



CHILD SAFE TRAINING MODULE

All children have the right to feel safe and be safe all the time.

Commission for Children and Young People, 2018. A Guide for Creating a Child Safe Organisation, p.9

The purpose of this online learning module is to provide relevant information and resources to our staff and volunteers who interact with children or youth as part of their role at our Westernport Parish. We hope that after this refresher training, you will have an understanding of the child safe standards and your obligations and responsibilities in preventing and responding to child abuse.

SELF CARE

Some of the material you will work through during this training is of a sensitive nature and will cover topics in relation to the abuse and neglect of children. Child abuse and neglect may be an issue that you are familiar with, or this may be the first time you have had to think about it.

If at any time you feel you need to take a break, please do not hesitate to take the time out from this session and seek support and assistance, either through our Safeguarding Children Safety Officer, Safeguarding Children Committee members or Parish Priest. You can also contact the Archdiocese's (PSU) Professional Standards Unit. Phone: (03) 9926 5621 Email: psu@cam.org.au

Welcome

Welcome to the Westernport Parish Child Safe Refresher Training Presentation

Our Parish is committed to the safety and well-being of children and young people who visit and participate in activities at our sites. We support and respect all children, and strive to provide an environment that allows them to feel safe, happy and empowered.

We aim to promote a culture that empowers children who are vital and active participants in our Parish by abiding by the Child Safe Standards.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Regardless of your level of interaction and involvement with children we are all responsible for a child safe parish

During this module, we will look at:

- The Victorian Child Safe Standards
- Types of child abuse
- Identifying abuse, including physical and behavioural signs
- Your responsibilities
- Actions
- Reporting
- Support

VICTORIAN CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

The Victorian Child Safe Standards aim to:

- Promote the safety of children
- Prevent child abuse
- Ensure organisations and businesses have effective processes in place to respond to and report all allegations of child abuse

VICTORIAN CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

Heading to describe below??

- ❖ Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements.
- ❖ A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety.
- ❖ A Code of Conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children.
- ❖ Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel.
- ❖ Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse.
- ❖ Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children.

IDENTIFYING ABUSE

When identifying child abuse, it is critical to remember that

- The trauma associated with child abuse can have a significant impact on the wellbeing and development of a child
- All concerns about the safety of a child or the conduct of a worker must be acted upon as soon as is practicable

TYPES OF ABUSE

There are 4 main types of child abuse covered by law:

Physical Abuse

Sexual Abuse,

Neglect

Emotional Abuse

PHSYCIAL ABUSE

Physical Signs

Some possible *physical signs* include

- Unexplained bruises
- Cuts
- Burns
- Broken or fractured bones

Behavioural Signs

Some possible *behavioural signs* include:

- Showing wariness or distrust of adults
- Wearing long-sleeved clothes on hot days (to hide bruising or other injury)
- Unexplained absences
- Change in academic performance

SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse is when an adult uses their authority to involve a child in a sexual activity.

Under the 'Failure to disclose', 'Failure to protect', and 'Grooming' criminal offences, any adult in Victoria is required to report to Victoria Police if they reasonably believe that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under the age of 16.

Physical Signs

Some possible *Physical Signs* include

- The presence of sexually transmitted disease
- Pregnancy
- Excessive or sudden increase in bed wetting or soiling

Behavioural Signs

Some possible *Behavioural Signs* include

- Displaying sexual behaviour or knowledge that is unusual for the child's age
- Difficulty in sleeping or nightmares
- Being withdrawn
- Clinginess
- Complaining of headaches or stomach pains
- Fear of specific people
- Showing wariness or distrust of adults
- Displaying Aggressive behaviour

NEGLECT

Neglect means failing to meet a child's basic needs, such as providing adequate:

- Food and drink
- Shelter
- Clothing
- Supervision
- Hygiene
- Medical attention

Neglect can also occur if an adult fails to adequately ensure the safety of a child where the child is exposed to extremely dangerous or life-threatening situations.

