



Child Safe Code of Conduct



Royal
Botanic
Gardens
Victoria

1. Purpose

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria (RBGV) is fully committed to safeguarding children and young people in our Gardens by providing a safe, supportive and enriching environment that respects and fosters their dignity and self-esteem as they connect with nature and develop a deeper understanding of biodiversity, conservation and the natural world.

Accordingly, we wish to ensure that all Gardens personnel strive for the highest possible standards with respect to safeguarding children and young people from physical, emotional, sexual and other forms of harm and neglect. To that end we have developed the **Child Safe Code of Conduct** to identify clear expectations for behaviour towards and in the presence of children, and to prevent behaviour that may be harmful to the children and young people in our care or in our proximity.

The **Child Safe Code of Conduct** has been formally approved and endorsed by the Royal Botanic Gardens Board and Executive Team. Its guidelines have been developed to protect all children and young people who visit the Gardens, including (but not limited to) those who engage in family activities, with their schools and through early learning programs.

This document should be read in conjunction with:

- the specific requirements of your role as defined in your 'position description' statement if you are an RBGV employee
- other relevant policy and procedure documents or templates, including:
 - **RBGV Child Safe Policy**
 - **RBGV Child Safe Statement of Commitment**
 - **RBGV Child Safe Procedure (flowchart)**
 - RBGV's incident reporting procedures
- Victorian Public Sector Commission's (VPSC) Code of Conduct
- all applicable laws, including in relation to privacy, confidentiality, information sharing and record keeping.

As part of your commitment to observing this **Child Safe Code of Conduct**, you will be required to sign the **Child Safe Statement of Commitment**, pledging you will help to safeguard and protect children and young people engaged with, by and within our Gardens.

A failure to observe these guidelines will be considered misconduct and be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Such disciplinary action may, depending on the seriousness of the misconduct, include suspension while matters are investigated, formal written warning/s and/or dismissal. In addition to any internal disciplinary proceedings, a report will be made to the police in all instances in which a breach of the law has or may have occurred.

There may be exceptional situations where these guidelines do not apply, for example, in an emergency. However, it is crucial that the relevant Branch Manager and Executive Director are advised of any incidents as soon as possible.

If you need counselling or support

If you or anyone you know needs support, please contact the National Sexual Assault, Domestic and Family Violence Counselling Service on [1800RESPECT](tel:1800RESPECT) (1800 737 732), [Lifeline 131 114](tel:131114), [Beyond Blue 1300 224](tel:1300224) or [Lifeworks Employee Assistance Program 1300 361 008](tel:1300361008).

2. Related Documents

- *Child Safe Policy*
- *Child Safe Statement of Commitment*
- *Child Safe Procedure (flowchart)*
- *Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria Enterprise Agreement 2017*
- *Victorian Public Sector Code of Conduct*
- *RBGV Privacy Policy*
- *RBGV Social Media Policy*
- *RBGV Recruitment Policy*
- RBGV Incident Reporting procedure
- OH&S Policy

3. Related Legislation

- Children Youth and Families Act 2005
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005
- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014

4. Scope

All personnel, including Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria's Board and Senior Leadership Group members, employees, volunteers, tenants (on-site partners), Friends' groups, work experience students, visiting researchers and other contractors, are required to commit to and abide by this **Child Safe Code of Conduct**.

5. Definitions

Definitions are included at the conclusion of this document.



6. Responsibilities

Position	Responsibility
Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Be fully accountable for ensuring that all personnel are aware of and able to access the reporting mechanisms for disclosing abuse of children and young people as per the Child Safe Code of Conduct — Strategic oversight to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people is included in all aspects of organisational planning and strategy — Legislative responsibilities to protect children and young people, and to disclose child abuse in compliance with Victoria’s Reportable Conduct Scheme — Complete required training and adhere to Child Safe standards, including signing the Child Safe Statement of Commitment
Director and Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Be fully accountable for ensuring that all personnel are aware of and able to access the reporting mechanisms for disclosing abuse of children and young people as per the Child Safe Code of Conduct — Legislative responsibility to report instances of child abuse or suspected child abuse to the Victorian Reportable Conduct Scheme — Oversight of the effectiveness of the RBGV Child Safe Program — Complete required training and adhere to Child Safe standards, including signing the Child Safe Statement of Commitment — Sustain the RBGV Child Safe Program as an ongoing priority for the Gardens
Executive/Senior Leadership Group members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Be fully accountable for ensuring that all personnel are aware of and able to access the reporting mechanisms for disclosing abuse of children and young people as per the Child Safe Code of Conduct — Complete required training and adhere to Child Safe standards, including signing the Child Safe Statement of Commitment — Successfully embed child safety and protection in organisational practice in every area of the Gardens — Effective communication and timely distribution of Child Safe Policy, Child Safe Code of Conduct, Child Safe Statement of Commitment and Child Safe Training — Provide advice and support to all managers and supervisors to assist in understanding and implementing the Child Safe Program — Regular review of branch activity to ensure safeguarding protections are in place

