a continuum.
As a result, this research study set out to answer two major research questions. Firstly, what is the nature of children's responses to selected safe/unsafe scenarios and secondly, what reasoning is used by young children in making decisions about the safety of selected scenarios?

7.1 Summary of Findings

Five main findings can be drawn from the data collected. These include aspects of how the participants responded to the selected safe and unsafe scenarios and the reasoning they employed to justify their decision making. The findings are outlined below.

1. All of the children used the touch barometer to measure the child's feelings rather than safety in some of the scenarios.

In situations where the child was crying or upset, most particularly in session three, the children used a setting on the touch barometer which reflected the child's feelings rather than the safety of the situation. All of the children except Nicky were able to explain what they had done. This correlates with concern from DeYoung (1988) who suggests that if young children are only able to judge a situation on its outcome, then in cases of non-intrusive sexual touching, which would not necessarily be upsetting for the child, they may not be able to judge the situation as unsafe and therefore reject the abuser and seek help.
2. Two of the children had some difficulty with the terms safe and unsafe.

One of the main areas of concern arising from the literature was young children's ability to understand and use the terms safe and unsafe (DeYoung, 1988; Briggs & Hawkins, 1994; Isbell & Morrow, 1991). Sam at six years and one month of age, and Carry at four years and six months, appeared comfortable using the terms safe and unsafe and were able to judge all of the situations using the terms. Nicky at six years and ten months and Brian at four years and two months, the oldest and youngest of the subjects respectively, had some difficulty with the terms. Nicky was unable to say whether some of the situations were safe or unsafe and even though she was able to give a setting on the touch barometer, she preferred to use terms which were more familiar to her, such as "not very good". Being the youngest of all four, Brian may have had less experience with the kinds of scenarios presented to him.

It is important to note again, that whilst the children in this study had been presented with one initial whole session to ensure that they were familiar with the terms safe/unsafe, no formal child abuse prevention program had been presented to the children.

In a review of child abuse prevention programmes in Australia and New Zealand, Briggs and Hawkins (1994) found that the least progress in prevention education of young children was made in the obtainment of the concepts of safe and unsafe. Indeed in Australia teachers reported teaching selectively, leaving out content with which they did not feel comfortable. As a result Briggs and Hawkins (1994) concluded that child abuse prevention programmes should
be not only school based and developmentally appropriate but taught in their entirety, if young children are to obtain maximum benefit from them.

3. All of the children displayed the characteristics of a child in the pre-moral stage of development. However, they also demonstrated a developing autonomous conscience and made judgements consistent with this development.

Many of the children's answers characterised a child in the pre-moral stage of development, as outlined by Piaget, Kohlberg and Freud (in Berrick, 1991). The children all showed a strong orientation towards obeying adults and all believed that if one broke a rule, one should be punished. However, at different stages throughout the data collection, there are examples of young children's moral awareness being greater than would be expected from a pre-moral child. Sam was able to reason subjectively and state that it was appropriate for Jake to reject Tom's kisses and tell an adult. Nicky was able to suggest that Sophie not play the game with the babysitter, even though her parents had told her to do what the babysitter said. Brian was able to consider the intent in session four and not just the outcome and judge the situation as unsafe. Carry was able to recognise that the situations that involved potential sexual abuse were unsafe and this was reflected in her choosing relatively high settings on the touch barometer. All of these examples support research that suggests that young children have an increasing awareness of moral dilemmas and a vocabulary that reflects this (Lamb, 1991; Kagen, 1992). Furthermore, all of the children demonstrated a developing awareness of situations that
constituted a moral transgression and viewed them negatively, even though their touch barometer settings did not always reflect this (Nucci & Nucci, 1982).

4. All of the children recommended that the child in the scenario reject the potential abuser, even though they were not always able to judge the situation as unsafe.

Liang (1991) found that young pre-schoolers of three and four years of age were often unable to recognise why a situation was abusive even though they demonstrated the ability to reject the abuser. This was evident with Sam, Nicky and Brian, when they did not recognise that session four was potentially unsafe, even though they all said that Jake should say no to the kiss and tell his parents. Further to this, Sam, Nicky and Brian all gave relatively safe settings to session five, even though they all stated that the game was not good and that Sophie should not play.

