

# CHILD PROTECTION NOTIFICATION PROCEDURE

Our Service is committed to providing a child safe environment where children's safety and wellbeing is supported and children feel respected, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential. We will ensure all employees and volunteers understand the meaning, importance and benefits of providing a child safe environment and critically, understand their obligations and requirements as mandatory reporters. To ensure best practice, all educators will attend approved child protection training certified by a registered training organisation. Educators will continue to maintain current knowledge of child protection and mandatory reporter requirements by completing Child Protection Awareness Training annually.

Working in conjunction with the *Child Protection Policy*, this procedure has been developed to ensure all employees and volunteers understand their obligations and requirements as mandatory reporters and what to do when making a notification.

Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations (S. 162A, 165, 166, 167, 174, 175 and Reg. 84, 86, 87, 145, 149, 155, 168, 170, 175, 176) NQS QA 2: Element 2.2.1 2.2.2 and 2.2.3 *Child Safety/Child Protection*  
Related Policy: *Child Protection Policy*

In an emergency or life-threatening situation, educators should contact 000 regarding urgent concerns relating to immediate danger to a child's health or safety.

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURE		
1	Educators are to comprehend their obligations as mandatory reporters and their requirement to report any situation where they believe, on reasonable grounds, that a child is at risk of significant harm to the relevant <b>Child Protection Helpline</b> per state requirements.  VIC: Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) During business hours contact Child Protection. To find LGAs covered by each intake click: <a href="#">Child protection contacts</a> or for After Hours Child Protection Emergency Service on 13 12 78	
2	The approved provider, nominated supervisor and educators will review the Service's <i>Child Protection Policy</i> every year to ensure awareness of Child Protection practices	
3	Educators are to make a report to the relevant state Department when they have current concerns about the safety, welfare and wellbeing of a child at risk of significant harm	

4	<p>When a decision has been made to make a report to the <i>Child Protection Helpline</i> the following information must be prepared in advance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• details which identify the child such as the child's name, date of birth, address, phone number, cultural identity or Aboriginality, language barriers, disabilities</li> <li>• details of the parents, carers or other household members such as name, date of birth or age, address, phone numbers, cultural identity or Aboriginality, language barriers, disabilities</li> <li>• details of the educator and service such as name, address, phone and email details</li> <li>• information regarding the significant risk of harm</li> </ul>	
5	Educators will respect what a child discloses, taking it seriously and follow up on their concerns through the appropriate channels	
6	Educators do not have to prove that reportable conduct is happening or have evidence of who may be abusing the child to contemplate making a notification	
7	Educators will prepare accurate records recording exactly what happened, conversations that took place and what was observed to pass on to the relevant authorities to assist with any investigation	
8	Educators will understand that allegations of abuse or suspected abuse against them are treated in the same way as allegations of abuse against other people	
9	It is important for educators to remain sensitive to the practices of families of culturally diverse or indigenous backgrounds; however, the child protection policy must be adhered to. The processes and procedures within the policy attempt to allow for the individual differences of families	
10	Educators are to keep up-to-date developmental records on all children. Records are a significant part of a child or young person's time in care and contribute to their life story	
11	Educators will share and exchange information in accordance with legislation to relevant agencies. Information to be shared and exchanged should relate directly to the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children	

#### ONLINE REPORTING GUIDE

1	<p>Educators will complete online training (if applicable) to understand the child protection reporting process and use of the online reporting guide per state requirements.</p> <p><b>VIC:</b> In Victoria, reports to child protection must be made to a protective intervener, or other appropriately delegated officer. Reports cannot be made via the department's website or email. To make a report, you should contact the child protection intake service covering the local government area (LGA) where the child normally resides. <a href="#">Child protection contacts</a></p>	
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2	Educators will use the <i>Online Reporter System</i> relevant to their state if they have concerns that a child or young person who has experienced harm or is at risk of harm	
3	Educators will complete the relevant <i>Online Reporter System</i> on each occasion they have risk concerns, regardless of their level of experience or expertise. Each circumstance is different, and every child and young person is unique.	
4	Educators are to use the relevant <i>Online Reporter System</i> report to determine if a report to the Child Protection Helpline or submit a child protection report (eReport) should be made	
5	Educators are to print out the Final Decision from the relevant <i>Online Reporter System</i> and place in a confidential file	
6	Educators are to follow the recommendations of the relevant <i>Online Reporter System</i> . This may include alternative supports for vulnerable children and their families.	
7	Educators will refer families to appropriate agencies where concerns of harm do not meet the threshold of significant harm.	
8	<p>When a decision has been made to make a report to the <i>Online Reporting System</i> the following information must be prepared in advance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• details which identify the child such as the child's name, date of birth, address, phone number, cultural identity or Aboriginality, language barriers, disabilities</li> <li>• details of the parents, carers or other household members such as name, date of birth or age, address, phone numbers, cultural identity or Aboriginality, language barriers, disabilities</li> <li>• details of the educator and service such as name, address, phone and email details</li> <li>• information regarding the significant risk of harm</li> </ul>	

