ISPCAN GLOBAL WEBINAR · 12 NOV 2026

START EARLY, KEEP LISTENING.

Building protective factors from early childhood to adolescence

KERRY LOWE / CHIEF EXECUTIVE



04 **A child learns they can say no to an unwanted cuddle.**

14 **That same boundary helps them recognise pressure.**

Different situations. The same protective foundations.

Strong practice starts with clear evidence.

Protection requires far more than education alone.

01

WHO / INSPIRE

2016

Education and life skills form one part of seven complementary strategies.

02

COCHRANE REVIEW

2015

Knowledge and protective skills improve, but longer-term evidence remains limited.

03

UNIVERSITY OF STIRLING

2019

An independent evaluation informed improvements to SSF's practice.

When should prevention education begin?

At what stage should children first learn about personal boundaries and consent?

A **Early childhood**

Approximately ages 3–5

B **Primary school**

Approximately ages 6–11

C **Adolescence**

Approximately ages 12–18

D **Unsure**

The Body Bubble.

A visual way of introducing personal space and consent.



01 MY SPACE

I can have my own personal space.

02 PERMISSION

People should ask before entering into my body bubble.

03 MY VOICE

I can say no and tell an adult.

No frightening descriptions. Everyday situations children recognise.

Three workshops.
One continuing conversation.

01 Keeping Myself Safe

02 Staying Safe Around Strangers

03 Keeping My Body Safe



CALLUM & SHONA

EARLY YEARS / WORKSHOP 01

Keeping Myself Safe

Children explore unkind behaviour, feelings and asking for help.

01 **Recognise unkind behaviour**

Notice words or actions that hurt or frighten.

02 **Practice a stop response**

Find words that feel usable and appropriate.

03 **Find a safe grown-up**

Speak up and seek another adult if needed.



WITH CALLUM AND SHONA

I can speak up. I can tell.

EARLY YEARS / WORKSHOP 02

Staying safe around Strangers

Children practise noticing a worrying approach and seeking support.

01 **Understand what a stranger is**

Someone the child does not know.

02 **Recognise unsafe situations**

Explore unfamiliar situations and feelings.

03 **Run, yell and tell**

Practise a response with adult support.



If I feel unsafe, I can get help.

EARLY YEARS / WORKSHOP 03

Keeping my Body Safe

Body Bubble, permission and unsafe secrets are introduced without fear.

01 **Personal space**

The Body Bubble makes boundaries visible.

02 **Permission matters**

Unwanted kisses, cuddles or touch can be refused.

03 **Never keep kisses and cuddles a secret**

Tell a safe grown-up and keep telling.



WITH CALLUM AND SHONA

My body belongs to me. I can always tell.

Callum & Shona animated.

Use the videos to prompt conversation — never in place of adult facilitation.



JELLY SONG

Feelings, bodily sensations and emotional vocabulary

WATCH ON YOUTUBE ↗



Feelings

Recognising your body warning signs

WATCH ON YOUTUBE ↗

Children become the educators.

Three workshops. Three storybooks. Conversations that continue at home.

BOOK 01

Keeping Myself Safe

TAKE HOME

BOOK 02

Staying Safe Around Strangers

TAKE HOME

BOOK 03

Keeping My Body Safe

TAKE HOME

“Opening up conversations that we might have not had otherwise.”

PARENT / CARER • 2024–25

95% Of parents had read the storybooks with their child

WORKSHOP → CHILD RETELLS → ADULT LISTENS & REINFORCES

Children put learning into practice.

What nursery staff respondents told us in 2025–26

96%

said the workshops create opportunities for further discussion

WHAT THEY NOTICED

“Lots of children have been putting ‘stop’ into practice.”

Children also retold Callum’s story during play to help each other understand unkind behaviour.

Source: Nursery Staff Evaluation 2025–26, n=51. Two respondents were unsure.

When a child finds the words to tell.

THE MOMENT THAT MATTERED

After a workshop about body safety and unsafe secrets, a young child went home and began a conversation with a parent.

The child disclosed ongoing sexual abuse. The parent listened, contacted the school, and police and social work became involved.

A QUESTION FOR ALL OF US

Would this child have felt able to tell — and been protected — without an adult ready to listen and act?