5. All of the children were able to recognise that a situation was unsafe if there was a threat of physical harm to the child in each individual scenario.

Gilbert (1988, in Berrick, 1991) found that young children describe feelings attached to experiences of extreme sensation. When using a good touch, bad touch continuum, Gilbert found that most of the children's responses were at the extremes of the continuum. They were able to identify situations such as hugging as good, and hitting as bad, but were unable to identify touches that were confusing. This is consistent with the findings from the data in this study. All of the children were able to recognise session two, where a small boy was
being threatened by bigger boys, as unsafe. However, session one, where Jacky's Dad was tickling her too hard, was also judged unsafe, even though Jacky's Dad was playing a game with her and the hurt was not intentional. Further to this, in session four, the kiss on the mouth from an adult that makes Jake feel uncomfortable, was not perceived as unsafe.

Therefore the findings of this study cast doubt on young children's ability to reliably judge the safety of situations in which they may be placed. It also adds support to the concerns expressed by researchers concerning the use of a touch continuum with young children in prevention programmes. Two of the children in this research study experienced difficulty with the terms safe and unsafe. Also, because the children based some of their judgements on how upset, scared or sad the child in the scenario felt, then the judgement was not always a true reflection of the safety of the child. However, all of the participants were able to articulate that the children depicted in those scenarios involving potential sexual abuse should say no to the potential abuser and seek help, which is crucial in any evaluation of the success of a prevention education programme.

7.2 Limitations Of The Study

This study involved four subjects only. Although the participants in this study may be considered representative of white, middle class children residing in the Perth metropolitan area, results cannot be generalised to the population as a whole. It is possible that differences in understanding, experience and
development, exist among young children from different familial, socio-economic, ethnic or geographical backgrounds.

As discussed in 7.1, in several of the sessions, the participants in the study applied the touch barometer as an indicator of the children's feelings only, rather than the safety of the situation. In some instances, their selections represented feelings and in others, safety. Therefore the use of the continuum as a reliable tool of measurement of young children's understanding of such concepts is questionable. Rather, the results of this study point to the need for very careful monitoring of all experiences related to the topic.

The questions which followed the touch barometer settings, clarified in most instances, what the participants were judging. However, in some cases, the feeling of the child and the safety setting were considered by the participants to be the same.

Although the participants in this study were able to suggest that the children in the hypothetical scenarios should reject a potential abuser and seek help, it is acknowledged that it is not possible to say with certainty that they would react in this way if faced with a real abusive situation.

**7.3 Recommendations For Further Research**

The findings of this research study cast doubt on whether all young children would be able to make appropriate judgements for a range of scenarios using the terms safe and unsafe. Thus further research into young children's judgements concerning the safety of selected scenarios following exposure to
the WA Health Education Syllabus, Prevention Education Supplement (1990) is needed.

In addition, further research into the moral development of young children and how it affects their ability to judge a situation as unsafe and reject a potential abuser, is needed. This small scale research suggests that some young children may have a developing autonomous conscience beyond the limitations outlined by Piaget, Kohlberg and Freud (Berrick, 1991). Therefore, in line with suggestions by several other researchers, further exploration of these theories with large samples of young children, would contribute to our knowledge of young children's moral understandings (Buzzelli, 1992; Lamb, 1991; Kagen, 1992; Nucci & Turiel, Weston & Turiel 1980, in Berrick, 1991).

7.4 Recommendations For Policy

The Curriculum Framework, for Kindergarten to Year 12 Education in Western Australia is a framework identifying common learning outcomes for all students, whether they attend government or non-government schools or receive home schooling. The learning outcomes comprise the mandatory element of the Curriculum Framework which all schools in W.A must implement. Number 13 of the overarching learning outcomes states: students recognise that everyone has the right to feel valued and be safe, and, in this regard, understand their rights and obligations and behave responsibly (1998,p19).

