



## My Safe Place FACT SHEET

People who are good at listening to and understanding their own emotions and those of others are more likely to have better health and well-being, manage life challenges, have closer relationships and achieve their goals.

From birth, parents play a crucial role in providing their children with safety and comfort when they are distressed. As a child grows, they gradually develop trust in others; both peers and other adults, where they can receive and provide support and a sense of safety and security.

Some children want a quiet indoor place, with blankets, loved toys, books, maybe even a beanbag.

Others want an outdoor place, like a swing, a cubby or under a shady tree.

### REMEMBER:

- > Everyone has feelings.
- > All types of feelings are OK.
- > Having a safe place to go can help someone feel OK when they have strong feelings.

Children can learn to cope independently with various emotions and situations. One strategy you can use to assist is helping your child create and seek out a physical place where they feel comfortable and safe. This **safe place** then becomes a space where they can soothe and calm themselves and a place over which they feel ownership.

A parent may also role model the use of a personal safe place when upset or tired.

For example: "I am feeling frustrated right now so I am going to take five minutes having a cup of tea in my armchair and then I will come back and talk with you".

Parents can also help by observing their children's emotions and asking whether the child may like some time in their safe place.

Note: There is a big difference between 'time out' and a safe place. It is important to avoid any interpretation that the safe place is a punishment. Parents should refrain from using the safe place to remove or get rid of emotions, rather it is an option for the child to take care of themselves and practice settling themselves. Afterwards, the child can be encouraged to express or talk about their experience and feelings and use other coping strategies as required.