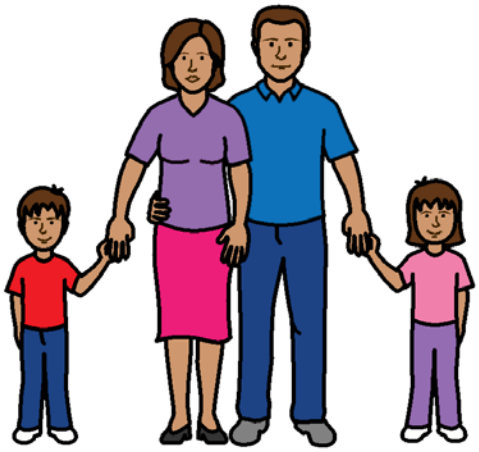
PROTECT

VICTORIA State Government | Education and Training



How to keep children safe

for parents and carers

Easy English

This factsheet has some hard words.

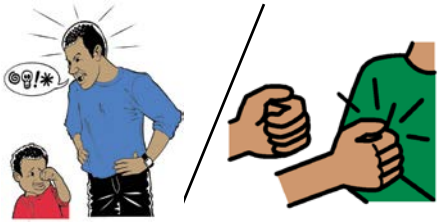
The first time we write a hard word it is in **blue**.

We write what the hard word means.

What is this factsheet about?

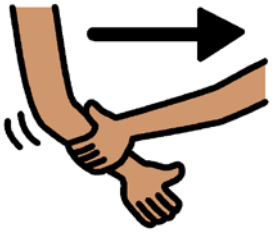
This factsheet is about how to keep children safe.

It tells you what to do if you think a child is **not** safe.



This factsheet also tells you about **child abuse**. Child abuse means actions that hurt a child or teenager.

What is child abuse?



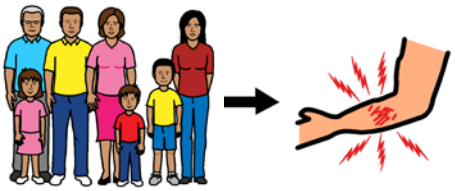
Child abuse can be

- **physical** – when someone hurts your body

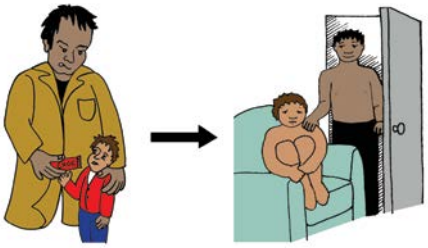
- **sexual** – when someone does a sex act that is **not** ok with you

- **emotional** – when someone hurts you with words

- **neglect** – when someone does **not** look after you



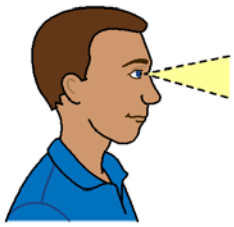
- **family violence** – when someone in your family hurts your body.



Child abuse also includes **grooming**.

Grooming means an adult tries to be friends with a child or teenager for sex acts.

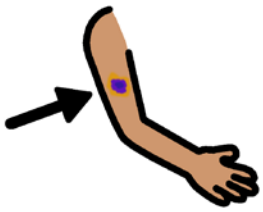
Child abuse is **not** ok.



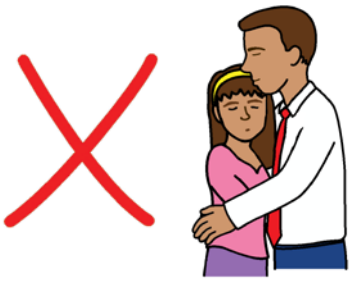
How do I know if a child has been abused?

There are lots of signs you can look for.

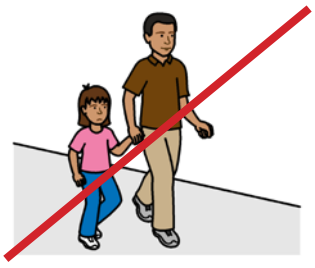
For example, you should tell someone if you see a child



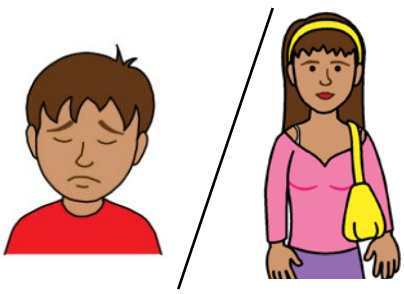
- is hurt on his or her body and can **not** explain why



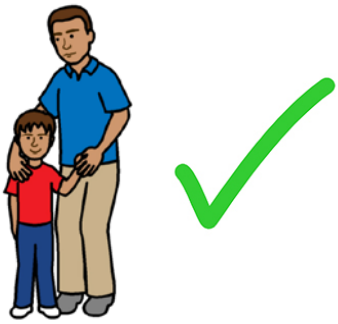
- is friends with an adult and you think the friendship is **not** ok



- never wants to go with a person they know



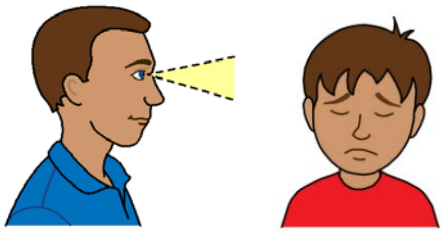
- acts in a different way, for example sad or more sexual than normal for his or her age.



