

BE SAFE OR BE SORRY: A SCOPING REVIEW ON CHILDREN'S SAFETY AND SECURITY AWARENESS

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Abstract. The rapid growth of urbanisation has brought significant benefits to the world economy and cultural and societal development and increased social problems worldwide. The nature of crime is not uniform but varies from geographical region to another. In some areas, property crime is more common, while crime against a person (violent) is prevalent in others. In recent years, children's safety and security have become more prevalent. Thus, this review emphasises the awareness of children's safety and security worldwide. Hence, the primary goal of this scoping review is to uncover previous research on steps and strategies applied by many in creating awareness among young children about safety and security knowledge. This scoping review was reported according to Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR) guidelines. Five databases, namely Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), Semantic Scholar, and Bielefeld Academic Search Engine (BASE), were used for data scoping. A total of 20 studies were identified to be eligible for selection.

Keywords: *safety, security, community awareness, young children*

Introduction

In recent years, children's safety and security have become more prevalent. Hence, it is crucial to comply with the system of integrated support for young children, schools from both Pre- and Primary need to build a partnership with parents and develop mutual responsibility for children's success in the educational safety and security inside and outside of school. In this way, parental involvement is increased, parents' efforts to support schools are encouraged, and they directly impact a successful safety education in curriculum implementation. Ghani (2017) stressed that urbanisation has created numerous social problems worldwide. There is no exception in Malaysia. He added that crime had become a common phenomenon in all urban areas in both developed and developing nations. The nature of crime is not uniform but varies from geographical region to another. In some areas, property crime is more common, while crime on person (violent) is prevalent in others. Crime is not plagued by a singular factor anywhere it occurs, and various factors influence criminal activities.

Urban areas are highly heterogeneous in all their socio-cultural and economic ramifications, where various goods and deviances can be found. According to Soh

(2012), all 'forms of deviance flourish within urban environments because there are more individuals who support this subculture'. These sub-cultures led to various crimes in urban areas, and the continuous increase in crime in such areas correlates with the rapid urbanism development. Many believe that the increase in crimes is associated with the rise in the urbanisation process and conclude that rapid urbanisation is one of the significant contributors to crimes. Hence it provides all the crime opportunity elements: offender, attractor/victims and the places where criminal activities are performed, and criminals escape or hide. Violent crime is usually related to crimes committed on human beings, and the brute manner in which it has done typically causes harm to a person, their personality or damage to property. Habibullah et al. (2013) defined violent crime as a criminal activity that is an act of brute force engaged in taking property or a person's life. Likewise, Ajaegbu (2012) notes that violent crime is the most 'inhumane' crime that continues to plague the societies that have taken centre stage, leading to bloodshed and economic setbacks. Furthermore, Soh (2012) explained that violent crime is generally a crime of violence that is sufficiently regular and significant in causing hurt. Indeed, this crime has been on the rise in Malaysia and cases related to child abduction, and murder happened.

Therefore, it is important for this research to investigate the measures taken to support child safety and security knowledge and develop awareness among young children on the topic related to safety and security knowledge. Hence, the main aim of this scoping review is to uncover previous research on steps and strategies applied from various regions in creating awareness among young children about safety and security knowledge.

Materials and Methods

This scoping review was reported according to Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews (PRISMA) guidelines (Ne'matullah et al., 2022; Zaid et al., 2022). The present scoping review was carried out based on Arksey and O'Malley (2005) methodological framework: (1) identifying research questions; (2) identifying relevant studies; (3) selecting relevant studies; (4) charting the data; (5) collating, summarising and reporting the results.

Identifying the research questions

Even though there are considerable improvements in many child safety and security areas, awareness remains low. Hence, the research question of this scoping review which helped as the manual of this study, was, 'What is empirically known from the existing literature about children's safety and security awareness?' *Table 1* below shows the fundamental research questions created based on the research objectives of the Population-Concept-Context (PCC) framework.

Table 1. Research questions were formed based on PCC.

Research questions	Specific objectives
1. How are past studies on children's safety and security distributed?	1. To explore the temporal and geographical relationship and the setting of past studies.
2. What research design was used by past studies on children's safety and security?	2. To determine the research method used in past studies.
3. What are the research aims of past	3. To analyse the research purpose of past

studies on children's safety and security?	studies on children's safety and security.
4. What elements of the study were found in past studies on children's safety and security?	4. To investigate the elements been researched in past studies.
5. What are the findings of past studies on children's safety and security?	5. To report the results of past studies on children's safety and security.

