

Let's Talk About Sarah

Exploring thoughts,
feelings and
emotions together.

Stories can help us understand ourselves and each other.

Sometimes we see parts of ourselves in a character and sometimes we simply become more curious about how another person might be feeling.

This discussion guide is an invitation to wonder. There are no right or wrong answers. You don't have to agree with Sarah's choices or have experienced the same things she has. The most important part is being curious, asking questions and listening to one another.

Everyone experiences worries differently. What felt big for Sarah may feel different for someone else—and that's okay too. Together, let's explore Sarah's story with kindness, curiosity and understanding.

A note about using these questions

These questions are examples only. They are not intended to be used as a script or checklist, and should always be considered within the context of the individual child.

A trauma-informed approach is essential when asking children questions about their experiences, feelings or behaviour. Before asking, consider the child's developmental stage, communication capacity, trauma history, emotional readiness and current level of safety and regulation.

It is also important to consider the role, skills and capacity of the person asking the questions. They should be able to respond appropriately to the child's answers, including providing support if the conversation brings up difficult emotions or experiences.

Questions should never be used to encourage a child to disclose information they are not ready or able to share. Children should be given choice, time and permission not to answer.

Finally, anyone asking questions about a child's experiences must understand the legal and organisational responsibilities that apply to their role. This includes knowing what to do if a child makes a disclosure or raises a concern about their safety or the safety of another person.

The goal is not to obtain information. The goal is to create a safe opportunity for a child to communicate, if and when they are ready.

Thinking About Sarah

- "What did you notice about Sarah?"
- "What do you think Sarah is feeling or thinking?"
- "What makes you wonder about her?"

Using our senses

Imagine you were Sarah, what do you think she might be:

Hearing ...
Seeing ...
Smelling ...
Touching ...

What is something you'll remember from the book?

Examples:

- One thing I learnt from Sarah is...
- One thing I want Sarah to know is...
- If I could say something to Sarah, I would tell her...

In the story we learnt that Sarah finds it really hard to trust people.

What else did you notice was hard for Sarah?

Sarah's carer Kathy helped her feel safe. How do you think she did that?

Imagine you were Sarah.

What 3 things would be helpful for Kathy to say to Sarah e.g. "I'm here with you"

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What 3 things do you think would be unhelpful? E.g. "Stop worrying".

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

If the child begins talking about their own life, listen with empathy and acceptance. You don't need to solve every feeling. Sometimes feeling heard is enough.

Find more resources at
www.ourlifetales.com.au

