

YOUTH SAFE BEHAVIOURS - TRAFFIC LIGHT TOOL

This resource aims to support and protect young people from harm and abuse. This innovative resource is based on the original 'Traffic Light Framework' developed by Family Planning Queensland in Australia and has been adapted for use within Defence. This resource uses the traffic light system to categorise the behaviours of young people and adults, to assist in:

- making decisions about safeguarding young people
- assessing and responding appropriately to behaviour
- understanding healthy behaviour and distinguish it from harmful behaviour.

By identifying sexual behaviours as green, amber or red, Defence personnel and ADF Cadets members can work to the same criteria when making decisions and protect young people with a unified approach. The resource is based on current knowledge and research, and should be used within the context of the youth safe policies contained in the Youth Policy Manual and the requirements of the relevant state or territory legislation.

All green, amber and red behaviours require some form of attention and response, but the type of intervention may vary according to the behaviour. The behaviours identified in the tool are examples used to show the differences between healthy and unhealthy interactions involving youth with adults and peers. The resource does not aim to define how young people should behave, but to show which behaviours are a natural part of the youth program compared with those behaviours which are problematic and may need intervention or support.

Using this traffic light tool



1. Identify

- What is the behaviour? Green, Orange, Red?

2. Respond

- What Youth Safety policies, procedures will help?

3. Determine the action

- What State/Territory legislation, policy, procedures, duty of care will help?

4. Support

- Contact SeMPRO, State and Territory Child and Youth Protection Authority, EAP.

The normative list provides specific examples of green, orange and red light behaviours, these are examples only and must be considered in context. Adults should take into account the actions of the young person and others involved as well as the location, frequency and nature of the behaviour. Adults should use the traffic lights tool to identify the characteristics of the behaviour and the way it occurs and then respond. All green, orange and red behaviours require some level of information, support and protective response.

Report harm or abuse – If you are aware of, or reasonably suspect, a young person has been or is being sexually abused, or is at risk of sexual abuse, or is at risk of sexually abusing others, you should contact the child and youth protection authority or the police in your state or territory

Irrespective of the age of consent in each State and Territory, Defence has defined the age of consent across Defence as 18

● Green behaviours

Green behaviours provide an opportunity to positively reinforce appropriate behaviour. All young people have the right to safe environment which equips them with the information and skills they need to form healthy and positive relationships and keep their traffic lights green.

● Amber behaviours

Amber behaviours signal the need to take notice and consider appropriate action. Recognising that the behaviour may be unhealthy, insensitive, unacceptable and/or criminal is the first step in keeping young people safe. If you are working with young people you must be aware of the Defence guidance for safeguarding them.

● Red behaviours

Red behaviours indicate a need for immediate intervention and action, though it is important to consider actions carefully. When determining the appropriate action, identify the behaviour, consider the context and be guided by: relevant legislation and Defence policies, procedures and guidance. The identified risks or needs of the young person and the potential or real risks to others.

Definitions and Actions

What is Green behaviour?

Green behaviour reflects safe and healthy interactions displayed between adults and young people and/or young people and other young people either individually or in a group.

- Displayed behaviours between young people of a similar age or developmental ability.
- Interaction that is safe, healthy and appropriate.
- Behaviours that provide opportunities to give positive feedback and additional information.

What can you do? Green behaviours provide an opportunity to positively reinforce appropriate behaviour, and to provide further information and support. All children and young people have the right to interactions and relationships which equips them with the information and skills they need to form healthy and positive relationships and keep their traffic lights green.

What is Amber behaviour?

Amber behaviours have the potential to be outside of safe and healthy interactions are unusual for that particular adult or young person and may be of potential concern due to age, developmental or power differences.

What can you do?

- Recognising that behaviour may be unhealthy is the first step in the Defence youth safe process. If you are working with young people:
 - follow the internal guidance in the Youth Policy Manual.
 - Call SeMPRO for advice.
- Amber behaviours cannot be ignored, and it is important to think through the options outlined in policy.
- Comply with the policy guidance and the Defence Youth Safety Framework.

What is Red behaviour?

Red behaviour is outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be:

- Excessive, secretive, compulsive, coercive, degrading or threatening.
- Involving significant age, developmental or power differences.
- Of concern due to the activity type, frequency, duration or the context in which they occur.

What can you do?

Red behaviours indicate a need for immediate intervention and action, though it is important to consider actions carefully. When determining the appropriate action, identify the behaviour, consider the context and be guided by:

- Relevant national legislation and guidance.
- Organisational policies, procedures and guidance.
- Human rights.
- The identified risks or needs of the young person.
- The potential or real risks to others.

Youth Safe Behaviours Traffic Light Tool

All green, amber and red behaviours require some form of attention and response. It is the level of intervention that will vary.

Green behaviour

- Awareness that Defence has no tolerance for sexual interactions between adults and under 18s
- Adults and young people understand the age of consent laws as defined by Defence
- Adults and young people report incidents of requesting/sending/receiving naked or sexually provocative images of self or others
- Adults and Young people feel confident to report all incidents of inappropriate behaviour
- Adults maintain 'professional boundaries' with young people at all times
- Adults and young people adhere to the code of conduct
- Adults and young people demonstrate respectful interactions
- Adults undertake their "special care provisions" towards young people
- Adults and young people are aware of SeMPRO and the services that they provide
- Inappropriate behaviours are challenged when the person feels safe to do so
- Adults and young people provide support to others by involving them in group activities, encouraging participation and establishing positive relationships
- Diversity is embraced by treating everyone with respect regardless of age, gender, ability, race, ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation

Actions

At some point we all encounter situations where we are unsure about what actions to take.

The behaviours may be:

- unusual for that particular young person or adult.
- of potential concern due to the activity type, frequency, duration or the context in which the interactions or behaviours occur.

Behaviours such as:

- inappropriate touching, kissing, tickling or wrestling
- commenting on a person's sexual activity, sexual appeal or private life
- making inappropriate remarks about another person's age, gender, ability, race, ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation
- behaviour that makes others feel uncomfortable
- touching, pinching, suggestive/offensive comments or innuendo of a sexual nature
- making sexually offensive jokes

In any situation there are a range of appropriate actions for example:

- if it's safe and in your remit, address the behaviour at the time.
- refer to policy – Contained in YOUTHPOLMAN.
- report the incident to the Defence youth program supervisor/manager or relevant Cadet Organisation Regional Incident Officer/Air Force Liaison Officer
- contact SEMPRO for advice.

Red behaviour

- A sexual relationship between an adult and an under 18 – Defence does not tolerate any sexual interaction between adults and young people under the age of 18 in any Defence youth context, irrespective of differences in individual state and territory legislation on age of consent and 'special care' provisions.
- Intimidating, bullying, humiliating, threatening or coercing others using threats, authority, rank and/or position
- Accessing/sharing the private information of another person
- Grooming behaviour: forming, initiating or fostering relationships with a minor
- Adult turning to a young person for emotional support or physical comfort
- Taking and sending or receiving naked or sexually provocative images of self or others **OR** pressuring others to take, keep, share or request explicit images or videos of themselves
- Sexual misconduct such as any person receiving gifts or money in exchange for sex
- Taking a young person on special outings alone; buying gifts or giving them money for no apparent reason and without the consent and knowledge of the parents/guardian
- Displays of aggressive, hostile and persistent behaviour directed at a particular person
- Cyberbullying; making insulting and inflammatory comments via social media sites or other electronic media.