Identifying relevant studies

The search strategy was designed to cover all relevant studies as widely as possible. This entailed using relevant keywords related to children's safety and security awareness (*Table 2*).

Table 2. Search string.

Search directory	Search string
ERIC Semantic scholar BASE	(importance OR awareness) AND (child OR children OR toddler OR kid) AND (safety OR security)

Study selection

Study inclusion criteria are provided in *Table 3*. Protocols for scoping reviews are not eligible for publication in PROSPERO, but findings were presented according to PRISMA guidelines (Tricco et al., 2018). Two research team members independently conducted title and abstract screening of all articles based on predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Table 3. Inclusion and exclusion criterion.

Inclusion criterion	Exclusion criterion
1. Article published from 2017-2021	1. Article published before 2017
2. Related to children	2. Not related to children
3. Text in the English language	3. Other languages
4. Full text	4. Without full text
5. All continent	5. Review article

Charting the data

The research team collectively determined which attributes of the articles to extract for summary and analysis after piloting the Microsoft Excel-based data charting form with a representative sample of the studies to be reviewed. The completed data charting structure was designed to retrieve the following study elements: author, year of publication, country of origin, source of the study, the purpose of the study, research design, elements of the study, and findings.

Collating, summarising and reporting the results

The research team summarised and reported findings from the charting process. Then, the team organised the findings by applying codes and keywords to minimise and narrow down all the data into related content. Next, the codes and keywords are revised to ensure the data collected are relevant to the study and collated into predefined categories.

Results and Discussion

The search identified 168 articles through three selected databases of Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), Semantic Scholar, and Bielefeld Academic Search Engine (BASE). *Figure 1* shows that 63 titles were extracted from the BASE database, while 44 titles were identified from the ERIC database. A total of 61 titles were downloaded from the Semantic Scholar database during the identification stage. Of the 168 articles, 22 duplicated titles were excluded leaving 146 titles to be screened for eligibility. Further, 86 titles were excluded from the screening by title and abstract. Thus, 60 titles were assessed for eligibility by data extraction. A total of 41 titles were left out as they did not meet the inclusion criteria. 11 titles were related to Cybersecurity, while five articles were without full articles. Four titles were about Parental, and three titles were not associated with children. Two titles were on Literature, and the remaining 16 titles were a blend of various topics. Therefore, only 19 titles were identified to be included in this review.

