

The Reportable Conduct Scheme

Information for young people



You have the right to feel safe and to be safe

Whether you are at school, on camp, in hospital, in residential care or youth justice, or involved in a religious organisation, you have the right to feel safe and to be safe.

Being safe means you are free from abuse, harassment, discrimination or inappropriate behaviour.

Feeling safe means you are comfortable in the places where you spend time and trust the adults who work or volunteer there.

You have a **right** to:

- be safe and feel safe wherever you are
- expect that the adults around you are keeping you safe
- be given information about how to raise a safety concern
- be listened to if you have a safety concern, and have action taken about your concern.



There are laws to keep you safe in organisations

The **Reportable Conduct Scheme** is among those laws. It exists to make sure certain **organisations** (like schools, religious organisations, youth justice services and out-of-home care providers) **deal with safety concerns** properly and fairly.

The **Reportable Conduct Scheme** says that **organisations must**:

- have ways for you to report any safety concerns about adults who work or volunteer there
- tell the Commission for Children and Young People if a worker or volunteer may have behaved in a way that is 'reportable conduct' (read more about what is 'reportable conduct' in the next section)
- properly investigate the adult's behaviour, including by talking to everyone involved
- keep the Commission updated about the investigation
- tell the Commission what it decides to do at the end of the investigation
- treat your personal information confidentially and only share it with people who need to know.

Sometimes information about your concern needs to be shared with other professionals or organisations, especially if the behaviour might be criminal.



What is 'reportable conduct'?

Reportable conduct covers a range of **behaviours by adult workers and volunteers** towards children and young people aged under 18 years, including:

- **sexual offences***
- **sexual misconduct***
- **physical violence***
- **any behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child**
- **significant neglect of a child.**

*For these behaviours, they could have happened to a child or young person or a child or young person could have seen them happen to someone else.

If you need help understanding what 'reportable conduct' includes and what types of organisations are covered by the Reportable Conduct Scheme, you can contact the Commission.

You can also find **more information** about the types of reportable conduct here:

<https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/resources/reportable-conduct-scheme/reportable-conduct-scheme-information-sheets>.

What should I do if I have a safety concern?

If there is an emergency, or you or someone else is in danger, then call police on **Triple Zero (000)** immediately.

If it isn't an emergency, ask someone at the organisation for a copy of the **child-friendly complaints policy** and follow the steps in the policy to **make a complaint** to the organisation.

If there is no policy or they don't help you, you can **contact the Commission** for information and assistance.

You can also ask an adult you trust, to help you make a complaint or to contact the Commission.



Once the organisation finds out about your safety concern, they need to **take it seriously** and do something about it. They need to **listen to you and support you** to be safe and to feel safe.

For support, you can also contact headspace <https://headspace.org.au/headspace/> or the Kids Helpline <https://kidshelpline.com.au/>.

What happens with safety concerns about possible reportable conduct?

Organisations must tell the Commission and take steps so that you and other children and young people are safe and supported.



Someone who was not involved in the incident or behaviour **will investigate** what happened. The person investigating will want to:

- find out directly from you what happened (without the adult who was involved being there), and
- separately, find out what happened from anyone else who might have information (including the adult involved in the incident or behaviour).

You have the **right** to ask for **information** and **support** before the process begins and can ask questions at any time. The process of asking you what happened usually takes place in person (with a support person if you want one) but you can also write things down.



The person asking the questions will ask you to **tell them everything you remember**. They might write things down and ask you to check it's right.

If you don't know the answer to a question or you have forgotten, that's ok. Just say 'I don't know' or 'I don't remember.' **You won't get in trouble** if you don't know an answer.

The information you provide will be shared with other people involved in the investigation, as well as other organisations like the Commission. It will not be shared with anyone who doesn't need to know, because your privacy is important. There is also a law that says your name can't be shared in public in connection with the concern you raised.

What happens next?

After an investigation, the organisation must consider all the evidence, including what you've told them, and make a 'finding'.

There are five types of findings including 'substantiated' (which means there is enough proof that the incident happened) or 'unsubstantiated'.

If a finding is 'unsubstantiated,' that doesn't mean that what you say happened didn't happen. It might just mean that all the evidence collected didn't meet the technical legal test under the Scheme.

The organisation must tell the Commission its finding as well as what it plans to do to keep children and young people safe.

The plans could include:

- consequences for the adult who was involved in the incident or behaviour
- making changes to how the organisation operates (like setting clearer expectations for adults about appropriate behaviours).

You have the right to be told about the findings and any actions that are taken.



About the Commission for Children and Young People

Our job is to promote the safety, wellbeing and rights of children and young people in Victoria. One of the ways we do this is by talking to the government and organisations about how they can best support you and keep you safe. We also make sure organisations follow laws like the Reportable Conduct Scheme. If an organisation is not following the Scheme, we take action.

Contact the Commission

If you need help understanding anything about the Reportable Conduct Scheme, or if you have any safety concerns about an organisation, you can contact us at the Commission.



call us on 1300 78 29 78 (free call)



email us at: contact@ccyp.vic.gov.au



visit our website at: ccyp.vic.gov.au

