

Early Warning Signs

The activities listed in this section are optional. They are designed to assist students to identify their early warning signs in a safe environment and are expected to take between 2 – 10 minutes, depending on the activity. Teachers are encouraged to incorporate at least one Part A activity, where possible, as children will be able to relate their experiences to their respective Part B activity. *Note:* Fifteen minutes has been allocated within the lesson plan for both Part A and Part B activities. Teacher discretion should be used to select activities that will ensure the best use of available time.

Instructions: Ask students to pay attention to how their bodies may be telling them they are feeling unsafe as they undertake one of the following supervised activities:

1. Walking across a balance beam

2. Imagining a spider is crawling up their back:

Ask students to close their eyes while you provide a detailed description of the spider and where it is and how it is moving around their back.

3. Setting an alarm clock, toaster or jack-in-the-box:

Ask students to sit around the object in silence as they wait for the alarm to sound, the toaster to pop or the jack-in-the-box to jump!

4. Slowly blowing a balloon up

In small groups, students should be placed in a tight circle, standing shoulder to shoulder as they face the person blowing the balloon. The balloon may be blown up by a teacher, helper or a student capable of blowing up a balloon. If the balloon is being blown by an adult they could squat down to ensure they are around the same height as students. Balloon blowers should slowly turn around as they blow, in order to face all group members. The balloon should be released before it bursts, as it nears capacity.

Note: Students should be allowed to move away if they wish.

Discussion points following the activity:

For all students:

Ask students to share how they felt during the activity and how their bodies told them when they were feeling scared or unsafe.

Years 3–6:

Discuss how our feelings or emotions can also tell us when we're not feeling safe. For example, if we're feeling scared, nervous, confused or upset, we might also be unsafe.

Discuss how some environmental cues, or "things around us" can also tell us we might not be safe. For example, if it is dark, if we are alone or if there is a loud noise.