This would correlate with aims of prevention education. The Prevention Education Supplement (1990) is one of the Health Education K-10 Syllabus
documents. With the introduction of the Curriculum Framework, the syllabus materials become resource documents, which teachers can choose to use to meet the student outcome statements.

The Health and Physical Education, Learning Area Statement, phases of development for early childhood states, *young children learn how to keep themselves safe and to reduce risks to their health* (1998) A list of examples such as sun protection and road safety is given. However, prevention education is not mentioned. In middle childhood, although it is suggested that children should learn to identify safety houses, again there is no mention of prevention education.

Links to Overarching Learning Outcome 13 for Health and Physical Education states that, "*children should recognise and comment on safe practice and are able to recognise safe people and safe houses*". However, there is no mention of sexual abuse prevention education for the early childhood years or beyond in the Curriculum Framework documents. Given that the Prevention Education Supplement (1990) is no longer a compulsory teaching syllabus in Western Australian Education Department schools, and the lack of reference to child abuse prevention in the Curriculum Framework documents, it is likely that this important curriculum component will not be addressed by many early childhood educators.
The Outcomes and Standards Framework (1998) outlines the level of achievement for each student of the outcomes set out in the Curriculum Framework. The Framework encompassing Health and Physical Education, Interpersonal Skills, Level one includes as indicators:

- identify a trusted circle of family and friends to confide in and share personal problems with;
- identify ways they like and do not like to be touched by familiar others and describe who they can turn to for help (1998, p83).

These indicators relate directly to prevention education. However, no direction is given for dealing with unsafe situations and feelings, or strategies for avoiding and/or reporting sexual abuse: both vital areas of the Prevention Education Supplement (1990). Therefore, it is recommended that these indicators be extended to include, identifying safe and unsafe feelings and situations, and strategies for dealing with sexual abuse.

### 7.5 Recommendations For Practice

Currently, the WA Health Education Syllabus, Prevention Education Supplement (1990) is introduced in year one in primary schools in W.A. However, with the introduction of the Curriculum Framework and Outcomes and Standards Framework, it will no longer be compulsory to implement the prevention programme. Although it will be mandatory to meet the above mentioned student outcomes, these do not include all of the objectives from the Prevention Education Supplement (1990).

It is recommended that the prevention programme be taught in its entirety to all children in year one in order to increase their knowledge of safe and unsafe
situations and provide them with appropriate support strategies for coping with abusive situations should they arise. Briggs and Hawkins (1994) stress the importance of teaching a programme in its entirety to ensure effective protection. Therefore it is important for teachers to overcome their embarrassment about teaching the "uncomfortable bits" in the interests of protecting those children entrusted to their care.

In addition to the Prevention Education Supplement (1990), bibliotherapy may be used to introduce children to unsafe situations in developmentally appropriate and meaningful ways. Young children may be empowered by identifying with the situation depicted in a story and in a discussion to follow, selecting a strategy to use if faced with this situation in the future, (See Appendix for suitable books). Puppet plays have also been found to be effective.

Butterworth and Fulmer (1993) suggest that all children should make a safety card at school and carry it in their school bag. On this card, the children should record the names and phone numbers of up to three individuals who they could contact in times of danger. These should be individuals who the children know will listen to them, believe them, comfort them, protect them and make them feel better. This strategy is necessary because it has been found that in relation to domestic violence, many children are unable to identify anyone to whom they can turn for help. Given that the perpetrator of child sexual abuse is usually someone very close to the child and that the child is frequently sworn to secrecy by a more powerful adult, it is even more critical for all children to have
identified a trusted friend (teacher, priest, grandparent) to whom they could go for help. This would be a suitable exercise to complete with young children to meet the student outcome statements listed for Level one, Interpersonal Skills in the Health and Physical Education Learning Area (1998) listed above.

7.6 Conclusion

Over the past decade, child sexual abuse has gained increasing recognition as a problem of social consequence and significant proportion in Australia. It is a child’s right to feel safe at all times and adults have a responsibility to preserve this basic right for all children. Young children, among the most vulnerable members of our community, are at risk of sexual abuse in a variety of cultural and social class settings. Therefore, it is the responsibility of schools to provide children with appropriate prevention education. This was acknowledged by the Ministry of Education when they produced the Prevention Education Supplement (1990) for use in Western Australian schools.

