

## Child Protection Awareness

**What you need to know:** While you are at this service, children's safety is everyone's responsibility, including yours. As someone working around children in NSW, there are a few things you must understand before the visit begins.

**Mandatory Reporting:** In NSW, certain people are required by law to report to the Child Protection Helpline if they have reasonable grounds to suspect a child is at risk of significant harm. This is called mandatory reporting. A mandatory reporter under Section 27 of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998. This applies to people who, in the course of paid work, deliver a service including education, children's services, health, welfare, or sport and recreation wholly or partly to children. Reporting is not optional. It is a legal obligation. Even if you are unsure whether mandatory reporting applies to your role, any person can make a voluntary report if they have a genuine concern about a child's safety or wellbeing. You do not need to be certain. You do not need proof.

### If a child discloses something concerning to you during the visit

- Stay calm. Listen without pressing for details or asking leading questions.
- Do not promise confidentiality. You cannot keep this secret.
- Tell us immediately. Report what you heard directly to the service Responsible Person, leader or nominated supervisor before you leave the premises.
- Do not investigate or speak to other children, families, or staff about what was said.
- The service will take it from there. You may be asked to write down what you observed or heard in your own words.

### If you observe something that concerns, you

If you witness behaviour, from any adult or child, that raises a concern about a child's safety or wellbeing, tell the service Supervisor, Assistant or Director immediately. You do not need to decide whether it is serious enough. That is not your call to make alone.

### How a report is made in NSW Reports in NSW

Reports are made to the Child Protection Helpline operated by the Department of Communities and Justice: Phone: 132 111 (24 hours, 7 days)

The service's nominated supervisor is responsible for making the report. If you have a concern and are unsure whether the service is acting on it, you can make a voluntary report yourself.

**What is inappropriate conduct:** While at this service you must not:

- Use physical discipline or threatening behaviour toward any child.
- Make comments that humiliate, belittle, or demean a child.
- spend one-on-one time with a child away from the group or out of sight of an educator.
- Take images or video of children on personal devices.
- Any breach of these expectations will result in immediate removal from the service.