Physical Signs

Some possible *physical signs* include:

- Frequent hunger
- Malnutrition
- Poor hygiene
- Inappropriate clothing

Behavioural Signs

Some possible *behavioural signs* include:

- Stealing food
- Staying at school outside of school hours
- Aggressive behaviour
- Misusing alcohol or drugs
- Academic issues

EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE

Emotional and psychological abuse occurs when a person engages in inappropriate behaviours, such as rejecting, ignoring, humiliating, isolating, threatening or verbally abusing a child, or allowing others to do so.

It can include derogatory name-calling and put-downs, or persistent and deliberate coldness from a person, to the extent where the behaviour of the child is disturbed or their emotional development is at serious risk of being impaired

Because this kind of abuse does not leave physical injuries, it is often hidden and underestimated

Physical Signs

Some possible *physical signs* include:

- Delays in emotional, mental or even physical development
- Physical signs of self-harming

Behavioural Signs

Some possible *behavioural signs* include:

- low self-esteem
- High anxiety
- Aggressive or demanding behaviour
- Being withdrawn, passive and/or tearful
- Self-harming

OTHER TYPES OF ABUSE

Others to be aware of include family violence, grooming, racial, cultural and religious abuse

FAMILY VIOLENCE

Family violence is any threatening, coercive or controlling behaviour that occurs in current or past family, domestic or intimate relationships. It may include

- Physical violence or threats of violence
- Verbal abuse
- Emotional or psychological abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Financial abuse

Exposure to these behaviours can have a traumatic effect on a child, whether they are the direct victim or a witness.

Physical Signs

Some possible *physical signs* include:

- Speech disorders
- Delays in physical development
- Bruises, cuts or welts
- Internal injuries

Behavioural Signs

Some possible *behavioural signs* include:

- Aggressive language and behaviour
- Nervous and withdrawn
- Adjustment problems
- Passive and compliant behaviour
- Low tolerance and frustration
- Wariness or distrust of adults
- Demonstrated fear of parents/carers or of going home
- Anxiety and/or depression

YOUR ROLE

We all have a responsibility to promote a culture of child safety. A child safe organisation fosters and demonstrates openness in a variety of ways. This directly and indirectly creates a culture in which everyone - employees, volunteers, *Parishioners*, parents, carers and children - feels confident, empowered and supported to safely disclose child safety concerns

If you work directly with children or youth volunteers, you are more likely to recognise behaviours that indicate child abuse or neglect, or that a co-worker may be a perpetrator of abuse. Even if you don't work directly with children, you still play an important role, including a legal duty to make a report where you have concerns about a child's safety

FACILITIES AT OUR PARISH

During times of parish activities at our facilities where groups of children are hosted, we need to maintain some strict rules to protect these children.

including:

- ❖ All staff/visitors must call the Office first where they can provide you with visitor or staff identification, which is to be visible at all relevant times
- ❖ All staff and volunteers working in these spaces must hold a valid Working with Children Card.

YOUR RESPONSABILITIES

Parish employees, volunteers, members of the public and contractors have an obligation to report

- ❖ immediately if they have a reasonable belief that a child is in need of protection as a result of physical injury or sexual abuse.
- ❖ Urgently (or immediately if the risk is immediate and severe) if they have an awareness that a adult poses a risk of abuse to the child under parish supervision

REASONABLE BELIEF

Parish employees, volunteers and contractors have an obligation to report immediately if they have a reasonable belief that a child is in need of protection as a result of physical injury or sexual abuse.

Factors contributing to reasonable belief may be, but are not limited to any of the items listed below :

1

A child discloses they or someone they know has been abused (noting that sometimes the child may in fact be referring to themselves).

2

Behaviour consistent with that of an abuse victim is observed

3

Someone else has raised a suspicion of abuse but is unwilling to report it

4

Observing Suspicious Behaviour

AWARENESS

Parish employees, volunteers and contractors have an obligation to report urgently if they have an awareness that an adult poses a risk of abuse to a child under the Parish's supervision. If the alleged risk is immediate and severe, the obligation is to report immediately.

