



Procedure for responding and reporting to incidents, disclosures and suspicion of abuse involving staff, volunteers or participants of Foundation Learning Centre

If a child or young person discloses an incident of abuse to you involving staff, volunteers or participants of Foundation Learning Centre:

REPORTING TO AUTHORITIES

As soon as immediate health and safety concerns are addressed, you **must** report all incidents, disclosures and suspicions of child abuse as soon as possible. Failure to report physical and sexual child abuse may constitute to a criminal offence.

Contact Victoria police on 000.

You also need to report internally to Child Safety Officers, the Deputy CEO or the CEO

ACTION 3: CONTACTING PARENTS/CARERS

The relevant staff member **must** consult with DHHS Child Protection or Victoria Police to determine what information can be shared with parents/carers. They may advise:

- **not to contact** the parents/carers (e.g. in circumstances where the parents are alleged to have engaged in the abuse, or the child or young person is a mature minor and does not wish for their parents/carers to be contacted)
- **to contact** the parents/carers and provide agreed information (this must be done as soon as possible, preferably on the same day of the incident, disclosure or suspicion).

ACTION 4: PROVIDING ONGOING SUPPORT

Foundation Learning Centre will provide support for children or young people impacted by abuse. This may include the development of a **Student Support Plan** developed in consultation with student welfare staff or professionals.

Strategies may include development of a safety plan, direct support and referral to wellbeing professionals.

Staff involved in the incident will receive internal debriefing and ongoing support as required.

All staff must follow the four *critical actions* every time they become aware of a further instance or risk of abuse. This includes reporting new information to authorities.



If you believe that a child or young person is not subject to abuse, but you still hold **significant concerns** for their wellbeing, you must still act.

This may include making a referral or seeking advice from Child FIRST (in circumstances where the family are open to receiving support), or to DHHS Child Protection or Victoria Police.

CONTACT

DHHS CHILD PROTECTION

AREA

North Division 1300 664 9777

South Division 1300 655 795

East Division 1300 360 391

West Division (Rural) 1800 075 599

West Division (Metro) 1300 664 9777

AFTER HOURS

After hours, weekends, public holidays 13 12 78

CHILD FIRST

www.dhs.vic.gov.au

VICTORIA POLICE

000 or contact your local police station

If a parent/carer reports that their child/young person has been abused in your organisation or raises a concern:

- Advise the parent/carer that you are required to follow the procedure for *Responding and reporting to incidents, disclosures and suspicions of abuse involving staff, volunteers or participants of Foundation Learning Centre*.
- Ask about the wellbeing of the child/young person.
- Allow the parent/carer to talk through the incident in their own words.
- Advise the parent/carer that you will record the information
- Explain to them the information will need to be reported to authorities and others, such as the Child Safety Officers, the Deputy CEO or the CEO, the police or child protection.
- Provide them with an incident report form to complete, or complete it together.
- Ensure the report is recorded accurately, and that the record is stored securely.

Legal Responsibilities

While the Child Safe Standards focus on organisations, every adult who reasonably believes that a child/young person has been abused, whether in their organisation or not, has an obligation to report that belief to authorities.

The **failure to disclose** criminal offence requires all adults (aged 18 and over) who hold a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria by an adult against a child/young person under 16, to disclose that information to police (unless they have a reasonable excuse not to, for example because they fear for their safety or the safety of others).

Related Documents

Foundation Learning Centre Child Safe Policy

Foundation Learning Centre Child Safety Statement

Foundation Learning Centre Staff and Volunteer Code of Conduct

Procedure for reporting suspected child abuse