

# Playing It Safe

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(All puppets on stage)

**Narrator:** Hello there! My name is Angie, I'm here to tell you a story about a girl named Jamie. Jamie is a person that experienced violence in her relationship. This story begins while Jamie and her two friends Jordan and Alex are hanging out during lunchtime at school.

**Jamie:** Jordan I can't believe your birthday party is only three weeks away! I'm so excited!

**Jordan:** I know, it feels like we've been planning it forever.

**Alex:** I can't wait! I have the perfect present for you.

**Jamie:** Is your mom going to make her usual delicious chocolate cupcakes? They are my favorite!

**Jordan:** Oh of course, she makes them every year. Jamie, should I tell her to make an extra cupcake for your boyfriend Spencer? (**Jordan and Alex giggle**)

**Jamie:** I will try and bring him along! I would probably tell her to make an extra cupcake.

(Jordan leaves stage).

**Narrator:** A week later, Alex and Jamie are hanging out at Alex's house. While watching a movie, Alex notices that Jamie is paying more attention to her phone than to the TV screen.

**Alex:** Jamie! Don't you like this movie? I thought it was one of your favorites.

**Jamie:** It is! Spencer just keeps texting me, he likes to know where I am at all times. It really shows how much he cares about me. Don't you think?

**Alex:** Well it does I guess, as long as it makes you feel good.

**Jamie:** Yeah, I'm happy. But you're right, I should put my phone away.

**(Jordan enters stage)**

**Narrator:** A week later Jamie, Jordan and Alex are at the mall shopping for party supplies. Jordan and Alex notice that Jamie looks nervous.

**Jordan:** Wow! Look at these balloons. I should totally get them for my party. What do you two think?

**Alex:** Yeah they are perfect! What do you think Jamie?

**Jamie:** (staring off into space)

**Alex:** Helloooo, earth to Jamie!

**Jamie:** Oh sorry! I left my phone at home.

**Jordan:** So, what's the big deal with that?

**Jamie:** Well, I didn't tell Spencer I was here and he gets worried when I don't text back right away.

**Alex:** That seems a little too clingy.

**Jamie:** No! I think it works for us, and it's just how he is.

**Alex:** Hmm...

All leave stage  
**Narrator:** Jamie gets home from the mall and looks at her phone. She has missed texts and calls from Spencer. As she reads through the messages, it seems like Spencer gets angrier with each text and accuses her of cheating on him. He even blames her for making him so upset and angry. He says he wouldn't be angry if she was true to him

and didn't betray his trust. Jamie is confused and upset because she doesn't know if she did something wrong or not.

Later on Spencer says sorry to Jamie and they make up.  
Jamie decides not to tell her friends about this fight with Spencer.  
(Alex and Jamie enter stage).

**Narrator:** A week later, Alex and Jamie are getting ready for gym class on Monday morning.

**Alex:** (annoyed with Jamie) Hey Jamie, where were you all weekend?

**Jamie:** (timidly) I spent the whole weekend with Spencer.

**Alex:** Oh! I was wondering why I didn't hear from you all weekend. What did you two do?

**Jamie:** Uh (hesitantly), watched movies, went for a walk, played games, you know, the usual.

**Alex:** Well I went to Jordan's birthday party on Friday. I texted you to see if you wanted a ride, but obviously you were too busy. Everyone was really upset that you weren't there. Jordan's mom even made extra cupcakes for you and Spencer.

**Jamie:** Oh... uhhh yeah... my phone died Friday and I didn't get to charge it until Sunday. Wish I could have made it.

**Narrator:** While changing for gym, Alex notices a big bruise on Jamie's upper right arm. The bruise looks new and Alex never noticed it before.

**Alex:** Whoa! Jamie! What's that on your arm and how did that happen? It looks painful.

**Jamie:** (hesitantly) , oh.. this thing? Umm yeah! (awkwardly chuckles), I got this from wrestling with my dog. He's a **BIGGGG** dog! Anyway, let's head out to the gym now.

(Jamie leaves stage)

**Narrator:** As Jamie dashes out of the locker room for warm up in the gym; Alex becomes suspicious of the conversation and begins to think that Jamie is hiding something from her. She finishes getting dressed for gym, and goes to talk to Jordan during warm up.

(Jordan enters stage).

