



Reporting child abuse

Queensland

Legislation

What gets reported?

Any reasonable suspicion of [child abuse](#) or neglect. **You don't have to have proof.** If you suspect that a child (and that includes anyone under 18) is in need of protection then you should report it immediately.

Who is required to report?

Although people working in sporting or recreation organisations are not mandatory reporters, there may be some individuals who do have this responsibility as a result of their employment with other organisations (e.g. teachers who coach the local team).

Even though not required by law anyone who suspects that a child or young person is at risk of neglect or [abuse](#) should report it to the Department of Child Safety.

ChildSafe environments

There are currently no legislative requirements within NSW relating to child-safe environments other than conducting the *Working With Children Check* if you provide child-related employment. Introducing child safe measures will help your organisation manage risks and keep children safe.

Action

How do I make a report?

To make a report about a child at risk of harm contact the Department of Child Safety as follows:

- **During normal business hours** contact your local child safety service centre or free call **1800 811 810**. Child safety service centres have professionally-trained child

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protection staff who are skilled in dealing with information about harm or risk of harm to children.

- **After hours and on weekends** contact our *Child Safety After Hours Service Centre* on (07) 3235 9999 or Freecall **1800 177 135**. The service operates 24 hours a day.
- If you believe a child is in immediate danger or in a life-threatening situation, contact the Queensland Police immediately by dialling **000**.

Useful information

How do I recognise abuse?

The [Department of Child Safety](#) defines child abuse as:

- **Physical abuse:** punching, slapping, kicking, shaking, biting, applying physical 'discipline' or 'punishment' causing harm or injury
- **Emotional or psychological abuse:** constant criticism, scapegoating, name-calling, belittling, excessive teasing, ignoring, punishing normal behaviour, exposure to domestic and family violence, withholding praise and affection
- **Neglect:** failing to meet the child's basic needs for adequate supervision, food, clothing, shelter, safety, hygiene, medical care, education, love and affection and failure to use available resources to meet those needs
- **Sexual abuse or exploitation:** any sexual act or sexual threat imposed upon a child including exposure, indecent phone calls, voyeurism, persistent intrusion of a child's privacy, penetration, rape, incest, involvement with pornography, child prostitution.

Child Safe environment strategies

Child Safe environment strategies are put in place to prevent and minimise opportunities for child abuse within your organisation including preventing offenders from gaining access to your organisation. Child safe environments include ensuring your staff and volunteers understand their child protection obligations and that staff and volunteers know who to go to should they have suspicions a child may be at risk of harm.

What does establishing a child-safe environment involve?

Basically it requires putting strategies in place to prevent offenders from gaining access to your organisation and reducing opportunities for abuse.

These strategies include:

Understanding the different types of child abuse.

Identifying potential risks and dangers to children (e.g. going away on camps) and managing those risks.

Developing guidelines and processes that clearly outline how to respond to child protection issues.

Choosing your staff with care.

- State your commitment to a child safe environment when advertising vacant positions.

- Seek criminal history checks for employees/volunteers working with children.
- Conduct referee checks (particularly with previous child-related employers, if possible).

Nominating a child protection officer or Member Protection Information Officer who people can trust and go to with concerns.

Ensuring that all staff (paid and volunteers) understand their mandatory/ethical reporting obligations for suspected child abuse.

Ensuring staff have a clear understanding of acceptable/ unacceptable behaviour and know who to contact to about concerns they may have.

Talking openly about the importance of ensuring the safety of children within your organisation.

Resources

Where can I get further information or resources on reporting?

- [Department of Child Safety](#)
- [Australian Sports Commission](#)