Position	Responsibility
Child Safety Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Be fully accountable for ensuring that all personnel are aware of and able to access the reporting mechanisms for disclosing abuse of children and young people as per the Child Safe Code of Conduct — Oversee creation and ensure communication of the Child Safe Policy, Child Safe Code of Conduct, Child Safe Statement of Commitment and Child Safe procedures at Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria — Champion child safety matters in all contexts and forums so that safeguarding children and young people becomes an embedded part of RBGV planning and culture — Complete required training and adhere to Child Safe standards, including signing the Child Safe Statement of Commitment. — Be the key point of contact for child safety breaches, incidents and concerns — Liaise with the Director and Chief Executive and Risk Committee of the Board as required
People and Culture Branch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Ensure recruitment and screening policy includes Child Safe practice and adherence — Regularly review and update key documents relating to child safety and provide supporting resources in consultation with relevant stakeholders — Support the coordination of the Child Safe Program and its implementation — Provide training and advice in the application of the Program. — Record training and compliance of staff in the documentation and completion of required processes — Support the Child Safety Officer in investigation and reporting in relation to child safety incidents
Managers/Team Leaders/Supervisors (all personnel who manage teams or individuals, including volunteers and contractors)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Be fully accountable for proactive behaviours in calling out and disclosing abuse of children and young people as per the Child Safe Code of Conduct — Complete required training and adhere to Child Safe standards, including signing the Child Safe Statement of Commitment — Ensure all required processes are implemented and adhered to
Personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Be fully accountable for proactive behaviours in calling out and disclosing abuse of children and young people as per the Child Safe Code of Conduct — Complete required training and adhere to Child Safe standards, including signing the Child Safe Statement of Commitment — Secure a Working with Children Check (WCC) as a condition of employment — Wear name badge, lanyard and/or uniform at all times within the Gardens — Promote the Gardens' Child Safe standards with the general public

7. Key Requirements

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria's **Child Safe Code of Conduct** addresses the major requirements for times when you, as an employee, might interact with children and young people within the Gardens or online. We have developed this Code of Conduct to help you to safeguard those children and young people from physical or emotional harm and neglect.

7.1 Sexual misconduct

Under no circumstances is any form of sexual behaviour to occur between, with, or in the presence of, children or young people visiting the Gardens or participating in any of our tours, family activities and schools' programs. Engaging in sexual behaviour while on RBGV premises or while representing RBGV is prohibited even if the young persons involved may be above the legal age of consent.

'Sexual behaviour' needs to be interpreted widely, to encompass the entire range of actions that could reasonably be regarded as sexual in nature, including but not limited to:

- 'contact behaviour', such as sexual intercourse, kissing, fondling, sexual penetration or exploiting a child or young person through prostitution
- 'non-contact behaviour', such as flirting, sexual innuendo, inappropriate text messaging, inappropriate photography or exposure to pornography or nudity.

7.2 Positive guidance (discipline)

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria strives to ensure that children and young people participating in Gardens' tours, family activities and schools' programs are aware of the acceptable limits of their behaviour so that we can provide a positive experience for all participants. Children are encouraged to feel safe, be safe and to have positive relationships and friendships with their peers and others at the Gardens.

Wherever possible, children and young people are encouraged to give feedback, 'have a say' and participate in all relevant organisational activities, especially on issues that are important to them. Children and young people are given information about their safe participation in organisational activities including access to information about child abuse prevention services.

However, there are times when personnel may be required to use appropriate techniques and behaviour management strategies to ensure:

- an effective and positive environment for all participants
- the safety and/or wellbeing of other children, young people or personnel participating in our tours, family activities or schools' programs.