However, there is an even greater responsibility for the community as young children should not be expected to protect themselves. Prevention Education aims to give children the skills to say no to unwanted touches, to get away and seek help. It does not put the responsibility of preventing sexual abuse onto the child. Whilst prevention education is an important measure in the battle to prevent the sexual abuse of children, it is incumbent on society as a whole to protect young children. Sexual abuse relies on power: the power of an older person over a dependent or developmentally immature child. The United Nations Convention on Children’s Rights, Article 19, highlights the responsibility of society to take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social
and educational measures to protect children from all forms of abuse, neglect, maltreatment and violence. This is the greater challenge.
References


Department of Community Development. (1994). *Child Protection in Western Australia*. Unpublished manuscript.


APPENDIX A

Briggs (1989)
APPENDIX B

DATA COLLECTION SESSION ONE

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

SHOW THE PICTURE

What do you think is happening in this picture?
Who do you think the people are?
How do you think the girl feels?
Is that a safe or an unsafe feeling?
Can you show me on the touch barometer?
How do you know that?
Look at the picture, how do you know what the girl is feeling?

READ THE STORY

Now that you have heard the story, how do you think the girl is feeling?
Is that a safe or an unsafe feeling?
Can you show me on the touch barometer?
How would you feel if that was happening to you?
Should Jacky's Dad be tickling her like that? Why?
What do you think Jackie should do?

READ THE END OF THE STORY
Appendix C

Briggs (1989)
APPENDIX D

DATA COLLECTION SESSION TWO

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

SHOW THE PICTURE

What do you think is happening in this picture?
How do you think the little boy feels?
Is that a safe or an unsafe feeling?
Can you show me on the touch barometer?
How do you know that?
Look at the picture, how do you know what the boy is feeling?
Why do you think the older boys are doing that?
How do you think the older boys feel?
Can you tell how the big boys feel from looking at the picture?
Should the big boys be doing that?
Why?
What rules do you think the big boys are breaking?
What would you say to the big boys?
What do you think should happen to the big boys?
Why?
What would you do if that happened to you?
Who would you tell if that happened to you?
APPENDIX E

DATA COLLECTION SESSION THREE

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

How do you think Tony feels?
Is that a safe or an unsafe feeling?
Can you show me on the touch barometer?
How do you know that?
How would you feel if someone did that to you?
What do you think Tony should do?
Why?
What would you do if that happened to you?
How do you think the other children feel?
Why?
Why would they do that to Tony?
What rules did the children break?
Who makes those rules?
What do you think should happen to the children who broke Tony’s building?
Why?
What if it happened at someone’s house, what rules would they be breaking then?
Can you tell me something that has happened to you at school that made you feel unsafe?
Can you show me how unsafe that made you feel on the touch barometer?

READ END OF STORY
Appendix F

Briggs (1989)
APPENDIX G

DATA COLLECTION SESSION FOUR

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

SHOW THE PICTURE

What do you think is happening in this picture?
How do you think the boy feels?
Is that a safe or an unsafe feeling?
Can you show me on the touch barometer?
How do you know that?
Look at the picture, how can you tell what the boy is feeling?

READ THE STORY

Now that you have heard the story, how do you think Jake feels?
Why?
Should Jake let Tom kiss him?
Why?
Should Jake tell anyone if he doesn’t like it?
Who should he tell?
Is it okay to kiss someone?
What do you think you should do if you don’t want someone to kiss you?
Is Jake being silly not wanting to kiss Tom?
Would Tom be angry if Jake told on him?
Why?
Does Jake have to let his friend kiss him?
Tom is a grown up, does he have to do what a grown up says?

