

CHILD PROTECTION 2016

Villanova College

Child Protection Question 1

Why is it important to report concerns you may have regarding students' safety?

Q1. Why is it important to report concerns you may have regarding students' safety?

- 'Duty of care' on every employee
- 'Duty of care' necessitates reasonable precautions taken to avoid danger to child's life & safety
- All staff compulsorily required to report all protection concerns or reasonable suspicions of harm or risk of harm to Principal or Student Protection Contact

Child Protection Question 2

What is “harm” as defined in the legislation?

Q2. What is “harm” as defined in the legislation?

- Harm any detrimental effect of a significant nature on a child's physical, psychological or emotional well-being
- Immaterial how the harm is caused (i.e. even if accidental)
- Sources of harm:
 - School employee
 - Person not a school employee
 - Another student
- 85% cases student harmed by someone known to them

Child Protection Question 3

What is your legal responsibility if you become aware or reasonably suspect a student is being harmed (i.e. mandatory reporting)?

Q 3. What is your legal responsibility if you become aware or reasonably suspect a student is being harmed (i.e. mandatory to report)?

- Mandatory reporting requirement by all staff of sexual abuse/likely sexual abuse to Qld Police
- Principal required to provide a written report if they become aware of, or receive a report from staff re actual /likely sexual abuse

What is your legal responsibility if you become aware or reasonably suspect a student is being harmed (i.e. mandatory to report)?

- Mandatory reporting (written) obligation by teachers to Dept. Child Safety when holding a reasonable suspicion a student:
 - Has suffered, is suffering or at an unacceptable risk of suffering, significant harm caused by **physical** or **sexual** abuse; and
 - May not have parent **able** and **willing** to protect them from harm
- Principal usually makes report on behalf of teacher – but must give teacher a written confirmation of report

Reporting Requirements

Summary of Student Protection Reporting Requirements

Suspected sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse
AND
The child is not in need of protection (Unchanged)

Student
Protection
Report to QPS
only

Suspected sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse
AND
The child is in need of protection (Changed)

Student
Protection
Report to QPS
and Child Safety

Child in need of protection due to physical abuse,
emotional abuse or neglect (Changed)

Student
Protection
Report to Child
Safety only

Child Protection Question 4

List the 4 categories of harm (abuse)?

Q4. List the 4 categories of harm (abuse)?

- Physical
- Sexual
- Emotional
- Neglect

Child Protection Question 5

List some actions/behaviours that would characterize/constitute PHYSICAL abuse

Q5. Physical Abuse - definition

- includes – beating, whipping, paddling, punching, slapping, hitting, pushing, shoving, shaking, kicking, pinching, biting, choking, hair pulling, burning/scalding (using water, cigarettes etc)

Child Protection Question 6

List some actions/behaviours that would characterize/constitute SEXUAL abuse

Q6 Sexual Abuse - definition

- Any sexual act between an adult and child
- Includes –
 - Fondling, touching or kissing a child's genitals
 - Penetration, intercourse, oral sex, sodomy
 - Exposing the child to adult sexuality in other forms (e.g. showing sex organs to child, forced observation of sex acts, showing child pornographic material, telling 'dirty' jokes)
 - Privacy violations (e.g. forcing child to undress, spying on child in bathroom)

Q7 Emotional Abuse - definition

List some actions/behaviours that would characterize/constitute EMOTIONAL abuse

Q7 Emotional Abuse - definition

- A pattern of behaviour attacking a child's emotional development and sense of self worth
- Includes constant –
 - Ignoring or withdrawal of attention
 - Shaming, humiliating
 - Rejection
 - Lack of physical affection (e.g. hugs)
 - Lack of praise or positive reinforcement
 - Yelling or screaming
 - Threatening or frightening

Emotional Abuse - definition

- Belittling or telling the child he/she is “no good...worthless...bad...a mistake”
- Negative comparisons with others
- Using derogatory terms to describe the child; name calling
- Using extreme forms of punishment (e.g. confinement to a closet/ dark room; tying to a chair for long periods of time; terrorizing)

Q8 Neglect- definition

List some actions/behaviours that would characterize/constitute NEGLECT

Neglect - definition

- Child is harmed by carer's failure to meet child's physical or emotional needs
- Includes failure to provide –
 - Food, clothing, shelter
 - Medical care
 - Supervision or general care
 - Education
 - Emotional/psychological care (e.g. not providing appropriate levels of interaction, encouragement, nurturing, stimulation or continually ignoring a child's distress)

Child Protection Question 9

List some of the signs or indicators for PHYSICAL abuse (consider physical, behavioural & emotional indicators).

Q 9. Physical abuse - signs

- Multiple injuries and/or bruises (e.g. welts, lacerations, abrasions, burns, bite marks, bald patches)
- Old and new bruises in combination
- Unexplained recurrent injuries
- Improbable excuses or refusal to explain injuries
- Fear of medical help or examination when offered
- Inappropriate dressing for conditions to hide injuries (e.g. long sleeves in hot weather)
- Refusal to undress for sport

Physical abuse - signs

- Fear/wary of general adult physical contact (e.g. shrinking back if touched)
- Appears wary or frightened of carer
- Fear of suspected abuser (e.g. parent) being contacted
- Admitting they are being punished in an excessive way
- Random displays of anger and aggression
- Self destructive behaviour (e.g. cutting)
- Chronic running away

Images of Child Abuse

**Warning – Graphic Images of Abused
Children follow**

Images of Child Abuse



Images of Child Abuse



Images of Child Abuse



Images of Child Abuse



Images of Child Abuse



Images of Child Abuse



Child Protection Question 10

List some of the signs or indicators for SEXUAL abuse (consider physical, behavioural & emotional indicators).

