

Flowchart: Responding to disclosures / incidents process

Step 1: Responding to an Emergency

If there is no risk of immediate harm, go to Step 2.

If a child is at immediate risk of harm you must ensure their safety by:

- separating alleged victims and others involved
- administering first aid
- calling 000 for urgent medical and/ or police assistance to respond to immediate health or safety concerns
- identifying a contact person at the school for future liaison with Police.
- where necessary you may also need to maintain the integrity of the potential crime scene and preserve evidence



Step 2: Reporting / Responding to Authorities

As soon as immediate health and safety concerns are addressed, you must report all incidents, suspicions and disclosures of child abuse / offending as soon as possible. (Failure to do so may amount to a criminal offence.)

IS THE SOURCE OF SUSPECTED ABUSE AN EMPLOYEE?

REPORTABLE CONDUCT

You **MUST** report all instances of suspected child abuse involving a school staff member, contractor, volunteer or visitor to the relevant College's Child Safety Officer or Executive Director.

The Executive Director must then report (as per CCYP guidelines) to Police and CCYP. If the Executive Director is unavailable, the Child Safety Officer delegate takes on this responsibility.

IS THE SOURCE OF SUSPECTED ABUSE WITHIN THE FAMILY OR COMMUNITY?

MANDATORY REPORTING

If you believe a child is in need of protection from child abuse or harm within the family or community, you must report to the College's Child Safety Officer or Executive Director.

The Executive Director will then report to relevant Government Agencies (DHHS and VIC Police) as appropriate. If the Executive Director is unavailable, the Child Safety Officer delegate takes on this responsibility.

Note: Mandatory Reporters are legally obliged to report matters relating to child abuse. All other staff/adults, whilst not legally obliged, should follow the same procedures as outlined above.

IS THE SOURCE OF SUSPECTED ABUSE ANOTHER STUDENT?

Report immediately to the College's Child Safety Officer or Executive Director.

The Executive Director will identify the contact person at the College for future liaison with Victoria Police and/or Child Protection and seek advice about contacting parents/carers.

Contact **VICTORIA POLICE** in all instances.

Contact **DHHS CHILD PROTECTION** if you believe:

- The victim's parents/carers are unable or unwilling to protect the child
- The student who is alleged to have engaged in the offending may need therapeutic treatment to address these behaviours or may be displaying physical and behavioural indicators of being the victim of abuse

DO YOU HAVE WELFARE CONCERNS OTHER THAN ABUSE?

If you believe a child is not subject to abuse but you still hold **significant concerns** for their wellbeing, you must report to the College's Child Safety Officer or Executive Director who will then notify the relevant Government Agency to make a referral or seek advice (Child First, DHHS or Police)

CONTACTS:

DHHS CHILD PROTECTION South Division: 1300 655 795 / after hours: 13 12 78
CHILD FIRST: www.dhhs.vic.gov.au
VICTORIA POLICE: 000





Step 3: Contacting parents or carers

Your College's Executive Director **must** consult with DHHS Child Protection or Victoria Police to determine what information can be shared with parents/carers and how to **communicate** with all relevant parties with consideration for their safety. They may advise:

Not to contact the parents/carer (e.g. in circumstances where the parents are alleged to have engaged in the abuse, or the child is a mature minor and does not wish for their parent/carer to be contacted, or where contacting the parents/carers is likely to adversely affect a **Victoria Police** investigation)

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)



Step 4: Providing ongoing support

In addition to reporting and referral to relevant authorities, the school must ensure that students feel safe and supported. This will be done in partnership and with the consent of parents, carers or guardians (where appropriate) Support in the form of debriefing will also be provided to any impacted staff members.

You play a critical role in protecting children in your care

- You **MUST** act by following the 4 steps above, as soon as you witness an incident, receive a disclosure or form a reasonable belief that a child has, or is at risk of, being abused, or has engaged in offending
- You **MUST** act even if you are unsure and have not directly observed child abuse / offending (e.g. if the victim or another person tells you about the abuse or offense)
- You **MUST** use the [Record of a child abuse allegation, disclosure or concern](#) template to keep clear and comprehensive notes

For more details please refer to the College's [Child Safety Reporting Policy](#), available at: <https://www.rabbinicalcollege.edu.au/childreportingpolicy>

