

What is child sexual abuse?

Sexual abuse is when someone involves a child or young person in a sexual activity by using their power over them or taking advantage of their trust. Often children or young people are bribed or threatened physically and psychologically to make them participate in the activity.

Child grooming is befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child, and sometimes the family, to lower the child's inhibitions with the object of sexual abuse.

Sexual abuse is a crime

How to recognise child sexual abuse?

Possible signs in children or young people

- bruising or bleeding in the genital area
- sexually transmitted diseases
- bruising to breasts, buttocks, lower abdomen or thighs
- child or young person or their friend telling you about it, directly or indirectly
- describing sexual acts
- sexual knowledge or behaviour inappropriate for the child's age
- going to bed fully clothed
- regressive behaviour e.g. sudden return to bed-wetting or soiling
- self-destructive behaviour e.g. drug dependency, suicide attempts, self-mutilation
- child being in contact with a known or suspected paedophile
- anorexia or over-eating
- adolescent pregnancy
- unexplained accumulation of money and gifts
- persistent running away from home
- risk taking behaviours - self harm, suicide attempts

Possible signs in parents or caregivers

- exposing a child or young person to prostitution or pornography or using a child for pornographic purposes
- intentional exposure of a child to sexual behaviour of others
- previous conviction or suspicion of child sexual abuse
- coercing a child or young person to engage in sexual behaviour with other children
- verbal threats of sexual abuse
- denial of adolescent's pregnancy by family

Remember, the above are only possible signs of child sexual abuse. The presence of these signs does not necessarily mean sexual abuse has been, or is, occurring.

(the above information is taken directly from Community Services NSW)

Your role

- Discuss child abuse concerns with your Parish Safeguarding Officer or National Safeguarding Officer at the Eparchy.
- Report to relevant child protection agencies in your State and Territory on number below.

State and Territory	24 hours Reporting Lines	
New South Wales	Child protection Helpline	Ph: 13 21 11 TTY 1800 212 936
	Mandatory reporters	Ph: 13 36 27
Victoria	Child Protection Crisis Line	Ph: 13 12 78
	North Division Intake	Ph: 1300 664 977
	South Division Intake	Ph: 1300 655 795
	East Division Intake	Ph: 1300 360 391
	West Division Intake Rural and regional only	Ph: 1800 075 599
	West Division Intake metropolitan only	Ph: 1300 664 977
	After hours Child Protection Emergency Service	Ph: 13 12 78
South Australia	Child Abuse Report Line	Ph: 13 14 78
	After hours crisis care	Ph: 13 16 11
Northern Territory	Child Protection Hotline	Ph: 1800 700 250
Western Australia	Child Protection Service	Ph: (08) 9222 2555 Country Free Call 1800 622 258
		Country Free call:1800 199 008
	After hours	Ph: (08) 9223 1111

	mandatory reporter line	Ph: 1800 708 704
Tasmania	Child Abuse Contact number	Ph: 1300 737 639
Australian Capital Territory	Mandatory Reporters	Ph: 1300 556 728
	General Public	Ph: 1300 556 729
Queensland	Child Safety After Hours Service Centre	Ph: 1800 177 135
local intake locations as below:		
Ipswich	Ph: 1800 316 855	
Far North Queensland	Ph: 1300 684 062	Fax: 07 4039 8320
South West	Ph: 1300 683 390	Fax: 07 4616 1796
Brisbane	Ph: 1300 682 254	Fax: 07 3259 8771
South East	Ph: 1300 679 849	Fax: 07 3884 8802
North Coast	Ph: 1300 703 921	Fax: 07 5420 9049
North Queensland	Ph: 1300 706 147	Fax: 07 4799 7273
Central Queensland	Ph: 1300 703 762	Fax: 07 4938 4697

References:

(Bromfield, 2005, and 2006). World Health Organization [WHO]. 2015. "What is Child Abuse and Neglect ." *aifs.gov.au* <https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/what-child-abuse-and-neglect>.

Kathryn Goldsworthy, Research Officer with the Child Family Community Australia information exchange at the Australian Institute of Family Studies. 2015. "What is Child abuse and Neglect ."

NSW, Community Services. n.d. <http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/preventing-child-abuse-and-neglect/what-is-child-abuse/signs-of-abuse>. NSW: CS.

Ockenden L, Communications and Research Officer with the Child Family Community Australia information exchange at the Australian Institute of Family Studies. April 2016. "State and territory departments responsible for protecting children." *CFCA Resource Sheet*.

Rhys Price-Robertson, Leah Bromfield and Nick Richardson. Previous Editions compiled by:. "What is child abuse and neglect ."

Services, NSW Community. n.d. "<http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/preventing-child-abuse-and-neglect/what-is-child-abuse>." *What is child abuse* .

Services, NSW Community. 2016. "Signs of Abuse ." <http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/preventing-child-abuse-and-neglect/what-is-child-abuse/signs-of-abuse>.