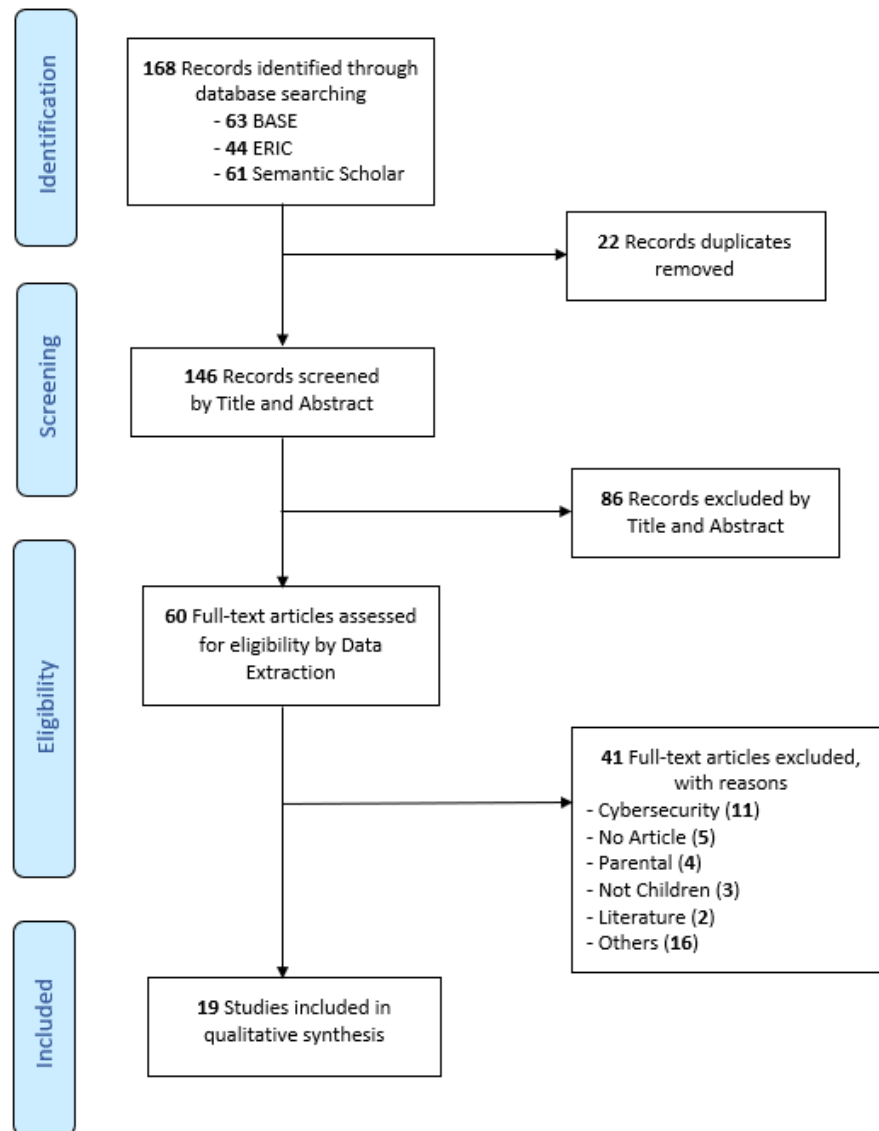


Figure 1. Flow diagram of the scoping review.

Distribution of past studies

The studies that were included in this review were published between the years 2017 and 2022. In 2017, two articles (Sattanon and Upala, 2017; Yachina and Khuziakhmetov, 2017) found research on children's safety and security. Furthermore, there were five articles found in 2018 (Ekman Ladru and Gustafson, 2018; Grzegorzewska et al., 2018; Muhammad and Sharif, 2018; Mwoma et al., 2018; Pasek et al., 2018) and 2019 (Chiang et al., 2019; Drăghicescu and Stăncescu, 2019; Nugroho, 2019; Trifunović et al., 2019; Włodarczyk, 2019) respectively from the three databases. In 2020, three articles were identified (Behravesch et al., 2020; Domalewska, 2020; Sanagavarapu, 2020), while only one article (Sherr et al., 2021) was found in 2021 respectively in relation to children's safety and security. As for 2022, three articles (Gheaus, 2022; Patel et al., 2022; Rakhshanderou et al., 2022) were related to the topic of study. As to the distribution by country, the highest number of studies were conducted in Poland with n=4 (Domalewska, 2020; Włodarczyk, 2019; Grzegorzewska et al., 2018; Pasek et al., 2018) and Iran with n=2 (Behravesch et al., 2020; Rakhshanderou et al., 2022), respectively. Meanwhile, twelve countries, namely Thailand (Sattanon and Upala, 2017), Russia (Yachina and Khuziakhmetov, 2017), Sweden (Ekman Ladru and Gustafson, 2018), Pakistan (Muhammad and Sharif, 2018), Romania (Drăghicescu and Stăncescu, 2019), Indonesia (Nugroho, 2019), China (Chiang et al., 2019), Serbia (Trifunović et al., 2019), Australia (Sanagavarapu, 2020), Austria (Gheaus, 2022) and Canada (Patel et al., 2022) were recorded with one study each. Meanwhile, a concurrent study (Sherr et al., 2021) was conducted in two countries namely South Africa and Malawi.

Research design used in past studies

From the accumulated 19 studies, n=9 (Rakhshanderou et al., 2022; Sherr et al., 2021; Behravesch et al., 2020; Domalewska, 2020; Sanagavarapu, 2020; Trifunović et al., 2019; Włodarczyk, 2019; Grzegorzewska et al., 2018; Sattanon and Upala, 2017) were quantitative studies, followed by n=9 (Gheaus, 2022; Patel et al., 2022; Chiang et al., 2019; Drăghicescu and Stăncescu, 2019; Nugroho, 2019; Ekman Ladru and Gustafson, 2018; Muhammad and Sharif, 2018; Pasek et al., 2018; Yachina and Khuziakhmetov, 2017) were qualitative studies. Meanwhile, a study (Mwoma et al., 2018) used a mixed-method research design.

