

Fact Sheet – Disclosures from Children & Young People

Supporting a Child or Young Person Who Has Disclosed

Safeguarding children and young people so that they thrive in their families and communities, is a fundamental aspect of our work in providing a hand up to those facing adversity. The Society strives to work with the wider community to prevent all forms of abuse against children and young people and to ensure that the inherent dignity, care and wellbeing of all children and young people is upheld.

In our work at The Society, there may be times where children or young people make disclosures of abuse that we must respond to.

Children and young people generally disclose with great hesitation and often with feelings of fear and guilt. It is therefore important to remain calm and supportive in these situations. Active listening, without probing, is required.

The following three steps are expected:

Reassure the child or young person that:

- They did the right thing by telling you.
- They are not in trouble.
- They are not responsible.
- You will tell someone who can help them.
- They have a right to feel safe and protected.

Do not make promises that you can not keep. For instance, if a child young person asks you to promise not to tell anyone, you need to let them know that you can't promise that.

Remain as calm and as neutral as possible, particularly with your facial expressions and tone.

Record

- Anything that you are told or that you observe, immediately.
- The date, time, parties involved.
- Your signature.

This can be in the form of field notes initially, but then the Child Protection Notification Form needs to be completed. Do not make assumptions, report only what the child or young person actually said.

Report the incident immediately to:

- Your manager or supervisor as required.
- The Regional Director as required.
- Family and Community Services or NSW Police as required.

Self Care

Disclosures can be very upsetting and difficult to hear. If you require support or assistance in debriefing any disclosures, please let your Manager or Supervisor know so that we can assist you.