**Alex:** Hey Jordan. I wanted to talk to you about something.

**Jordan:** Hey Alex! Sure, what's up?

**Alex:** I was talking to Jamie in the locker room, and noticed a big bruise on her arm. Did you see it?

**Jordan:** Yeah! I asked her about it. She said she ran into a door while she was chasing her brother down the stairs.

**Alex:** What? (**very confused**) She just told me she got it from wrestling with her dog!

**Jordan:** Well that's weird; I don't know why she would lie about something like that.

**Alex:** She was also acting different when I was asking about her weekend and why she didn't come to your birthday.

**Jordan:** Maybe we should go ask her about it again?

**Alex:** No, no. I think I'll just go talk to her. I don't want her to feel attacked.

**Jordan:** Yeah, that's a good idea.

Jordan leaves stage

**Narrator:** As the day goes on, Alex can't help but think about their conversation and how she is going to bring it up again. Alex decides to ask Jamie to walk home after school with her so that she can ask about what really happened.

Jamie enters stage.

**Narrator:** As Alex exits the school, she sees Jamie outside and waves her down.

**Alex:** Hey Jamie!!

**Jamie:** Hey Alex! How was the rest of your day?

**Alex:** Mine was good. Drama class was great. It's always the best part of my schedule. How was yours?

**Jamie:** Oh good. Nothing too exciting.

**Alex:** That's good.

**Narrator:** Jamie and Alex walk a couple blocks and chat about their day a bit more. Alex keeps thinking about the right moment to change the subject in order to ask Jamie about the bruise and their conversation earlier.

**Alex:** So Jamie, I just wanted to talk to you about earlier in the gym.

**Jamie:** What about it?

**Alex:** Well, I was chatting with Jordan and he noticed your bruise as well. We talked and realized the stories you told each of us didn't match up. I want you to know that I'm here for you, just as I've always been. Can I ask what really happened?

**Jamie:** *(hesitant and fearfully)* well..., I know I can trust you, but it's really nothing.

**Alex:** Jamie... That bruise doesn't look like nothing. Are you okay?

**Jamie:** Yea... *(pauses)*.. I'm okay, it's just... I'm scared.

**Alex:** *(in a consoling voice)* Scared of what?

**Jamie:** *(shamefully)* Him...

**Alex:** Who's him?

**Jamie:** Spencer...

**Alex:** So, Spencer was the one that gave you that bruise? What did he do?

**Jamie:** Well yeah... but it was an accident and I'm sure he didn't mean to.

**Alex:** Jamie, are you sure he didn't mean to?

**Jamie:** Well, he's usually really nice. He only gets like that when he's upset.

**Alex:** Jamie, please tell me what happened?

**Jamie:** Well, I told him about Jordan's birthday party and asked him to come. He said that I shouldn't be friends with Jordan because he's a boy.

**Alex:** Well that's not fair, you and Jordan are just friends.

**Jamie:** I know but he said he didn't trust Jordan. I told him he should trust **me** and I would just go to the party for a bit but he told me I couldn't.

**Alex:** What happened then?

**Jamie:** I told him I really wanted to go and that I already told everybody I would be there. He got really angry and one thing led to another and...**(pauses, looks down and slowly says)** he hit me.

**Alex:** **(Shocked)** He hit you?!

**Jamie:** It was my fault. I shouldn't have annoyed him. I should be happy that he loves me so much that he wants me all to himself. I mean I really love him too.

**Alex:** It's NOT your fault, I'm glad you told me, it shouldn't have happened to you. You are my friend and want to see you happy. I don't like seeing you sad or hurt.

**Jamie:** I know. I also wish he didn't check my phone all the time and stop me from texting my friends **(looking down, very sad)** I really miss you guys.

**Alex:** **(puts a hand on Jamie's shoulder)** We really miss you too. Do you ever tell Spencer how he makes you feel?

**Jamie:** Sometimes... I try, but he says he acts that way because he loves me so much.

**Alex:** When someone loves you, they should never make you feel bad, sad, or hurt you. They should trust you and respect you and if there is a problem, they should talk about it nicely. That doesn't seem like a healthy relationship.

**Jamie:** (starts crying) No it doesn't seem healthy, but I love him so much. I'm sorry that I'm crying but I'm really upset. I don't know what to do.

**Alex:** It's okay to cry. (Pats Jamie on the back). Well, like we learnt in class, hitting is not okay. My mom always tells me "Never forget that walking away from something unhealthy is brave". Have you ever thought about taking some time apart?

**Jamie:** I don't feel brave. I love him too much to leave him.

**Alex:** When you spend so much time with someone, you become used to the routine and it becomes normal. Maybe you are just worried about losing the way you do things. Maybe you are afraid to be alone...afraid **not** to be in a relationship.