Research aim of past studies

Table 4 shows ten categories of aims for conducting a study on children's safety and security. The role of school intervention (Domalewska, 2020; Drăghicescu and Stăncescu, 2019; Włodarczyk, 2019; Grzegorzewska et al., 2018) with n=4 titles and food security (Rakhshanderou et al., 2022; Sherr et al., 2021; Sanagavarapu, 2020) were found to be the primary purpose of the study with n=3 articles respectively. While categories about children's travel (Pasek et al., 2018; Sattanon and Upala, 2017), play place (Nugroho, 2019; Mwoma et al., 2018), game knowledge (Chiang et al., 2019; Trifunović et al., 2019) and environment (Patel et al., 2022; Behravesch et al., 2020) chalked n=2 articles respectively. Other categories involving children's mobility (Ekman Ladru and Gustafson, 2018), childrearing (Gheaus, 2022), gender disparity

(Muhammad and Sharif, 2018) and folklore (Yachina and Khuziakhmetov, 2017) recorded a study each.

Table 4. Characteristics of included studies.

Distribution	Research design	Aims	Elements	Findings
Ekman Ladru and Gustafson (2018) Sweden	Video-ethnographic	This article analyses how young children negotiate mobility practices and engage in embodied learning in the collective preschool routine of walking in line.	Walks in line	While walking in line, children collectively 'do' space in diverse ways depending on where and how they move and where and when teachers negotiate safety issues.
Sattanon and Upala (2017) Thailand	Questionnaire	This paper aims to investigate the parental anxiety within the safety of children travelling to school and examine the student's self-help abilities.	(1)Traffic management (2)Safety zone (3)Facilities	The results indicated that parents worry at a high level mainly about the school setting, traffic volume, weather, security management, and facilities.
Drăghicescu and Stăncescu (2019) Romania	Investigation approach	Intend to investigate the extent to which teachers, being aware of the seriousness of the actions subsumed by bullying, are intervening promptly, adopting a series of strategies to prevent and combat this phenomenon.	School bullying	The research results revealed a proactive attitude on behalf of the teachers, who were aware of the need for involvement.
Nugroho (2019) Indonesia	Narrative method	The paper aims to study the criteria for developing the quality of play value for children's identity and play place in Malang, Indonesia.	Safe, comfortable and enjoyable playgrounds	The results indicate the main criteria for quality of play value, according to the experts, is safe spaces with a value of 0.141.
Gheaus (2022) Austria	Narrative method	This article relieves two desiderata in childrearing, the importance of which the pandemic has made clearer than ever.	(1)Unstructured time (2)Childrearing	Findings indicated a need to give children access to multiple caring adults and, thus, more opportunities to form secure and protected relationships.
Domalewska (2020) Poland	Quantitative analysis	The paper aims to discuss the role of schools in counteracting threats to societal security resulting from increased migration. Secondly, the study investigates im-migration policy and educational solutions in Poland. Finally, we evaluate educational solutions implemented in schools.	(1)Societal value (2)Personal safety (3)Societal security	The study shows that schools play a special role in educating young people about societal values, personal safety and societal security.
Muhammad and Sharif (2018) Pakistan	Semi-structured interviews	This study aimed to focus on addressing the area of gender disparity in primary school education in the country.	(1)Social issues (2)Gender disparity	The most significant identified factors include poverty, school proximity, security issues, social issues and perception of parents regarding the importance of girls' education.
Chiang et al. (2019) China	(1)Interviews (2)Video analysis	This study intended to design and implement an adventure video game (AVG) on mobile devices to improve children's	Safety accidents	The proposed AVG app situated children in real dangerous circumstances through roleplaying and then

