



Reporting child abuse

New South Wales

Legislation

What gets reported?

A report should be made to Family and Community Services if you suspect that a child or young person is at risk of harm. This means you have current concerns for the safety, welfare or wellbeing of a child or young person. You don't have to be certain, you only need to make sure your concerns are well founded and based on information you know or have from a reliable source.

How do I make a report?

If you believe a child is in immediate danger or in a life-threatening situation, contact the NSW Police immediately by dialling **000**.

Anyone who suspects, on reasonable grounds, that a child or young person is at risk of harm *should* report it to the Child Protection Helpline on **132 111** 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

In NSW, individuals working within sporting or recreation organisations are **not** mandatory reporters (i.e. they are not required by law to report suspicions of a child at significant risk of harm).

For more information about reporting, go to www.community.nsw.gov.au/docs/menu/preventing_child_abuse_and_neglect/reporting_suspected_abuse_or_neglect.html

Useful information

Child Safe Organisations

There are currently no legislative requirements within NSW relating to being child safe other than Working with Children Check requirements if you engage adults to provide child-related

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activities. Introducing child safe systems will help your organisation manage risks and keep children safe from harm.

Child Safe systems are put in place to prevent and minimise opportunities for child abuse within your organisation including preventing offenders from gaining access to your organisation. They 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.

Organisations working to create Child Safe systems are committed to and understand the importance of children's safety.

What does becoming a Child Safe organisation involve?

While a criminal record check can be an important tool in an organisation's approach to being 'child safe', they can't identify people who have not previously been caught or are yet to offend.

Implementing effective child safe policies and practices is the best way for an organisation to protect the children they are involved with.

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/volunteers with care.

- State your commitment to being a child safe organisation 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 reporting obligations for suspected child abuse.

Ensuring staff have a clear understanding of acceptable / unacceptable behaviour and know who to contact if they have concerns about a child's welfare.

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?

- [Office of the Children’s Guardian](#)
- [NSW Family and Community Services – Community Services](#)
- [Communities NSW - Sport and Recreation](#)