

Child Safety Reporting Policy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to explain the roles and responsibilities of staff and their duty of care in relation to the reporting requirements around abuse to children in line with the Child Safe Policy & Procedure (Q Drive).

RATIONALE

Children and young people under the age of 18 are potentially vulnerable and can unfortunately be exposed to situations beyond their control which can lead to harm.

POLICY

NIET is committed to the care, safety and protection of all students and has a zero tolerance of child abuse. This responsibility extends to the identification and timely response to concerns regarding possible sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse and/or neglect of a child.

All staff are required to hold a current Working with Children Check. Any registered Teachers employed by NIET are part of the State of Victoria mandatory reporters. However, all persons have a duty of care to ensure the safety of children.

Mandatory Reporting

Mandatory Reporters are defined as:-

- teachers and principals;
- registered medical practitioners;
- nurses; and
- police.

Mandated staff members are required by law to make a report to Department of Health & Human Services (Child Protection) as soon as practical after they have formed reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection. It is expected that all NIET staff will make a report in these circumstances. Reasonable grounds of sexual offences on a child under the age of 16 **MUST** be reported to the Police.

On each occasion that reasonable grounds is formed, or when new information becomes available, it must also be reported to the DHHS or the Police if of a sexual nature on a child under the age of 16, even if there have been instances of other reports made relating to the child by other parties.

Reasonable grounds are more than a rumour or speculation but maybe less than having proof.

Reasonable grounds may include:

- A child tells the professional that he/she has been abused;
- A child states that they know someone who has been abused;

- The professional observes the child's behaviour which leads them to believe that the child has been abused; or
- The professional observes physical signs or indicators of abuse.

Responsibility

If any NIET staff member or volunteer that is not a mandatory reporter believes on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection, they must report their concerns to the company's Child Safety Representative/Officer or to a NIET management team member for action.

These instances must also be reported to DHHS or Victoria Police where the child's parents have not protected or are unlikely to protect the child from harm. Under the new criminal offences "Failure to Protect", Failure to Disclose" there is a legal obligation for all adults to report child abuse. Failure to do so can result in a criminal offence.

Confidentiality

As much as is reasonably possible, an individual's right to privacy is to be protected. Due process and privacy is maintained for the individual making the report and for the student and their family.

Record Keeping

All reports of alleged abuse or harm, or risk thereof, are duly recorded. Reports are to record factual details, such as: places, times, dates, names of people, observable behaviours or evidence of harm on the Child Safety and Wellbeing register.

IMPLEMENTATION

Making a report

Staff do not require the permission of parents, carers or guardians to make a report to Child Protection or the Victorian Police, nor are they required to tell parents, carers or guardians that they have done so. Staff is expected to follow the Department policy for making a report set out at:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au//principals/spag/safety/Pages/childprotection.aspx>

Reports to Child Protection and Victoria Police are confidential unless you consent or a court or tribunal decides that it is necessary in the interests of justice for your identity to be disclosed.

Roles

It is the role of the of NIET Management team to ensure all current staff and potential employees are aware and informed of the NIET Policy on Child Safety reporting.

Staff training

As part of their initial induction to NIET, new staff will be informed of child protection reporting requirements and must complete online training provided the DHHS prior to formal commencement

with NIET. All internal staff are also required to complete the online training yearly to ensure they understand their roles and responsibilities in child safety reporting.

RELATED POLICIES

- Access and Equity Policy & Procedure
- Privacy Policy and Procedure
- Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Staff Recruiting Policy & Procedure
- Child safe Policy & Procedure

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

- Child Safe Standards 2016
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005
- Crimes Act 1958
- Education and Training Reform Act 2006
- Child Safety Incident Report Form
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Register
- 2017 Skills First Program funding contract 4.2

Revision History:	
Date	December 2016 Version 1
Source:	Q:\VERSION CONTROLLED DOCUMENTS Acts, Regulations, Codes of Practice, ISO/AS/NZ Standards ASQA Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 Skills First Program VET Funding Contract 2017
Review Date:	December 2017
Authorised by Director: Carol Campbell	Signature:

A step-by-step guide to making a report to Child Protection or Child FIRST

Protective concerns

You are concerned about a child because you have:

- received a disclosure from a child about abuse or neglect
- observed indicators of abuse or neglect
- been made aware of possible harm via your involvement in the community external to your professional role.

At all times remember to:

- record your observations
- follow appropriate protocols
- consult notes and records
- consult with appropriate colleagues if necessary
- consult with other support agencies if necessary

STEP 1	STEP 2	STEP 3	STEP 4
RESPONDING TO CONCERNS 1. If your concerns relate to a child in need of immediate protection; or you have formed a belief that a child is at significant risk of harm*. Go to Step 4 2. If you have significant concerns that a child and their family need a referral to Child FIRST for family services. Go to Step 3 3. In all other situations Go to Step 2. * Refer to Appendix 2: Definitions of child abuse and indicators of harm in the Protocol – Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people	FORMING A BELIEF ON REASONABLE GROUNDS 1. Consider the level of immediate danger to the child. Ask yourself: a) Have I formed a belief that the child has suffered or is at risk of suffering significant harm? YES / NO and b) Am I in doubt about the child's safety and the parent's ability to protect the child? YES / NO 2. If you answered yes to a) or b) Go to Step 4 3. If you have significant concerns that a child and their family need a referral to Child FIRST for family services. Go to Step 3	MAKING A REFERRAL TO Child FIRST Child Wellbeing Referral 1. Contact your local Child FIRST provider. • See over for contact list for local Child FIRST phone numbers. 2. Have notes ready with your observations and child and family details.	MAKE A REPORT TO CHILD PROTECTION Mandatory/Protective Report* 1. Contact your local Child Protection Intake provider immediately. • See over for contact list for local Child Protection phone numbers. • For After Hours Child Protection Emergency Services, call 131 278. 2. Have notes ready with your observations and child and family details. • Non-mandated staff members who believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection are able to report their concerns to Child Protection