Factors contributing to may be, but not limited to

- Feeling very uncomfortable about the way an adult is interacting with a child
- Suspect that the adult is grooming the child for the purpose of establishing trust or normalising sexual behaviour, and
- Notice a reluctance by the child to be alone with the adult.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS

You must take immediate action in relation to concerns about potential child abuse

You should take steps to ensure the immediate safety of the child involved and, without compromising your safety, ensure an appropriate level of care and supervision for the child

Treat all allegations of child abuse seriously and respond consistently with the reporting procedures as outlined in the Parishes Child Safe Policy. Procedure and incident report Form .

Westernport Parish Child Safe Policy, Procedure and Incident Report Form

You can access the full Child Safe Policy, Procedure and Incident Report from our website or the Child Safety Officer

Learner Acknowledgement

We require all employees and volunteers to acknowledge that they have read, understood and comply with the policy

Please check this box when you have read the policy

REPORTING PROCESS



The Parishes designated Child Safety Officer, or a member of the safeguarding Children Committee who will assist with reporting allegations of child abuse and safety concerns and coordinating a response

You must complete an incident Report Form, which can be found in our Child Safe Policy and Procedure, our website or the Child Safety Officer.

Once you form a belief on reasonable grounds that you should raise a report to protect a child, your obligations to report is separate to the reporting obligations or actions of others

REPORTING PROCESS

The information that you provide through your report may assist authorities to take further action to protect the child.

You should make a report to protect a child, even if:

- ❖ DHS (Department of Human Services) Child protection or Victoria Police were previously involved or are already involved with the child or their family
- ❖ You're already aware that other party has already raise concerns with the relevant authorities
- ❖ You, or another staff member/ volunteer have made a report to relevant authorities previously, and new information has come to light that raises new grounds for reporting

SUMMARY

A SUMMARY OF THE KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER

- ❖ You should now be able to recognise signs that indicate that a child is being or has been abused and know when to report to DHS Child Protection and Victoria Police.
 - ❖ We are all responsible for creating a child safe parish whether we work directly with children or not, we have a legal duty to protect children from harm
 - ❖ We can all contribute to promoting the rights and wellbeing of children within our organisation and the wider community
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ASSESSMENT QUESTION 1

What are the four main types of child abuse?

Select the correct answer from the list below.

Physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect and emotional abuse

Neglect, mental abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse

Emotional abuse, psychological abuse, sexual abuse and physical abuse

Physiological abuse. neglect, emotional abuse and sexual abuse



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ASSESSMENT QUESTION 2

There are three main aims of the Victorian Child Safe Standards.

Tick the three correct answers in the box on the right

The Victorian Child Safe Standards aim to:

Promote the safety of children

Promote child abuse

Ensure organisations and businesses have effective processes in place to respond to and report all allegations of child abuse

Prevent child abuse

Prevent the safety of children



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ASSESSMENT QUESTION 3

We have a role and certain responsibilities regarding child abuse.

Which of the following statements is not true.

- You should make a report to protect a child, even if DHS (Department of Human Services) Child Protection or Victoria Police were previously involved or are already involved with the child or their family.
- Once you form a belief on reasonable grounds that you should make a report to protect a child, your obligation to report is separate from the reporting obligations or actions of others.
- You do not need to make a report to protect a child if you are aware that another party has already raised concerns with the relevant authorities.
- Even if you don't work directly with children, you still play an important role, including a legal duty to make a report where you have concerns about a child's safety.



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ASSESSMENT QUESTION 4

There are a number of physical and behavioural signs of the different types of child abuse.

List the physical or behavioural sign to the most appropriate type of abuse below.

Frequent hunger or stealing food

Physical Abuse

Sexual Abuse

Neglect

Emotional
Abuse

You have completed **Westernport Parish** Child Safe Refresher / Training.

I acknowledge that I have read, understood and will comply with the **Westernport** Parish Child Safe Policy, Procedure and Incident Report Form. Including the parish Code of conduct Declaration

*Copy and return the 4 Assessment questions to the Parish office or
the Children Safety Officer*