



PBs in 5 Minutes

I would like to give you a brief overview of the Protective Behaviours process. PBs is a framework for **(1) personal safety** consisting of **2 themes** and **7 strategies**. This is very different from the 'lock your doors', restrictive approach to personal safety - it is a dynamic, confidence building, empowering approach that links safety with having adventures and taking risks.

It starts with a positive statement about **(2) feeling safe**: the first theme of PBs is:-
'We all have the right to feel safe all the time.'

With that right comes a responsibility not to do anything that would leave other people feeling unsafe and we can identify if we are feeling unsafe by tuning into our **(3) 'Early Warning Signs' – (Physical Feelings)**, those things that happen in our body like butterflies in the stomach, wobbly knees etc. that let us know we don't feel OK in this particular situation. And if we get those 'Early Warning Signs', PBs encourages us to **(4) Think (Thoughts)** clearly about what our options are and work out what **(5) Action (Behaviour)** we might need to take. That action might be to contact somebody on a **(6) Support Network** which is where Theme 2 of PBs comes in :-

'We can talk with someone about anything, even if it feels awful or small.'

PBs encourages the development of a clear 'support network' which we can call upon having identified that we are feeling unsafe. On the support network we would ideally have 5 people who might be able to help us do some **(7) Problem-Solving**. They might be people who ask questions so that we can come up with our own solutions; they might be people who actually give some advice; they could be friends or family or people at the end of a help line - sometimes it's easier to 'phone a help line as they, and us, remain anonymous. It doesn't necessarily have to be about something that's really terrible; it might be that we need to mull things over, or celebrate an achievement. Having four people plus the ones at home, is suggested so that we have got a bit of variety and have back up options if our first choice of contact is unavailable.

In this way the PBs process can increase our self-confidence and empower us to develop our own thinking and problem-solving skills. In turn, this can enhance our confidence to take **(8) Protective Action** on our own behalf and seek the help of others when we need it in order to help us feel safe again. When we are feeling safe we are more likely to feel confident, strong and **(9) Empowered** so we can get 'out there', have some **(10) Adventures** and live life to the full within a framework of safety. So if we believe we have the right to feel safe and have a support network we then have the opportunity to push the boundaries and take a few risks - not restricting ourselves and staying indoors all the time, but getting out there and having some fun.