We require our personnel to use strategies that are **fair, respectful and appropriate to the developmental stage of the children or young people involved.**

The child or young person needs to be provided with clear direction and given an opportunity to redirect their misbehaviour in a positive manner.

Under no circumstances are our personnel to take disciplinary action involving physical punishment or any form of treatment, verbal or otherwise, that could reasonably be considered as degrading, cruel, frightening or humiliating. This kind of behaviour will result in formal investigation.

7.3 Adhering to professional role boundaries

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria's personnel should not, of their own volition or at the request of a service user, act outside the confines of their duties (as specified in their position description) when helping to deliver customer service, tours, family activities or schools' programs, unless reasonably deemed appropriate, such as a child or young person asking for information from Horticulture or Infrastructure staff.

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria's staff and volunteers:

- must not provide unauthorised transportation, for example, driving children between sites in a personal vehicle, or offering an unaccompanied child a ride on a work buggy or vehicle
- must not engage in activities with children or young people who are visitors to our organisation outside authorised tours, family activities or schools' programs, such as unscheduled tours of areas of the Gardens usually closed to public, unless reasonably expected in offering onsite assistance

- must not provide any form of support to a child or young person or their family unrelated to general visitation or our family activities and schools' programs, for example, personal tours of the Gardens after hours, offering art or gardening classes at the child's home or babysitting
- must not seek contact with children or young people outside our tours, family activities or schools' programs, following their visit to the Gardens, unless authorised and through approved workplace channels of communication
- must not accept an invitation to attend any private social function at the request of a child or young person who has participated, or is participating, in our tours, family activities or schools' programs — or at the request of their family
- must not develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, through gift giving, special treatment or inappropriate attention for specific children)
- must not engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children (for example, out of work hours social activities).

If any of our personnel become aware of a situation in which a child or young person requires assistance that is beyond the confines of that person's role, or beyond the scope of Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria's usual service, they should, at the earliest opportunity; contact the child or young person's parent; or guardian; refer the matter to an appropriate support agency; or refer the child or young person to an appropriate support agency; and/or seek advice from management.

7.4 Use of language and tone of voice

Language and tone of voice used in the presence of children and young people should provide clear direction, boost their confidence, encourage or affirm them. It should not be harmful to children. In this respect, avoid language that is:

- discriminatory, racist or sexist
- derogatory, belittling or negative, for example, calling a child a 'loser' or telling them they are 'too fat'
- intended to threaten or frighten
- be profane or sexual.

7.5 Promoting equity and diversity

All personnel must ensure that their approach and interactions with children and young people, like all visitors, is sensitive, respectful and inclusive of all backgrounds and abilities.

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria's personnel will support the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of all children and young people, especially of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds; children with disabilities or special needs; and children who identify as part of the LGBTIQ+ community; or those who are vulnerable.

7.6 Supervision

Personnel are responsible for supervising the children and young people to which our organisation provides tours, family activities and schools' programs, to ensure participants:

- engage positively with tours, family activities and schools' programs, for example, by engaging in learning activities that are tailored to their age and level of comprehension
- behave appropriately toward one another, for example, ensuring program resources are shared, no child is excluded from an activity
- are in a safe environment within the Gardens, and are protected from external threats, for example, falling branches or extreme weather

Our personnel are required to work in an open and transparent way. They are required to avoid being alone with children and young people to whom we provide services, and (where possible) to conduct all activities and/or discussions with visitors within sight of another adult.

7.7 Use of electronic and online communications

We prohibit all personal electronic communication between Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria's employees and volunteers and the children and young people who visit the Gardens and to whom we provide service, except when authorised with the express permission of a member of the Senior Leadership Group.

All our personnel are required to follow **RBGV's Privacy Policy** and **Social Media Policy**.

The privacy of personal information relating to Child Safe incidents is very important and must be protected at all times.

7.8 Gift giving

A member of the Senior Leadership Group is to authorise any gifts to children or young people involved in tours, family activities or schools' programs, or to their families. This includes rewards, prizes, treats or plant materials.

7.9 Photographs and videos of children and young people

Under these guidelines: children and young people to whom we deliver services are to be photographed or filmed while involved in visiting our Gardens, on tours, family activities or schools' programs, only if:

- an employee's Branch Manager has granted prior and specific consent for a photographic session to occur
- the image or video is taken with prior consent and written permission of the child or young person's carer, parent or guardian
- the photograph or video is taken in the presence of the child or young person's carer, parent or guardian
- the child or young person is given the opportunity to opt out of being photographed or filmed
- the child is appropriately dressed and posed.