Your role

As a parent or carer your role is to keep children safe.

You **must** help a child if you **suspect** child abuse. Suspect means you think a child



- has been abused

or

- is at risk of abuse.

What should I do if I suspect my child has been abused?

You **must** tell the police **now**.

Call 000 or visit your local police station.

What should I do if I suspect another child has been abused?

You **must** tell Child Protection **now**.

Child Protection is part of the Department of Health and Human Services or DHHS.

The contact information is at the end of this factsheet.

Go to page 15.

Sexual abuse

If you think a child has been hurt by **sexual abuse** the law says you **must** tell the police **and** Child Protection **now**.

Sexual abuse means someone has hurt a child with a sex act.

A sex act does **not** have to be physical.

For example it can be when someone talks about sex in a way that is **not** ok.

You **must** tell the police and Child Protection even if you are **not** sure.

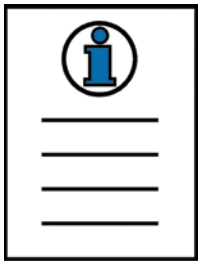
It is important to keep the child safe.

Tell the police and Child Protection again if

- you think nothing has happened

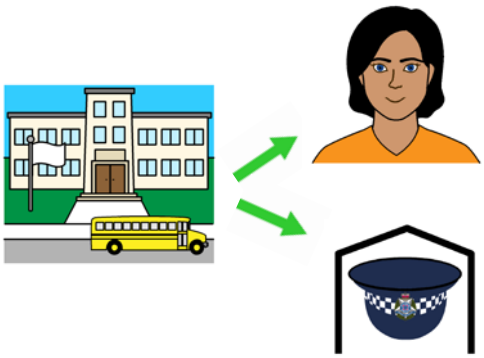
and

- the child is still at risk of abuse.



The information you give helps to keep the child safe.

What if someone at school suspects my child has been abused?



The school **must** tell Child Protection.

The school might also tell the police.

You might be contacted by

- the school

or

- Child Protection

or

- the police.

Your child will get help from the school.

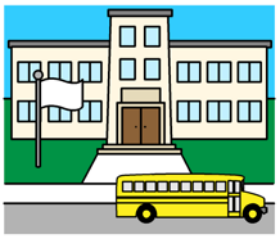
For example

- emergency services if needed

- a **counsellor**.

A counsellor is a person who can talk to your child about abuse and help them.

How should I talk to my child about safety?



Tell your child that he or she has the right to feel safe

- at school

- at home

- in the community.

Tell your child that no one is allowed to

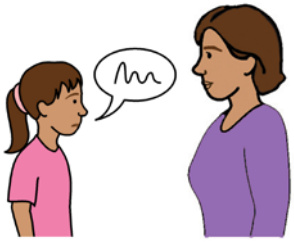
- hurt you with words or actions

- make you feel scared

- touch you in places you do **not** want to be touched.

You should also say

- you **must** tell me if you do **not** feel safe

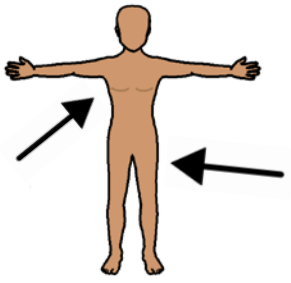


- you will **not** get into trouble if you tell an adult you trust

- an adult will listen and help.

Think about the age of your child when you talk about sex.

Tell your child he or she has body parts that are private.



Always use the right names for body parts.

How can I keep my child safe in the community?

You can

- make sure your child spends time in safe places with people you trust

- check that staff and volunteers who spend time with your child have a Working with Children Check

- go to the Victorian Government Better Health Channel website for more information.
  http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au

Contact Information

Victoria Police

Call 000

Department of Health and Human Services

Child Protection

Call 131 278

If your child goes to a public school

Department of Education and Training

Call 03 9589 6266

If your child goes to a Catholic school

Catholic Education

Archdiocese of Melbourne

Call 03 9267 0228

If your child goes to a private school

Independent Schools Victoria

Call 03 9825 7200

Contact Information

Department of Education and Training

For more information and support go to our website.

http://www.education.vic.gov.au/protect

Do you need help?

Do you speak another language?

You can use the Translating and Interpreting Service.

Call 13 14 50.

Then give number 03 9589 6266.

Is hearing hard for you?

You can use TTY.

Call 13 36 67.

Then give number 03 9589 6266.

Is your speech hard to understand?

You can use NRS Speak and Listen.

Call 1300 555 727.

Then give number 03 9589 6266.

© Scope (Aust) Ltd. You may use this document for your own personal, non-commercial purposes **only**. You must not use the document for any other purpose, and must not copy, reproduce, digitise, communicate, adapt, modify the document or any part of it (or authorise any other person to do so) without the prior consent of Scope (Aust) Ltd.

Scope's Communication and Inclusion Resource Centre
wrote the Easy English. November 2016 www.scopevic.org.au
To see the original contact child.safe.schools@edumail.vic.gov.au

The Picture Communication Symbols ©1981–2010 by Mayer-Johnson LLC a Tobii Dynavox company. All Rights Reserved Worldwide. Used with permission. Boardmaker™ is a trademark of Mayer-Johnson LLC.
ClipArt © Inspired Services, UK. www.inspiredservices.org.uk
Change picture © 2011. www.changepeople.co.uk