Education can open a door. Responsibility for protection always rests with adults.

Anonymised real safeguarding case · Shared with permission · One case, not evidence of population-level impact

One programme. Different communities.

ACCESS Adapt travel, delivery patterns and timetables.

CONSISTENCY Keep the same three workshops, characters and storybooks.

CONTINUITY Partner with nursery staff who can reinforce the messages.



PLANNING AND PARTNERSHIP • SAFE STRONG & FREE

The curriculum grows with the child.

The foundations stay recognisable, but the situations become more complex.

EARLY YEARS

04—05

My body. My voice.

- Personal space & consent
- Safe / unsafe feelings
- Trusted adults

PRIMARY

06—11

My relationships.

- Bullying & belonging
- Respect & boundaries
- Trusted adults

SECONDARY

12—18

My choices online & off.

- Digital pressure
- Healthy relationships
- Bullying/Racism

ADOLESCENCE

New risks need new conversations.

ONLINE SAFETY

Digital pressure · exploitation

BULLYING & RACISM

Exclusion · discrimination

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Consent · respect

EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

Trusted relationships · support

The adult safety net must grow too.



What young people tell us about active learning.

Immediate workshop feedback from respondents

88%

felt more confident or a little more confident

81%

gave the workshop 4 or 5 stars

THEIR SUGGESTION

“Maybe we could do drama, like acting out bullying scenarios, and drawing”

Listening means adapting the next workshop, not just rating the last one.

Source: Safe Strong & Free Bullying Awareness Workshop Evaluation (n=43). Five selected “No” for confidence.

Young people’s voices: safer online choices.

AI, Deepfakes & Online Extortion • evaluation responses

SELF-RATED KNOWLEDGE / GOOD OR EXCELLENT

33% → **98%**

BEFORE AFTER

+65 percentage points in retrospective knowledge ratings

“Think before sending messages online.”

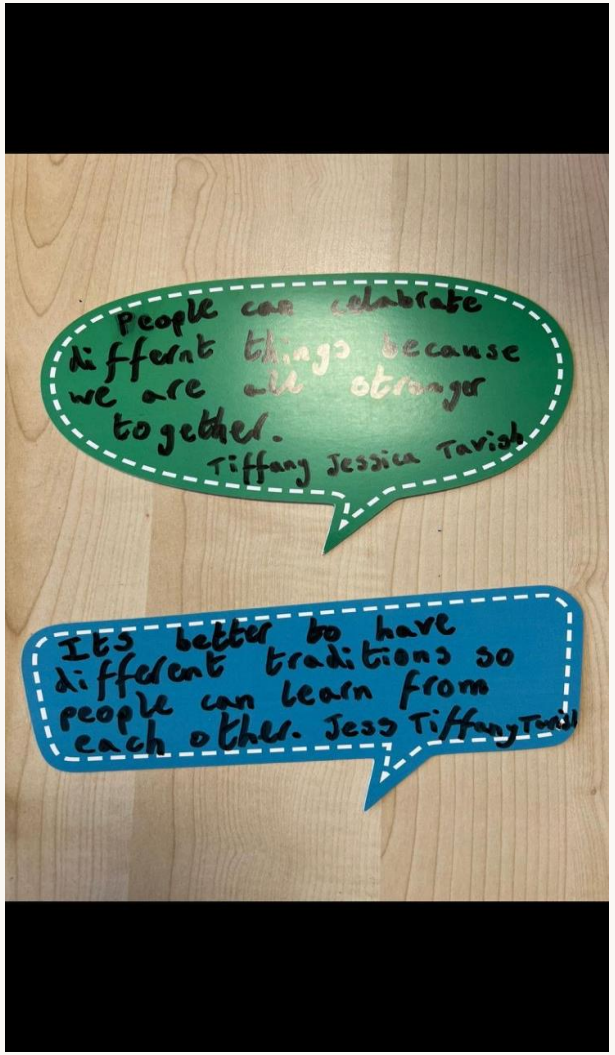
“Speak to a trusted adult if anything were to happen online.”

Source: SSF Session feedback. Retrospective self-report; not a measure of long-term behaviour change.

We reviewed more than what children remembered.

We asked: how did children actually participate?