			safety knowledge and skills through interactive gameplay.		engaged them in learning safety-related knowledge through case scenarios.
Pasek et al. (2018)	Observation		This article explores the idea of developing skills in securing safety in travel as an additional educational need for school children and young people.	Human needs	The article recommends supplementing the school curriculum to help create a profile of a student who can secure broadly understood safety for himself and others.
Poland					
Trifunović et al. (2019)	Experimental research		This study aimed to determine whether the type of device used (computers or tablets) in the natural kindergarten environment influences young children's performances.	Spatial relationships on traffic signs	The results show significant differences between the two-testing media for identifying the longer vs shorter relationships in favour of the Tablet PC.
Serbia					
Behravesh et al. (2020)	Descriptive-analytical		This study aims to recognise the issues of the sense of security of children in the parks of Mashhad.	Physical factors of urban parks	Findings show that the lighting index of all park nights and the reduction of out-of-sight locations induce fear in the design of the parks.
Iran					
Yachina and Khuziakmetov (2017)	Sociometric method		This paper aims to define how folklore peculiarities affect human safety behaviour and culture formation.	Students perceive psychological difficulties	Findings show that oral folklore (like fairy tales, proverbs, sayings, epics and games) is pedagogically practical for developing pupils' security culture.
Russia					
Sherr et al. (2021)	Cross-sectional		This study examines the potential impact of combinations of cash transfers and food security status on child cognitive development and educational outcomes.	Social protection	Results found that educational and cognitive outcomes for children can be bolstered by social protection measures (cash grant receipt or food security).
South Africa & Malawi					
Włodarczyk (2019)	Surveys		This study aims to find the extent to which selected assumptions of participatory management considered in the school safety and security promotion.	Security assurance	Of crucial importance in this respect is the need to understand the essence of safety in both positive and negative dimensions.
Poland					
Sanagavarapu (2020)	Survey		Australian parents' knowledge, views, and feelings of food allergy management and guidelines in primary schools.	Schools' practices and guidelines for food allergy	Overall, parents' satisfaction surrounding the schools' food allergy management was mixed.
Australia					
Patel et al. (2022)	Focus group		This study investigates student and teacher perspectives on safety in a Canadian inner city and marginalised neighbourhood undergoing revitalisation, alongside the redesign of a local school.	Causes of violence	The findings support the importance of including children's voices when planning, implementing and evaluating policy initiatives that directly affect their lives.
Canada					
Mwoma et al. (2018)	Mixed methods approach		This article presents a study conducted in preschools in informal settlements in Nairobi County, Kenya, focusing on safety and security for preschool children.	Conducive learning environment	Findings revealed that preschools in informal settlements are experiencing a myriad of challenges impacting negatively on children's learning.
Kenya					

Rakhshanderou et al. (2022) Iran	Experimental Study	This study aimed to survey the effect of school-based educational intervention on mothers' behaviour concerning healthy breakfast and snacks for children.	Nutritional status	There were significant differences between the two groups regarding the mean knowledge, perceived benefits, perceived barriers and behaviour scores two months after the program, except for attitude and mean scores (P<0.001).
Grzegorzewska et al. (2018) Poland	Survey	The aim is to identify the problems of crime and its prevention.	Social life	The study shows how children and young people perceive the issues related to security.

Elements of study

There were five principal elements identified from the 19 articles. The aspect of stranger danger (Patel et al., 2022; Behravesht et al., 2020) and play place safety (Nugroho, 2019; Mwoma et al., 2018) had recorded n=2 titles, respectively. Elements about road safety (Chiang et al., 2019; Trifunović et al., 2019; Ekman Ladru and Gustafson, 2018; Pasek et al., 2018; Sattanon & Upala, 2017) showed n=5 articles. In addition, elements related to food security (Rakhshanderou et al., 2022; Sherr et al., 2021; Sanagavarapu, 2020) had recorded n=3 titles. As for child sexual safety, a total of n=7 (Gheaus, 2022; Domalewska, 2020; Drăghicescu and Stăncescu, 2019; Włodarczyk, 2019; Grzegorzewska et al., 2018; Muhammad and Sharif, 2018; Yachina and Khuziakhmetov, 2017) titles were recorded.

Finding of past studies

Based on this scoping review conducted, significant findings were identified from the 19 articles reviewed. The first findings were related to the safe space involved in n=5 studies (Patel et al., 2022; Behravesht et al., 2020; Nugroho, 2019; Ekman Ladru and Gustafson, 2018; Mwoma et al., 2018). Results from n=4 studies (Rakhshanderou et al., 2022; Sherr et al., 2021; Grzegorzewska et al., 2018; Yachina and Khuziakhmetov, 2017) indicated that children's psychology plays a significant role in children's safety and security. Meanwhile, the findings found n=3 (Gheaus, 2022; Sanagavarapu, 2020; Sattanon and Upala, 2017) on parental worries and care towards children. While another n=3 indicated school curriculum (Domalewska, 2020; Muhammad and Sharif, 2018; Pasek et al., 2018) plays a part in imparting good values on children's safety and security. In addition, teachers' attitudes (Drăghicescu and Stăncescu, 2019; Włodarczyk, 2019) and the use of game knowledge (Chiang et al., 2019; Trifunović et al., 2019) showed n=2 titles, respectively.