For further information refer to Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people – A joint protocol of the Department of Human Services Child Protection, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development | *Erasmus Children's Services and Victorian Schools*

Contact Numbers

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

METROPOLITAN REGIONS	
Eastern	(03) 9265 2400
Northern	(03) 9488 9488
Western	(03) 9291 6500
Southern	(03) 9794 3555
RURAL REGIONS	
Barwon South Western	5225 1000
Gippsland	5127 0400
Grampians	5337 8444
Hume	5761 2100
Loddon Mallee	5440 3111

Office for Children and Licensed Children's Services:

METROPOLITAN REGIONS	
Eastern	(03) 9265 2400
Northern	(03) 9412 5333
Western	(03) 9275 7000
Southern	(03) 9096 9555
RURAL REGIONS	
Barwon South Western	5225 1000
Gippsland	5127 0400
Grampians	5337 8444
Hume	5761 2100
Loddon Mallee	5440 3111

Important information for government schools

Principals of Victorian Government schools must report all incidents to the Emergency and Security Management Unit on **03 9589 6266**.

Victorian Government schools should contact the Student Critical Incident Advisory Unit (SCIAU), Student Wellbeing Division, for advice and support when responding to allegations of student sexual assault or inappropriate sexual behaviours.

The SCIAU can be contacted on

03 9637 2934 or 03 9637 2487.

Victorian Government School Principals should refer to the flowchart – *Responding to Allegations of Student Sexual Assault Compulsory Actions for Principals* at:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/childprotection/childprotection.htm>

Department of Human Services Child Protection

METROPOLITAN REGIONS		METROPOLITAN REGIONS	
Intake Unit	Regional Office	Regional Office	Regional Office
Eastern	1300 360 391	Box Hill	(03) 9843 6000
North and West	1300 664 977	Preston	1300 664 977
		Footscray	1300 360 462
Southern	1300 655 795	Dandenong	(03) 9213 2111

RURAL REGIONS	
Intake Unit	Regional Office
Barwon South Western	1800 075 599
Geelong	(03) 5226 4540
Gippsland	1800 020 202
Traralgon	(03) 5177 2500
Grampians	1800 000 551
Ballarat	(03) 5333 6530
Hume	1800 650 227
Wangaratta	(03) 5722 0555
Wodonga	(02) 6055 7777
Loddon Mallee	1800 675 598
Bendigo	(03) 5434 5555

After hours Child Protection Emergency Services (AHCPEs)

Statewide number for all emergency child protection matters outside of normal business hours (24 hours, 7 days a week):

131 278

Victoria Police **000**

Catholic Education Offices

Catholic Education Office, Melbourne	(03) 9267 0228
Catholic Education Office, Ballarat Diocese	5337 7135
Catholic Education Office, Sale Diocese	5622 6600
Catholic Education Office, Sandhurst Diocese	5443 2377

Independent Schools Victoria (03) 9825 7200

Other

Victorian Aboriginal Education Association, Inc.	(03) 9481 0800
Victoria Police Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Unit	(03) 9247 6666
Centre Against Sexual Assault	1800 806 292
Gatehouse Centre, Royal Children's Hospital (for specialist counselling and medical assistance)	(03) 9345 6391
Child Safety Commissioner	(03) 8601 5884
Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency	(03) 8388 1855

CHILD FIRST

Local Catchment Area	Contact
Barwon South Western	Greater Geelong, Queenscliff, Surf Coast 1300 551 948
	Colac – Otway, Corangamite 5232 5500
	Warrambold, Moyne, Glenelg, Southern Grampians 1300 889 713
Gippsland	East Gippsland 5152 0052
	Wellington 5144 7777
	La Trobe, Baw Baw 1800 339 100
	South Gippsland, Bass Coast 5662 5150
Grampians	Northern Grampians, West Horsham 1800 195 114
	Ararat, Pyrenees, Hepburn, Ballarat, Golden Plains, Moorabool 1300 783 341
Hume	Wodonga, Towong, Indigo 1800 705 211
	Alpine, Benalla, Mansfield, Wangaratta 1800 705 211
	Greater Shepparton, Strathbogie, Moira 1300 854 944
Loddon Mallee	Mitchell, Murrindindi 1800 663 107
	Greater Bendigo, Campaspe, Central Goldfields, Loddon, Macedon Ranges, Mount Alexander 1800 260 338
	Buloke, Goonawarra, Swan Hill, Mildura 1800 625 533
	1800 MALLEE
Eastern Metropolitan	Yarra Ranges, Knox, Maroondah 1300 369 146
	Monash, Whitehorse, Manningham, Booroondarra 1300 762 125
North and West Metropolitan	Nilumbik, Whittlesea, Banyule, Yarra and Darebin (03) 9450 0955
	Brimbank, Melton 1300 138 180
	Hume, Moreland 1300 786 433
	Hobson's Bay, Maribymong, Melbourne, Moonee Valley and Wyndham 1300 786 433
Southern Metropolitan	Casey, Cardinia, Greater Dandenong (03) 9705 3939
	Aboriginal children and families (Casey, Cardinia and Great Dandenong) (03) 9794 5973
	Frankston, Mornington Peninsula 1300 721 383
	Kingston, Bayside, Glen Eira, Stonnington, Port Phillip 1300 367 441