01	OBSERVE	How children engage
02	REFLECT	What activities add value
03	REFINE	Where more rehearsal is needed



From watching to doing.

The shift was not about more puppets. It was about more purposeful participation.

BEFORE

Children watched.

Adult-led demonstration and some less-directed puppet play.

AFTER

Children practiced.

Their own coloured fabric puppets helped them rehearse boundaries, words and telling.

Four practical improvements.

Clearer concepts and more opportunity for children to rehearse.

01

SAFE / UNSAFE GAME

Make situations discussable.

02

BODY BUBBLE

Make boundaries visible.

03

NEW ANIMATION

Recognise warning feelings.

04

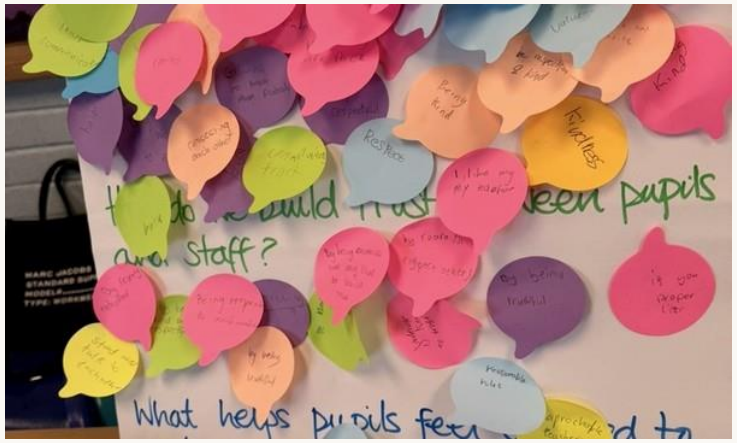
PUPPET PRACTICE

Rehearse speaking and seeking help.

OBSERVE → ADAPT → REHEARSE → REVIEW

Children’s voices must shape our practice.

Three perspectives — one continuous learning process.



CHILDREN

Experience & understanding



PROFESSIONALS

Observation & feedback



FAMILIES

Reinforcement beyond the session

Children learn skills.
Adults hold responsibility.

Prevention education can build language, confidence and help-seeking.

The duty to notice, respond and protect stays with adults and services.



The adult response changes everything.

Four responsibilities that belong to us.

01 **NOTICE**

See the signs and create opportunity.

02 **LISTEN**

Stay calm and take concerns seriously.

03 **RESPOND**

Act through local safeguarding procedures.

04 **FOLLOW THROUGH**

Maintain support and protection.

Never place the burden of keeping safe on a child.

The settings change.

The need for trust does not.