Images and videos are only to be used for documentation or promotional activity. Images and footage are not to be distributed (including as an attachment to an email) to anyone outside Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria other than the child photographed or their parent or guardian, without management knowledge and approval or without a signed consent form.

Images and videos (digital or hard copy) are to be stored in a manner that prevents unauthorised access, for example:

- if in hard-copy form, in a locked drawer or cabinet
- if in electronic form, in a 'password protected' platform
- images and videos (digital or hard copy) are to be destroyed or deleted as soon as they are no longer required.
- images and videos are not to be exhibited on our website without parental or guardian knowledge and approval, or such images must be presented in a manner that de-identifies the child or young person. Any caption or accompanying text may need to be checked so that it does not identify a child or young person if such identification is potentially detrimental.



7.10 Physical boundaries and contact with children and young people

Any physical contact with children and young people in the Gardens must be appropriate to the delivery of our tours, family activities and schools' programs, such as when demonstrating how to pot up plants, weaving, helping children to climb down from trees or play equipment etc. If physical contact is required, it must be based on the needs of the child or young person (such as to assist or comfort a distressed young person) rather than on the needs of our personnel.

Under no circumstances should any of our personnel have physical contact with children or young people visiting the Gardens or participating in Gardens; tours, family activities and schools' programs that:

- would appear to a reasonable observer to have a sexual connotation
- involves touching
 - of genitals
 - of buttocks
 - of the breast area
- is intended to cause pain or distress to the child or young person – for example corporal punishment
- is overly physical – as is, for example, wrestling, horseplay, tickling or other roughhousing
- is unnecessary – as is, for example, assisting with toileting when a child does not require assistance
- is initiated against the wishes of the child or young person, except if such contact may be necessary to prevent injury to the child/young person or to others, in which case:
 - physical restraint should be a last resort
 - the level of force used must be appropriate to the specific circumstances and aimed solely at restraining the child or young person to prevent harm to themselves or others.
- the incident must be reported to the line manager and Child Safety Officer immediately.
- If first aid is administered as part of injury prevention with a child, this must be documented within an Incident Report as per normal protocol.

7.11 Overnight stays and sleeping arrangements

At the time of writing, we prohibit overnight stays as part of the service we provide to children and young people. This may change with any introduction of camping or orienteering activities at either site.

7.12 Uniform, name badge and lanyard

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria's personnel should wear their **uniform, name badge or lanyard and Child Safe Pin** at all times when on-site at either Gardens, as well as when representing our organisation at designated external functions and outreach programs.

7.13 Public and staff toilets

No child or young person is to be accompanied to a public or staff toilet without their carer, teacher or guardian. Personnel should avoid one-to-one situations with a child or young person in any toilet or change facilities at the Gardens. Personnel should not do anything of a personal nature for a child or young person that the child or young person can do for themselves, such as toileting and changing clothes.

7.14 Use, possession and supply of alcohol or drugs

While on duty, personnel must not:

- use, possess or be under the influence of an illegal drug
- use or be under the influence of alcohol
- be incapacitated by any other legal drug such as prescription or over-the-counter drugs
- supply alcohol or drugs (including tobacco) to children and young people visiting the Gardens or participating in any tours or programs

Safe use of legal prescription drugs (other than alcohol) is permitted, provided such use does not interfere with your ability to care for children and young people involved in our services.

7.15 Transporting children

Children and young people are to be transported only in circumstances that are directly related to the delivery of our tours, family programs or schools' activities, and/or as part of the Royal Botanic Gardens Free Shuttle or

Explorer services, where they must be accompanied by an adult. They should not be given casual lifts in buggies or any other work vehicle associated with Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria.

7.16 Reporting obligations

All personnel MUST make an **Incident Report** as soon as possible if:

- they become aware of any child safety concerns or allegations
- they observe any RBGV personnel whose practice or behaviour is contrary to the expectations of behavior set out in the **Child Safe Code of Conduct**
- any physical contact is initiated by a child or young person that is sexual and/or inappropriate, for example, acts of physical aggression, to enable the situation to be managed in the interests of the safety of the child or young person, our personnel and any other participants.

If you have immediate concerns for the safety of a child or young person, contact the Police on 000 right away. Then contact the Chief Warden and Child Safety Officer for guidance.