Safety Awareness Programme is a prevention strategy that educates children to help them avoid physical and sexual abuse and other forms of violence. The latest research indicates that when children take risks, they learn to test their boundaries, understand their physical ability and develop the ability to be somewhat self-sufficient. Parents' and teachers' involvement is equally vital in equipping children with safety skills. For children in preschools, kindergartens and primary schools, creative activities should help children enjoy lessons on safety. The review identified five topics for creating safety awareness among young children.

Stranger danger

The measures are intended to minimise risk conditions that can cause children's safety and security from child abduction cases. In terms of the safety of children in public places, children will face various threats and risks that may result in something undesirable happening if left without adult supervision, even for a short period. Parents should be vigilant about their children's every move. The early years of development provide a window of chance to lay a strong foundation for a child's life (Mwoma et al., 2018). Children make leaps in physical, motor, social-emotional, cognitive and language development (The World Bank, 2010). Thus, ensuring that the children in their early years are protected from unsafe conditions will enhance their holistic development.

Playground safety

When people say playground, people will imagine a place for children to play. The desire to play naturally for all children and its value is undeniable. The process of play increases a child's self-esteem, opens a young mind to new possibilities, and develops social, verbal and problem-solving skills (Raja Mohd Rozuan et al., 2019). Child safety is the protection of children by adults related to attitudes, practices and environment from accidents, injuries, and threats in the playground. Research on risky play and young children's risk-taking has been relatively new in recent decades (Sandseter et al., 2021). Even though research indicates that risky play can lead to increased physical activity, improved motor skills and physical competence (Brussoni et al., 2015), it could sometimes cause danger of injury from falling (Kleppe et al., 2017).

Road safety

Maintaining road safety for children is necessary to ensure that they are safe and controlled when on the road. Various bad things can happen to children if no action or monitoring is done. It is vital to concern about road safety awareness among school-going children, whereby there is a lack of enforcement activity has been carried out. However, a study by Ahmad et al. (2019) found that the respondents had good enough knowledge and attitude regarding the importance of safety on the roads but could not be translated into their daily practices. The conclusion is that school students are easily influenced by attitude and their surroundings, either from their family or close friends and other people, to do something. Strictly law enforcement and knowledge of driving perspectives on the roads are needed to mitigate road safety awareness among school students.

Food security

With the concept of healthy and balanced nutrition, this discussion is about foods with nutrient content matching the required nutrient intake. It is vital to note that the nutritional intake needs of each person are different, depending on gender, age, ability, and other daily activities. Past studies revealed that although food safety guidelines and resources are established worldwide, limited Food Safety Education programmes have been targeted at elementary school children, particularly in developing countries (Peng et al., 2021). Furthermore, improving food safety knowledge has been the primary

outcome of the programmes; however, elementary school children are not practising food safety behaviours despite knowing (Ellinda-Patra et al., 2020).

Child sexual safety

Child sexual abuse is a severe and hidden problem in many countries worldwide. Older individuals do the concept of child sexual safety with children to satisfy their uncontrollable lust. Many children fail to understand that they are sexually abused without proper knowledge (Sharma, 2020). Any form of adult behaviour that forces, persuades, threatens or uses tricks to deceive children (UNICEF, 2013). Hence it is crucial to implement a structured education programme for school children on child sex abuse to prevent the occurrence of child sex abuse in children. Information on types of child sex abuse and its prevention must be included in the curriculum, improving the discussion between students, parents and teachers and breaking this culture of silence (Mathew et al., 2021).

Conclusion

The fact is every responsible parent and teacher alike is concerned about their children's safety. Hence, it is crucial to comply with the integrated support system for young children. At the same time, kids need to socialise at a young age and have a particular level of freedom to grow up and develop independence. Teaching children who learn and think differently about personal safety is especially important. Preschools are essential in implementing basic safety rules for children to abide by. This will help them become more mindful of how to protect themselves when no adults are around. Preschools need to build partnerships with parents and develop mutual responsibility for children's success in educational safety and security inside and outside of school. In this way, parental involvement is increased, parents' efforts to support schools are encouraged, and they directly impact successful safety education in curriculum implementation.

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Conflict of interest

The authors confirm that there is no conflict of interest involved with any parties in this research.

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