READ END OF STORY
APPENDIX H

DATA COLLECTION SESSION FIVE

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

READ THE STORY

Do you think this is a good game?
Do you think Sophie should play the game?
Do you think Sophie is feeling safe or unsafe?
Can you show me on the touch barometer?
Given that Sophie feels that way, should she play the game?
Would Sophie feel safe or unsafe if she played the game?
Can you show me on the touch barometer?
Why?
Should Sophie keep the game a secret?
Who should Sophie tell?
Why?
Do you think Sophie would get into trouble if she told?
Why do you think the babysitter doesn't want Sophie to tell?
Do you think the babysitter should get into trouble?
Why?
From whom?
Is the babysitter breaking any rules?
Sophie's parents said she has to do whatever the babysitter said, does that mean she has to play the game?

READ END OF STORY
APPENDIX I

DATA COLLECTION SESSION SIX

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

What rules do you know?
Is that all of them?
Who makes those rules?
What happens to kids if they break their rules?
Do grown ups have any rules?
What about when grown ups drive their car, are there any rules?
What happens to grown ups if they break their rules?
Who makes rules for grown ups?
Appendix J

Letter To School Council

Dear Chairperson,

I am currently studying at Edith Cowan University, Faculty of Education, Early Childhood studies. I am conducting research into young children’s understandings of safe and unsafe situations, how they make judgements about the relative safety of a situation and the underlying beliefs or standards upon which they base their decisions.

To do this effectively, I will need to work with four children from my class group for a short session each week over a seven week period. The sessions will include the use of picture talks and short stories outlining a range of situations. Stories will highlight situations which range from touches that are unwanted or uncomfortable (for example, being tickled too hard or being bullied by older children) to situations where there is non-intrusive and potentially sexual touching (for example, a babysitter wanting to play a touching game and an adult friend kissing a child on the mouth). The picture talks, stories and outline of interview questions are available for you to consider and discuss.

The sessions will be short and will involve a discussion about each child’s judgement of the safety of the situation. The issues raised will be resolved with the children during the session where a follow up story will outline the child in the story taking the action of telling an adult. Each situation is resolved in a positive and reassuring manner. The sessions will aim to gather information in order to understand better how and why children judge situations to be safe or unsafe, and to find out about the rules and standards of behaviour upon which they base their decisions.

I will audio tape each session so that relevant information can be gathered. All of the information and data gathered will be confidential and no parent or child will be identifiable when the data have been analysed. Written permission will be gained from the parents of the four children involved in the study. I will be happy to answer any further questions you have regarding the project. You will be able to access data from my research at any time for feedback and review, notwithstanding my need to ensure the participants’ confidentiality. Please read and sign the accompanying form.

Yours sincerely

Samantha Wynne
Appendix K

Letter To Participant’s Parents

Dear Parent,

I am currently studying at Edith Cowan University, Faculty of Education, Early Childhood Studies. I am conducting research into young children’s understandings of safe and unsafe situations, how they make judgements about the relative safety of a situation and the underlying beliefs or standards upon which they base their decisions.

To do this effectively I will need to spend a short session with your child each week over a seven week period. The sessions will include the use of picture talks and short stories outlining a range of situations. The stories will highlight situations which range from touches that are unwanted or uncomfortable (for example, tickling too hard or being bullied by older children) to situations where there is non-intrusive and potentially sexual touch (for example, a babysitter wanting to play a touching game and a child being kissed by an adult friend on the mouth.) The picture talks, stories and outline of the interview questions are available for you to consider and discuss.

The sessions will be short and will involve a discussion about your child’s judgement of the safety of a situation. The issues raised will be resolved with your child during the session, where a follow up story will outline the child in the story taking the action of telling an adult. Each situation is resolved in a positive and reassuring manner. The sessions will aim to gather information in order to understand better, how and why children judge situations to be safe or unsafe and the rules or standards of behaviour known to them and on which they base their decisions.

I will audio tape each session so that relevant information can be gathered. Any recordings or information that I gather will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and stored carefully by myself. I will be happy to answer any questions that you may have. Please read and sign the accompanying slip.

Yours sincerely

Samantha Wynne
APPENDIX L

BIBLIOTHERAPY

BOOKS ON FEELINGS


Books On The Right To Feel Safe and Child Sexual Abuse Prevention