POLICE SCOTLAND



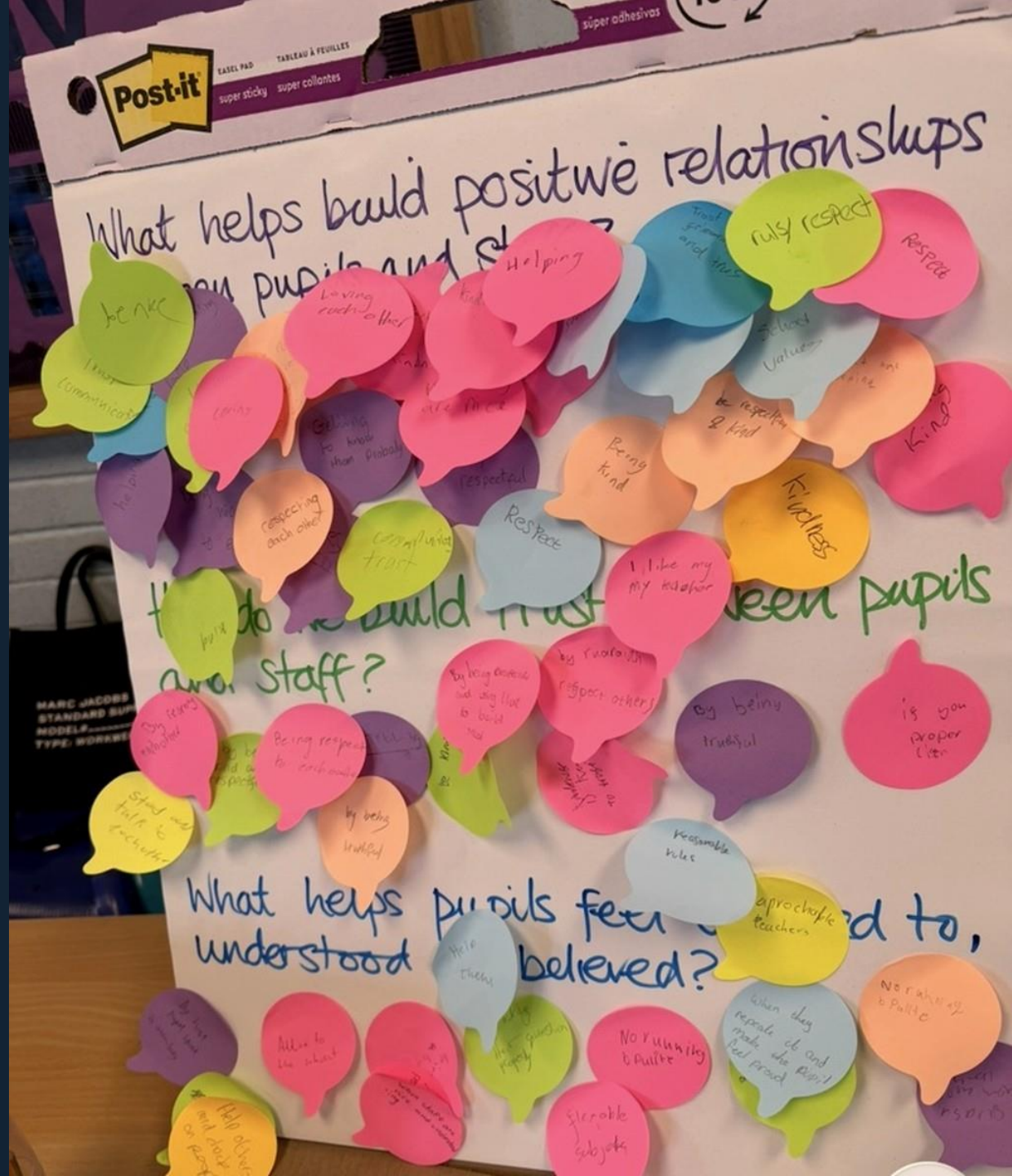
COMMUNITY



PLANNING

Belonging is part of feeling safe.

SEEN	Representation
HEARD	Voice
RESPECTED	Inclusion
BELIEVED	Trust



STRONGER TOGETHER

Beyond a workshop. Towards whole-school culture.

THE SHIFT

Not only “What did we deliver?”

Ask what changes in adult responses, language, participation and belonging.

Launched at Inverness Town House
5 March 2026



What most limits sustained prevention?

Choose the biggest barrier in your setting.

A	Limited curriculum time
B	Staff training or confidence
C	Cultural or community sensitivities
D	Insufficient funding or resources
E	Difficulty reinforcing learning over time

Four tests for a stronger approach.

01

Age appropriate

Is the language right for the children?

02

Active rehearsal

Can children meaningfully practice?

03

Adult readiness

Do adults know how to respond?

04

Continuous learning

Will we listen, evaluate and adapt?

THE QUESTION THAT CHANGES PRACTICE

Do children know who to tell?

OR

Have we created a place where it feels safe to tell?

What would you take back to your setting?

01 How early can we teach boundaries without creating fear?

02 What do children tell us about how they understand safety?

03 How should evaluation reshape our activities?

04 What helps parents and schools reinforce the learning?

Protection is built together.

01 **Start early**

Use familiar, rights-based language.

02

Revisit ideas in changing contexts.

03 **Rehearse**

Let children practice safely.

04 **Invest in adults**

Respond, support and protect.

THANK YOU / FROM SCOTLAND

EVERY CHILD DESERVES TO BE SAFE, STRONG AND FREE.

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Continue the conversation.

Core evidence and programme materials discussed in the webinar.

SAFE STRONG & FREE	Programme information ↗
WHO / INSPIRE	Violence prevention framework ↗
COCHRANE REVIEW	Prevention education evidence ↗
STIRLING EVALUATION	Independent research (2019) ↗