Please refer to **Child Safe Policy** and the **Incident Report procedures and template** for detailed guidance for all personnel to follow when making a report.

The **privacy of all personal information related to Child Safety reporting for all involved parties** will be protected throughout any reporting process – in person and in records management.

All Child Safe incidents will be reported to the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria Board through the Director and Chief Executive to the Risk Committee.

7.17 Prior or current criminal offences and convictions

All personnel must inform their line manager of any past criminal offences or convictions punishable by imprisonment that might in any way affect their ability to work near, with or for children and young people. Personnel must also **immediately** inform their line manager of any offences or convictions that have occurred during their employment which would affect their ability to work near, with or for children and young people.

8. Communications

We communicate our **Child Safe Code of Conduct** requirements to all personnel involved with children and young people in our organisation through induction (start of employment); special Child Safe Training Modules; refresher training every three years. We involve our personnel in reviews of the Child Safe Code of Conduct requirements. We communicate any significant alterations in relation to the **Child Safe Code of Conduct** requirements and resources to all personnel.

9. Monitoring and Review

This document will be reviewed every three years, in consultation with relevant stakeholders. Some circumstances may trigger an early review, this includes but is not limited to legislative changes, organisational changes, incident outcomes and other matters deemed appropriate by the Board and/or Director and Chief Executive. We retain records of each review undertaken. Such records may include minutes of meetings and documentation of changes to policies and procedures that result from a review.

External audit and verification based on a sample, conducted by the Australian Childhood Foundation shall occur at three yearly intervals.

10. Contact

The contact for further information is the Child Safety Officer in collaboration with the Head of People and Culture.

11. Acknowledgements

This Code of Conduct has been developed with the support and assistance of the Australian Childhood Foundation.



12. Version Control

Document Name	Policy Number	Effective Date
Child Safe Code of Conduct	v 1.0	23 March 2018
Child Safe Code of Conduct	v 2.0	May 2020

Definitions

Term	Definition
Bullying	<p>Bullying involves the inappropriate use of power by one or more persons over another less powerful person or group and is generally an act that is repeated over time. Bullying has been described by researchers as taking many forms which are often interrelated and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — <i>verbal</i> (name calling, put downs, threats) — <i>physical</i> (hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting) — <i>social</i> (ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating) — <i>psychological</i> (spreading rumours, stalking, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions).
Child abuse	Behaviour towards and/or in the presence of children and/or young people that is harmful.
Child or young person	A person under the age of 18 years.
Child Safe Code of Conduct	The Child Safe Code of Conduct aims to identify and prevent behaviour that may be harmful to children and young people at Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria. The Child Safe Code of Conduct outlines what is, and what is not acceptable behaviour or practice when working with or engaging with children and young people.
Emotional or psychological abuse	Emotional or psychological abuse occurs when a child does not receive the love, affection or attention they need for healthy emotional, psychological and social development. Such abuse may involve repeated rejection or threats to a child. Constant criticism, teasing, ignoring, threatening, yelling, scapegoating, ridicule and rejection or continual coldness are all examples of emotional abuse. These behaviors continue to an extent that results in significant damage to the child's physical, intellectual or emotional wellbeing and development.
Family violence	Family violence occurs when children are forced to live with violence between adults in their home. It is harmful to children. It can include witnessing violence or the consequences of violence. Family violence is defined as violence between members of a family or extended family or those fulfilling the role of family in a child or young person's life. Exposure to family violence places children and young people at increased risk of physical injury and harm and has a significant impact on their wellbeing and development.