## DOCUMENTING A SUSPICION OF HARM

If educators have concerns about the safety of a child, they will:


1	record their concerns in a non-judgmental and accurate manner as soon as possible	
2	record their own observations as well as precise details of any discussion with a parent (who may for example explain a noticeable mark on a child).	
3	not endeavour to conduct their own investigation	
4	document as soon as possible so the details are accurate including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>child's personal details (name, address, DOB, details of siblings)</li> <li>time, date and place of the suspicion</li> <li>full details of the suspected abuse</li> <li>date of report and signature</li> </ul>	

## DOCUMENTING A DISCLOSURE

When receiving a disclosure of harm, the person receiving the disclosure will:

1	remain calm and find a private place to talk	
2	not make promises that can't be kept. For example, never promise that you will not tell anyone else	
3	tell the child/person they have done the right thing in revealing the information but that they'll need to tell someone who can help keep the child safe	
4	only ask enough questions to confirm the need to report the matter, because probing questions could cause distress, confusion and interfere with any later enquiries	
5	not attempt to conduct their own investigation or mediate an outcome between the parties involved	
6	document as soon as possible so the details are accurately captured including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>time, date and place of the disclosure</li> <li>'word for word' what happened and what was said, including anything they (the staff member/educator) said and any actions that have been taken</li> <li>date of report and signature</li> </ul>	
7	in addition, the person receiving the disclosure from a child will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>give the child or young person their full attention</li> <li>maintain a calm appearance</li> <li>reassure the child or young person that they've done the right thing by telling a trusted adult</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• accept that the child or young person will disclose only what they're comfortable with and recognise the bravery/strength of the child for talking about something that is difficult</li> <li>• let the child or young person take his or her time</li> <li>• let the child or young person use his or her own words</li> <li>• don't make promises that can't be kept. For example, never promise that you will not tell anyone else</li> <li>• honestly tell the child or young person what you plan to do next</li> <li>• not confront the perpetrator</li> </ul>	
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REVIEW OF PROCEDURE			
Date procedure created	August 2024	To be reviewed	Reviewed April 25. Next review date. April 2027
Approved by	Melissa Collard	Signature	
Procedure Reviewed Date	Modifications/Changes		
August 2024			

Procedure reviewed: minor edits and hyperlinks fixed.

Additional Child Protection resources section added to procedure	
July 2023	Procedure reviewed: updated contacts added
March 2022	Procedure reviewed: Additional information regarding review of policy added

CHILD PROTECTION RESOURCES		
NAME OF RESOURCE	RESOURCE DESCRIPTION	DESKTOP LIBRARY LOCATION
POLICY AND PROCEDURES		
Child Protection Policy	The <i>Child Protection Policy</i> provides guidelines and practices to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of children. It outlines the responsibilities of management, educators, staff, volunteers, students and visitors in preventing and responding to abuse or neglect. Mandatory reporting obligations are detailed, providing a framework for protection children and promoting a safe environment.	QA2 Policy Library
Child Protection Notification Procedure	This procedure has been developed to ensure all employees and volunteers understand their obligations and requirements as mandatory reporters and what to do when making a notification.	Resources > Procedures
Child Protection Educational Program Risk Assessment	This Risk Assessment Action Plan identifies potential hazards before, during or following the implementation of a Child Protection Educational Program and specifies actions (control measures) to be taken to minimise or control any risk prior to the delivery of any child protection education program.	Resources > Forms
Child Protection Observation Record	This observation record is to be used to assist reporting of any suspected child abuse signs, suspicions or concerns that an educator observes while the child is cared for at our service. The record is to be used in accordance with the Child Protection Policy and procedure and kept in line with our Privacy and Confidentiality Policy.	Resources > Forms
Child Protection Report Form	This form can be used to incorporate all mandatory and relevant information prior to making a call to the relevant Child Protection Helpline or completing the online reporting process.	Resources > Forms
Consent to Share Information	This form can be used to record consent provided by families to share information with other organisations for a specific purpose.	Resources > Forms

Reportable Conduct Scheme Policy (VIC Services)	The Reportable Conduct Policy outlines guidelines and procedures for identifying, reporting and responding to allegations of misconduct or abuse by employees, volunteers or visitors of the Service.	QA2 Policy Library
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