



When is it OK to
keep a secret?

The illustration features two teenagers, a Black male on the left and a white female on the right, both in a thoughtful pose with their hands on their chins. They are set against a light purple background decorated with faint, stylized thought bubbles. The male is wearing a purple t-shirt, and the female is wearing a teal t-shirt. Two large, white thought bubbles with purple outlines are positioned above them, containing text about keeping secrets.

When is this not OK?
How can we know
when we should break
a confidence
or tell a secret?

Secrets

A secret is...

'something that is kept or meant to be kept unknown or unseen by others.'

Can you think of a secret you have ever had?

Did you tell anyone your secret or did you keep it to yourself?

Did they keep your secret or did they tell someone else?



Try and think about a secret you've had in the past that was appropriate to share with a friend.



Keeping Secrets

Why might our VIPs need us to keep a secret?

To keep a surprise, such as a party or present, for someone.

So they can share exciting news with us first - for example, someone in their family is having a baby.

To keep sensitive information, such as the person in the class that they like, private.



We ask people we trust and have respect for to keep our secrets. That means it is important to maintain their trust and respect by not sharing their secrets with others. Knowing their secret does not give you the right to share it with others.

Secrets that are confidential, or ones that are exciting for our friends, are fine to keep, as long as we feel comfortable and know that no one is getting upset or hurt. Sometimes, an adult might ask us to keep a surprise secret like a birthday present for our siblings. However, an adult asking a child to keep a secret about something the child is uncomfortable with is not OK and we should always share this with another grown-up that we trust.

Safety

Secrets are OK to keep if they are a surprise for someone else and you can understand the need for them to be kept a secret. For example, keeping someone's birthday present a surprise is absolutely fine as you don't want them to know what they are getting.



An adult giving you a gift and telling you to keep it a secret is not OK. While it is lovely to receive gifts, anyone telling you to keep that gift a secret means they do not want others to know, which may mean it is an inappropriate gift or that giving you a gift is inappropriate.

It is very important to tell a trusted adult about this, or any secret that makes you feel uncomfortable, unhappy or unsafe. If the adult that is making you feel this way is within your family or support network, it is important to tell another trusted grown-up about it.



Safety

We would need to share someone else's secret...



- if the secret makes us feel uncomfortable;
- if the secret makes us worry about someone else's safety;
- if the secret makes us feel worried in any other way;
- if we think the secret might involve someone else doing something dangerous;
- if we think the secret might involve someone else doing something they shouldn't.

OK or Not OK?



We are going to throw a birthday party for your mum at the weekend. But don't tell her, it is a secret!

OK, Dad, your secret's safe with me.



In groups, discuss if this secret is fine to keep or if it should be shared.

OK or Not OK?

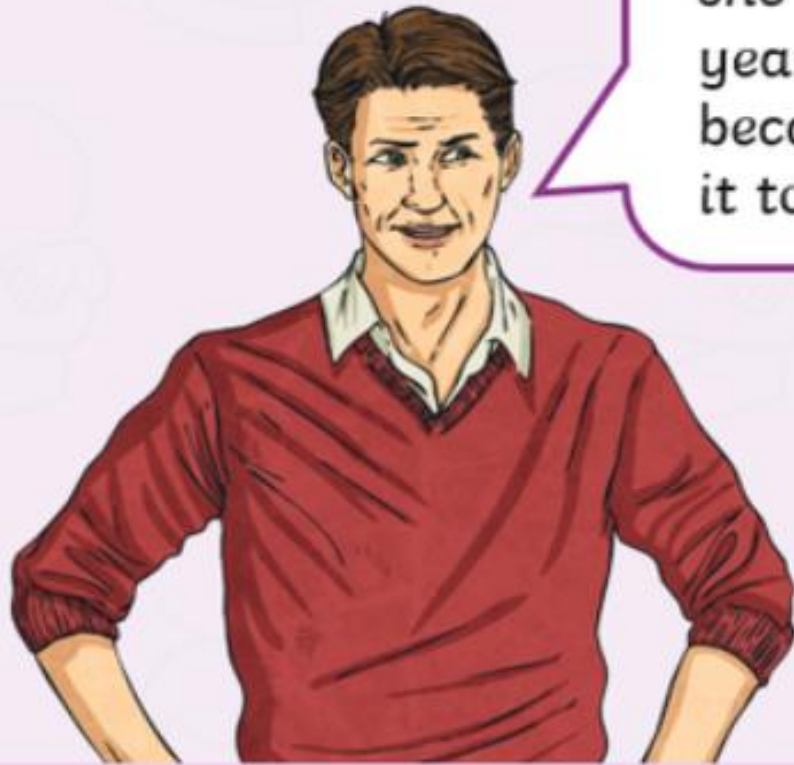
You can have this phone from me, so we can call each other, but you mustn't tell anyone that I've given it to you.

Thank you so much! I promise I won't tell my mum or dad or anyone else.



In groups, discuss if this secret is fine to keep or if it should be shared.

OK or Not OK?



I have bought something your sister will really like because she has worked very hard this year. Keep it a secret though because I'm not going to give it to her until after her exams.



I won't tell her.
I promise.

In groups, discuss if this secret is fine to keep or if it should be shared.

OK or Not OK?

You can have all this chocolate as my children don't want it. Just don't tell anyone that I've given it to you!

Wow, thank you. I won't tell anyone, I promise.



In groups, discuss if this secret is fine to keep or if it should be shared.