

Frongo's Yarn

Our body's alarm system

In order to stay safe, our bodies have their very own alarm system. When there is danger, our body goes into “protective mode”; our heart beats faster to pump more blood to our muscles, and our breathing increases. Sometimes people may even feel a little sick, shaky or wobbly. Whilst these feelings can be uncomfortable, they are not dangerous. Usually we refer to these feelings as anxiety. Everybody feels anxious sometimes, and it is an important feeling to experience as it helps us to be aware of potential danger and act in a way that keeps us safe.

There are three settings to our “protective mode”:

- **FIGHT:** If we make ourselves look big, loud or aggressive, this can sometimes scare away danger.



- **FLIGHT:** Sometimes our best option is to run away as fast as we can.



- **FREEZE:** If we freeze, maybe we won't be seen and the danger will pass.



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When have you had to

FIGHT



FLIGHT



FREEZE



Sometimes our alarm system gets a little off track. When kids have had a lot of stressful life experiences then their body can become extra sensitive. Take smoke alarms for example. They ring loudly when there is a fire so that people can be safe. However, they can sometimes go off when we've just burnt some toast! This means that our alarm system can go off even when there isn't real danger ("**false alarm**")... we just thought that there might be danger. Remember: safety isn't just physical. Our alarm system picks up on physical, emotional, social and moral safety too.



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Communities**

www.communities.wa.gov.au/thestoryanimals