

# Safety for Kids 101

Keeping kids safe, is something I have been doing for the last twenty years.

Whether it be on the television, on radio as “Bryan and Bobby”, or in person during a visit to a local school or kura.

One of the questions I get asked time and time again by parents, grandparents, uncles, and aunts is: “How do I get my kids to learn about safety”?



There are a few things I have learnt along the way on my journey as a police officer, which you can do to make safety actually sound like something kids should be interested in. This will help offset their worries about feeling and being safe.

Some of the best ways to strike an interest with kids (and not just for safety) is to make the learning fun. Make sure you explain what it is you (and they) are doing, to keep them safe. The filming of Bryan and Bobby was a lightbulb moment for me, highlighting how often adults don't give the kids "THE WHY" when asked to do something.

For example, It is staggering the number of kids that I talk to, who when asked, “Why do we hold hands in the carpark or crossing the road with mum or Dad?” answer with: “Because you will get into trouble if you don't” or “So you don't get killed” or “So you don't get growled at by Dad.”

So try a simple trick - engage and explain THE WHY for kids safety.

For example, when talking to my 5 year old about the importance of holding hands when crossing the road I did the following:

I explained to him, that it was like holding the hand of a giant, who could see and hear further than he could and that ‘the giant’ would keep him safe if anything dangerous was seen.

I explained he could help the giant, by finding the safest place to cross and then checking the road in both directions three times to make sure the way was clear, and it was safe to cross. Using our eyes and ears to listen for traffic, helps keep us and the giants safe too.

I demonstrated as we walked across the road, that we don't run or skip and keep looking and listening in both directions for traffic, to make sure it was still safe.

Safety should be just like anything else we learn in life. It should have the elements of fun, discovery, and empowerment otherwise it becomes nothing but a tedious chore or a command that we follow. As William M. Jeffers, former President, Union Pacific Railroad Co once stated “Safety applies with equal force to the individual, to the family, to the employer, to the state, the nation and to international affairs. Safety, in its widest sense, concerns the happiness, contentment and freedom of all.”

Regards/Stay safe/ Kia noho haumaru

Bryan