Sexual Abuse - signs

- Knowledgeable in a sexual way but inappropriate to child's age
- Inappropriate interest in sex for child's age
- Mimicking sexual activity (eg. seductiveness)
- Suddenly drawing sexually explicit pictures
- Talking about having a secret
- Becoming worried about clothing being removed

Sexual abuse - signs

- Lack of trust or fear of someone they know well (e.g. not wanting to be alone with them)
- Regressed behaviour (e.g. bedwetting, bringing out discarded security toys, thumb sucking)
- Extreme emotional reactions (e.g. self harm, depression, anorexia, O/D, anger)
- Difficulty sitting or walking
- Frequent washing, showering, bathing (i.e. sense of being dirty)
- Wariness of adult contact

Statement Re Abuse – It is just the way it is

The child may see the abuse as just a part of life and believe that their family is just ordinary and normal.

“... (the abuse) was like washing the dishes or taking the dog for a walk... They (parents) seemed so normal and that really put doubts in my mind about the abuse and everything. You know, I’ve got a mum who’s got a full-time job and you know has lots of friends and goes out and does things on the weekends, and a dad who sits at a desk all day and goes running in the mornings and whatever, it sounds pretty normal to me.”

Eliza (17 years old) was sexually abused by her father from a very early age

Child Protection Question 11

List some of the signs or indicators for EMOTIONAL abuse (consider physical, behavioural & emotional indicators).

Emotional abuse - signs

- Continual self deprecation (“I’m stupid...ugly...worthless”)
- Overreactions to mistakes (and being punished)
- Inappropriate responses to pain (“I deserve this”)
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Anxiety reactions (e.g. rashes, hives, facial tics, stomach aches)
- Cruel behaviour (ie. pleasure from hurting others/pets)

Emotional abuse- signs

- Feelings of worthlessness about life and themselves
- Lack of trust in people and their expectations
- Extreme attention seeking or risk taking behaviour
- Fear of new situations
- Apathy toward most things
- Difficulty forming positive relationships
- Lack of attachment to parent
- Behavioural disorders (e.g. aggression, bullying, compulsive lying, stealing)
- Reluctant to play with peers

Child Protection Question 12

List some of the signs or indicators of NEGLECT (consider physical, behavioural & emotional indicators).

Neglect - signs

- Constant hunger
- Emaciated or 'sickly' looking
- Constant tiredness and lacking energy
- Poor personal hygiene (eg. severe body odour)
- Poor state of clothing
- Lacks sufficient suitable clothing for the weather
- Untreated medical problems (illnesses/injuries)
- Poor social relationships
- Compulsive scavenging or stealing (food, money)

Neglect - signs

- Frequently absent from school or late to school
- States there is no one at home to provide care
- Extended stays at school, public places, other homes
- Extreme longing for adult affection
- Anxiety about being dropped off and abandoned

Child Protection Question 13

A student makes a disclosure to you that they are being harmed (abused). How would you respond when talking to the student (i.e. what would you say/do)?

What should you not do?

Q 13. What to do if child discloses abuse

- Control expressions of shock, disgust or panic
- Acknowledge to the child that this must be a very hard thing for them to talk about
- Reassure the child they have done the right thing in disclosing
- Believe the child
- Let child know that other children report similar experiences
- Make it clear to the child that it is not their fault

What to do if child discloses abuse

- Explain to the child that support & protection is available to him/her
- Tell the child what you will do next.

What not do if child discloses abuse

- Avoid asking leading questions
- Do not put words in their mouth about how they must be feeling or thinking
- Do not push for details – child will face a number of interviews after disclosure
- Do not make promises you can not keep – particularly about confidentiality or what is likely to happen to them
- Avoid making judgmental or emotive statements

Child Protection Question 14

If you form a reasonable suspicion that a student is being harmed or a student makes a disclosure of harm to you, what should you do according to Villanova procedures?

Q14. If you form a reasonable suspicion that a student is being harmed or a student makes a disclosure of harm to you, what should you do according to Villanova procedures?

Reasonable Suspicion of harm:

- ▶ consult Student Protection Contact (optional) –
 - 3 x Heads of School
 - College Counsellor
 - College Psychologist
- ▣ complete Report of Suspected Harm form (staff intranet) or Mandatory Report Suspected (sexual abuse/likely abuse) to Statutory Authority

Q14. If you form a reasonable suspicion that a student is being harmed or a student makes a disclosure of harm to you, what should you do according to Villanova procedures?

- ▶ send completed form to Principal or
- ▶ Chair of Villanova Council if the Principal is suspected of the harm

Q14. If you form a reasonable suspicion that a student is being harmed or a student makes a disclosure of harm to you, what should you do according to Villanova procedures?

- Timing of the report important – within 24 hrs
- Consultative team approach
- Options available – observe/monitor/record