**Jamie:** It's just hard to picture a life without him. The times we are together and we are happy, it's so good.

**Alex:** You deserve someone that is **always** going to make you happy and treat you kindly without any harm.

**Jamie:** (whimpering)... (sniffles), I know, it's just hard. I just don't know what to do.

**Alex:** (Pauses)...hmmm...Is there an adult you trust that will listen to you?

**Jamie:** Yeah I can tell my mom tonight, I guess. I'm really sorry that I hurt Jordan by not showing up at his party.

**Alex:** He was really worried about you. Is it okay if I tell him what's going on between you and Spencer?

**Jamie:** I guess so. He's one of my best friends, too.

Jordan enters stage.

**Narrator:** The next day at school, Jamie, Alex, and Jordan are getting ready for gym class again.

**Jordan:** (looks at Alex and nods. Tentatively says) Uhhhh, Jamie. So have you talked to your mom about Spencer?

**Jamie:** Well no ....but I talked to Spencer on my own and it seemed like he was really sorry. He even bought me flowers and chocolate and said that it would never happen again.

**Alex:** So are you guys still together? Do you believe him?

**Jamie:** Well he seemed like he really meant it. Plus, we love each other so much.

**Jordan:** But he hurt you! And someone who loves you would never hurt you.

**Jamie:** Well I'm sure things will be different from now on. He even said I should go to the movies with **you guys** this weekend.

**Jordan:** Well ....okay if you say so. Just remember you can talk to us anytime.

**Alex:** Yeah, we're always here for you.

**Narrator:** Jamie did not show up to the movie on Saturday. Alex and Jordan are worried about her and go to her house the next day to make sure she is okay. Jamie's mom lets them in and says she is really worried about Jamie because she has been locked in her room all day. Alex and Jordan enter Jamie's room.

**Jamie: (sniffling)** Oh, hey guys. What are you doing here? Sorry I missed the movie last night.

**Jordan:** It's okay. We came over here to check on you. Are you okay?

**Alex:** Where were you yesterday?

**Jamie:** I was hanging out with Spencer all day, and when it came time to go to the movie, he got really mad and wouldn't let me go.

**Jordan:** What was he mad about?

**Jamie:** He said that I must not love him if I didn't want to spend all my time with him and that I was just going to cheat on him.

**Alex:** With who?

**Jamie:** With Jordan. He thinks that I shouldn't need to hang out with anyone else but him.

**Jordan:** What?! That's ridiculous we've been friends since elementary school. And besides, , people can't tell you who you should hang out with.

**Alex:** We're really worried about you Jamie. This seems like a very unhealthy relationship.

**Jamie:** Yeah, I don't think he's changed and he was calling me names. I was up all night... crying. I really love him and want to make it work but I'm so confused.

**Jordan:** Yeah it can be really confusing. Maybe you should talk to an adult about it. Your mom is really worried about you.

**Jamie:** I'm scared to tell her. I don't want to let her down.

**Alex:** Yeah it can be very scary but remember, this is NOT your fault. It shouldn't have happened to you. Do you want us to come with you to talk to your mom?

**Jamie:** I would like that very much. Are you sure you don't mind?

**Jordan:** What else are friends for! (Both Alex and Jordan put hands on Jamie's shoulders)

**Narrator:** Jamie's mom listens to her and encourages her break up with Spencer. She also helps figure out ways to keep Jamie safe.

Spencer continues calling Jamie and does not leave her alone over the next few weeks. He leaves messages saying how sorry he is and how much he loves her, but Jamie doesn't answer. She finds this very difficult but with the support and help of her mom she is able to stay strong and know that she should not go back to an unhealthy relationship.

Jamie starts hanging out with Alex and Jordan again and never misses another movie night or birthday party!

If you are in an unhealthy relationship and are experiencing dating violence - that means physical, sexual, or emotional violence - remember to follow the personal safety rules: "Talk" (say NO), "Walk" (get away as quick as you can), and "Squawk" (tell an adult you trust and keep telling until someone helps you). Remember, healthy relationships make us feel good about ourselves!

### Discussion Questions:

1. Who was your favourite puppet? What did you like about him/her?
2. Was Jamie and Spencer's relationship healthy or unhealthy? What are some signs of an unhealthy relationship? What are some signs of a healthy relationship?
3. What is dating violence? What types of violence did you see in Jamie and Spencer's relationship?
4. If you were Jamie, what would you do? Would you end the relationship too? Why or why not?
5. Over the last few sessions, we learnt about control and caring. Do you think Spencer was controlling Jamie, or just caring about her? Why?
6. If you are being emotionally, physically, or sexually abused in a relationship, it is really important to get help. In this story, Jamie got help from her mother because of her friends. Who else could Jamie tell and get help from?