

Child protection principles

1. Best interest of the child - the child must be paramount in the decision making process
2. Early intervention and support for families - offer help and support to prevent entry or re-entry into the statutory system for children
3. Culturally appropriate care of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle - children have a right to cultural connections
4. Participation of children and young people in decision-making process - children should be able to have a voice in issues affecting them where appropriate and applicable.

Mandatory reporters

- All persons who are employed in children's services are mandatory reporters.
- As a mandatory reporter you have a duty to report the following:
 - any suspicions that a child in your care is at risk of significant harm
 - any suspicions that a group of children in your care are at risk of significant harm
- Reports must be based on reasonable grounds
- Reports must be made in a timely manner
- Mandatory reporters are protected under the Child Protection Law from liability if you reported in good faith.

Identifying issues

- Form positive relationships with children to be able to notice changes in their behaviours or appearance
- Form strong partnerships with families to recognise changes.
- Professional partnerships allow for trust and you will more likely be disclosed to if there is an issue.
- Follow organisational policies and procedures at all times to create a safe space for children.
- Look out for signs of abuse or neglect towards children from outside and inside the service.

Gathering information

- Be sure to only ask open questions to allow children to explain information in their own words.
- Take cues from the children (and family) as to whether you are distressing them by asking questions.
- Keep detailed notes of what happened as soon as practicable to avoid forgetting key information.
- Do not share or discuss with multiple people, support privacy and confidentiality
- Follow service policies and procedures around who to talk to and how.

Reporting

1

If the child needs urgent medical attention or you have witnessed the abuse call 000

2

If it is not an emergency report as per the Child Protection Policy and guidelines of your state or territory. As a mandatory reporter you must ensure it gets reported.

3

Notify the Nominated Supervisor/Approved Provider or any safe person within the organisation's management so that they can follow their required reporting steps.