

The Right Words in Under 10 Minutes

Home + classroom safe (ages 5–16)



A simple, story-supported framework that helps parents, carers, and teachers explain organ and tissue health journeys — calmly, gently, and without medical jargon or pressure.



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Parent/Carer Communication Resource (Ages 5–16)

“Most families don’t need more information — they need the right words when a child asks a big question. Donate Buddies makes those conversations feel calm, safe, and possible.”

Ages 5–16

Emotionally safe
language

Under 10 Minutes

To use the framework

4-Step Framework

Safety → Simple words →
Calm answer → Close

Home + Classroom Safe

For parents, carers &
teachers

A calm way to talk about big health journeys (Ages 5–16)

For: Parents, carers, teachers, hospital support teams & community organisations

Solves: “I don’t have the right words to explain this to a child.”

✓ Ages 5–16 ✓ Under 2 minutes to start ✓ 4-step framework. ✓ Home + classroom safe

What this is / what this is not

✓ What this IS

- Simple, calm language for real conversations
- Age-appropriate words a child can understand
- A tool to open the door — not close it

✗ What this is NOT

- Medical advice or clinical information
- A script about surgical procedures
- Pressure to decide, act, sign up, register, or “choose donation”
- Scare-based or graphic explanations
- A replacement for your care team

The “Right Words” Framework (4 steps • under 2 minutes)

Step 1 — Open with a Safety Sentence

Choose what feels natural:

- “You’re safe, and it’s okay to ask big questions about breathing.”
- “We can talk about this gently — and we can stop anytime you want.”
- “I might not have every answer, but I’ll explain it calmly and honestly.”

Step 2 — Name the body part (one sentence only)

Keep it body-positive and calm:

- “Your lungs are like two soft air balloons in your chest that help you breathe in and out.”
- “They bring fresh air in and help send oxygen around your body.”
- “They work all the time — even when you’re asleep — to help your body keep going.”

Step 3 — Explain what’s happening (without fear)

Pick one:

- “Sometimes the lungs need extra support, and the medical team helps decide what that looks like.”
- “Sometimes a lung transplant is discussed when lungs can’t do their job well enough.”
- “A transplant can involve organ donation, and we explain that gently without scary details.”

Step 4 — Keep it calm (Short vs Story)

- Short version: “That’s the main thing about the lungs. You can ask more questions whenever you’re ready.”
- Story version: “Captain Buddy can explain lung stuff gently with a story — short version or story version?”
- Buddy version: “Lenny the Lung explains lung transplant and donation in kid words.”

Quick Guide – DO / DON'T

✓ DO

- Start with safety – reassure before you explain
- Use body-positive, simple language
- Let the child lead with questions
- Pause and breathe – your calm is contagious

✗ DON'T

- Use medical jargon or clinical terms
- Make it about urgency, time pressure, or numbers
- Let adult worry lead the conversation
- Promise outcomes you can't guarantee

Ready-to-use scripts (Common hard questions)

“What do my lungs do?”

Ages 5–9:	“Your lungs help you breathe in fresh air and breathe out the old air so your body can keep going.”
Ages 10–12:	“Your lungs bring oxygen into your body when you breathe in and help remove carbon dioxide when you breathe out.”
Ages 13–16:	“Your lungs move oxygen into the blood and remove carbon dioxide, helping the body work properly.”

“Why are my lungs sick (or tired)?”

Ages 5–9:	“Sometimes lungs get tired and need extra help. You didn't cause it. The doctors are helping your lungs, and you are loved.”
Ages 10–12:	“It can happen for lots of reasons, and it's not your fault. The team is working out what your lungs need and how to support them.”
Ages 13–16:	“There can be different reasons, and it's not something you caused. The team is figuring out what's going on and what support helps most.”

“Am I going to stop breathing?”

Ages 5–9:	“Thank you for asking. Right now, you are breathing – and the doctors are helping your lungs. You are cared for with us.”
Ages 10–12:	“I hear that fear. You are breathing, and the team is watching you carefully and supporting your breathing. If anything changes, the team will guide the next steps.”
Ages 13–16:	“That's a real worry. You are breathing, and the team is watching your breathing closely.”

“What is a lung transplant?”

Ages 5–9:	“A transplant is when doctors give someone new lungs to help their body breathe better.”
Ages 10–12:	“A lung transplant is when healthy lungs are used to replace lungs that aren't working well.”
Ages 13–16:	“A lung transplant replaces lungs that can't do their job properly, with careful medical planning.”

“What does lung donation mean?”

Ages 5–9:	“Donation means a gift that helps someone else. Sometimes donated lungs can help a person breathe.”
Ages 10–12:	“Lung donation means lungs can be given to help someone who needs a transplant.”
Ages 13–16:	“Lung donation may help someone receive a transplant. It's handled with respect and care.”

“Does lung donation hurt the donor?”

Ages 5–9:	“No. Donation only happens in ways that don't hurt the donor. Grown-ups handle the details.”
Ages 10–12:	“No. Donation is managed carefully by trained teams, and it doesn't hurt the donor.”
Ages 13–16:	“No. Donation is handled respectfully by trained teams. We can keep details simple.”

The One-Minute Close (end well)

Choose one:

- “I'm really proud of you for asking about your breathing. We can talk again anytime you need.”
- “Right now, you're cared for and not alone. Let's do something normal together – what would you like to do next?”
- “If you want, Lenny the Lung and Captain Buddy can help us find the right words – no rush at all.”

For support teams – how organisations can use this

This mini-pack is designed to sit comfortably inside resources already offered by hospital support teams, school counsellors, and community health organisations. It requires no specialist training – simply print or share digitally as a gentle starting point for families, siblings, and classrooms navigating lung health journeys. The language is written to complement, not replace, professional guidance.

Disclaimer: Educational resource only – not medical advice. Always follow the guidance of your treating care team.