

# 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 tendons.”
- “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 simply.”

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

Keep it body-positive and calm:

- “Tendons are strong cords that connect muscles to bones so you can move.”
- “Sometimes donated tendon tissue can help a body repair or rebuild.”
- “We can talk about tendon donation gently — without scary details.”

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

Pick one:

- “Sometimes doctors use donated tendon tissue to help repair an injury.”
- “Trained teams handle tendon donation with respect and care.”
- “Captain Buddy and Tessa the Tendon explain this in calm, kid words.”

### Step 4 — Keep it calm (Short vs Story)

- Short version: “That’s the main thing about tendons. You can ask more anytime.”
- Story version: “Captain Buddy can explain tendon donation gently — short or story?”
- Buddy version: “Tessa the Tendon explains tendon 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 does tendon donation mean?”

Ages 5–9:	“It means sharing tendon tissue that can help another person’s body. Donated tendons can help someone move.”
Ages 10–12:	“Tendon donation means donated tendon tissue can help someone’s body repair and move.”
Ages 13–16:	“Tendon donation means donated tendon tissue may help repair movement and support recovery. It’s handled with care.”

### “What do tendons do?”

Ages 5–9:	“Tendons are strong cords that help your muscles pull your bones so you can move.”
Ages 10–12:	“Tendons connect muscles to bones so movement works smoothly.”
Ages 13–16:	“Tendons connect muscle to bone and help transfer force for movement.”

### “Where does donated tendon tissue come from?”

Ages 5–9:	“It can come from a person who has died, and their family said yes to helping others. It’s handled with care.”
Ages 10–12:	“It usually comes from a donor who has died, with family consent. Trained teams handle it respectfully.”
Ages 13–16:	“It usually comes from a deceased donor, with family consent. It’s managed by trained teams with respect and care.”

### “Does tendon donation hurt the person who donates?”

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

### “Why would someone need donated tendons?”

Ages 5–9:	“Sometimes a tendon gets hurt. Donated tendon tissue can help a body move better again.”
Ages 10–12:	“Some people need help repairing a tendon so they can move and heal.”
Ages 13–16:	“People may need tendon tissue to repair injuries and support recovery.”

### “Will the donor’s body still look normal?”

Ages 5–9:	“Yes. The person is treated with care and respect, and their body is looked after.”
Ages 10–12:	“Yes. Donation is done respectfully, and the person’s body is treated with care.”
Ages 13–16:	“Yes. Donation is managed respectfully by trained teams, and the person’s body is cared for.”

## The One-Minute Close (end well)

Choose one:

- “I’m really proud of you for asking about tendon donation. 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, Tessa the Tendon 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 organ and tissue donation conversations (including tendon donation). 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.