Term	Definition
Grooming	<p>Grooming is a term used to describe what happens when a perpetrator of abuse builds a relationship with a child with a view to abusing them at some stage. There is no set pattern in relation to the grooming of children. For some perpetrators, there will be a lengthy period of time before the abuse begins. The child may be given special attention and, what starts as an apparently normal display of affection, such as cuddling, can develop into sexual touching and then into more serious sexual behaviour. Other perpetrators may draw a child in and abuse them relatively quickly. Some abusers do not groom children but abuse them without forming a relationship at all.</p> <p>Grooming can take place in any setting where a relationship is formed, such as leisure, music, sports and religious activities, or in internet chatrooms, in social media or by other technological channels.</p>
Harm	<p>Harm to a child, is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing. It is immaterial how the harm is caused. Harm can be caused by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect — sexual abuse or exploitation — a single act, omission or circumstance — a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances.
Neglect	<p>Neglect is the persistent failure or deliberate denial to provide the child with the basic necessities of life. Such neglect includes the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, adequate supervision, clean water, medical attention or supervision to the extent that the child's health and development is, or is likely to be, significantly harmed. Categories of neglect include physical neglect, medical neglect, abandonment or desertion, emotional neglect and educational neglect. The issue of neglect must be considered within the context of resources reasonably available.</p>
Personnel	<p>All staff and volunteers who work for the organisation whether in a paid or unpaid capacity.</p> <p>For the purposes of this Policy, personnel also refers to Friends' groups, tenants (onsite partners), work experience students, visiting researchers and other external providers), that is, anyone or any group that delivers services at either Melbourne or Cranbourne Gardens.</p>
Physical abuse	<p>Physical abuse occurs when a person subjects a child to non-accidental physically aggressive acts. The abuser may inflict an injury intentionally or inadvertently as a result of physical punishment or the aggressive treatment of a child. Physically abusive behavior includes (but is not limited to) shoving, hitting, slapping, shaking, throwing, punching, biting, burning, excessive and physically harmful over training, and kicking. It also includes giving children harmful substances such as drugs, alcohol or poison. Certain types of punishment, whilst not causing injury can also be considered physical abuse if they place a child at risk of being hurt.</p>
Sexual abuse	<p>Sexual abuse occurs when an adult or a person of authority (e.g. older) involves a child in any sexual activity. Perpetrators of sexual abuse take advantage of their power, authority or position over the child or young person for their own benefit. It can include making sexual comments to a child, engaging children to participate in sexual conversations over the internet or on social media, kissing, touching a child's genitals or breasts, oral sex or intercourse with a child. Encouraging a child to view pornographic magazines, websites and videos is also sexual abuse. Engaging children to participate in sexual conversations over the internet is also considered sexual abuse.</p>

Term	Definition
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Sexual exploitation

Sexual exploitation occurs when children are forced into sexual activities that are then recorded in some way and/or used to produce pornography. Such pornography can be in the form of actual photos or videos or published on the internet. Exploitation can also involve children who are forced into prostitution.

Signs of child abuse

Signs of physical abuse

- Bruises, burns, sprains, dislocations, bites, cuts
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries
- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather
- Fear of returning home or of parents being contacted
- Showing wariness or distrust of adults
- Being aggressive towards others or being very passive and compliant

Signs of emotional abuse

- Physical, mental and emotional development is delayed
- Highly anxious
- Showing delayed speech or sudden speech disorder
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional response to painful situations
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Chronic running away
- Compulsive stealing
- Low self esteem
- Drug or alcohol abuse

Signs of neglect

- Frequent hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Inappropriate clothing, e.g. summer clothes in winter
- Untreated medical problems
- Low self-esteem
- Poor social relationships
- Drug or alcohol abuse

Physical signs of sexual abuse

- Bruises, bite marks scratches, other injuries not consistent with accidental injury or other injuries to breasts, buttocks, lower abdomen
- Signs of sexually transmitted infections
- Difficulty walking or sitting
- Recurrent urinary tract infections
- Persistent headaches or recurrent abdominal pain
- Unexplained pain in the genital area



Term	Definition
	<p>Behavioural signs of sexual abuse</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Over attention to adults of a particular sex — Inappropriate displays of attention between child and parent or caregiver that appear lover-like rather than parent-like (being excessively overprotective towards child, restricting child's social activities or being inquisitive of child's sexuality) — Displaying unusual interest in the genitals of others — Precocious knowledge of sexual matters — Sudden changes in mood or behaviour — Difficulty sleeping and nightmares — Regressed behaviour, for example bed wetting, separation anxiety, insecurity — Change in eating patterns including preoccupation with food — Lack of trust in familiar adults, fear of strangers, fear of men — Lack of appropriate role boundaries in family – child fulfils parental role — Acting-out behaviour – aggression, lying, stealing, unexplained running away, drug or alcohol abuse, suicide attempts — Withdrawn behaviour such as passivity, excessive compliance, mood swing or depression — Learning problems at school, loss of concentration, unexplained drop in school performance — Poor peer relationships, family and /or child appear socially isolated

External links

For more information visit the [Commission for Children and Young People's Child Safe Standards](#).



Traditional Owner Acknowledgement:

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and learn and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and future.