

# FOUR CRITICAL ACTIONS FOR SCHOOLS

## Responding to Student Sexual Offending

### YOU MUST TAKE ACTION

As a school staff member, you play a **critical role** in protecting children in your care.

- You **must** act, by following the 4 critical actions, as soon as you witness an incident, receive a disclosure, or form a reasonable belief that that a student is a victim of a student sexual offending and/or a student has engaged in sexual offending.
- You **must** act even if you are unsure and have not directly observed student sexual offending (e.g., if a victim, or another person tells you about the offence)
- You **must** use the **Responding to Student Sexual Offending Template** to keep clear and comprehensive notes.
- Form located in Staff Drive 'Responding to Student Sexual Offending Template'

\* A reasonable belief is a deliberately low threshold. This enables authorities to investigate and take action.

### 1 RESPONDING TO AN EMERGENCY

If there is no risk of immediate harm go to **Action 2.**

If a child is at immediate risk of harm you **must** ensure their safety by:

- Separating alleged victims and others involved
- Administering first aid
- Calling **000 for urgent medical and/or police assistance** to respond to immediate health or safety concerns
- Identifying a contact person at the school for future liaison with Police

Where necessary you may also need to maintain the integrity of potential crime scene and preserve evidence.

### 2 REPORTING TO AUTHORITIES

As soon as immediate health and safety concerns are addressed, you **must** report all incidents, suspicions, and disclosures of student sexual offending as soon as possible:

Refer to **Responding to and Reporting Allegations of Child Abuse Procedures**

#### VICTORIA POLICE

All instances on **000**

#### DFFS CHILD PROTECTION

If you believe that:

- the victim's parent/guardians are unable or unwilling to protect the child
- the student who is alleged to have engaged in the student sexual offending is:
  - aged over 10 and under 15 years and may be in need of therapeutic treatment to address these behaviours
  - may be displaying physical and behavioural indicators of being the victim of child abuse\*.

#### INTERNALLY

ALSO report internally to:

- Principal and/or Leadership Team (all instances)

You must identify a contact person at the school for future liaison with Victoria Police and/or Child Protection and seek advice about contacting parents/carers (see **Action 3**).

\*See the **Four Critical Steps for Schools: Responding Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse** for further guidance in these circumstances.

### 3 CONTACTING PARENTS/ GUARDIANS

Your Principal **must** consult with DHHS Child Protection or Victoria Police to determine what information can be shared with parents/guardians of all impacted students.

**Staff are NOT to make contact with Parents/Guardians**

The Principal will guide you through the SPLS Child Safe process including making contact with parents/guardians.

### 4 PROVIDING ONGOING SUPPORT

Your school must provide support for students who are victim to a student sexual offence AND students who have engaged in a sexual offence. This is an essential part of your duty of care requirements.

This support should include the development of a Student Support Plan in consultation with wellbeing professionals, outlining support strategies. Strategies may include the development of a safety plan, direct support and referral to wellbeing professionals.

#### CONTACT

##### SCHOOL

Principal- Tim Reimann  
(03) 5389 1626

##### DFFS CHILD PROTECTION

West Division (Rural) 1800 075 599

##### DFFS AFTER HOURS

After hours, weekends, public holidays  
13 12 78

##### CHILD FIRST/ ORANGE DOOR

Horsham 1800 195 114

<https://services.dffh.vic.gov.au/referral-and-support-teams>

##### VICTORIA POLICE

000 or 03 5389 1470 (Dimboola Police Station)

##### DET SECURITY SERVICES UNIT

(03) 9589 6266

##### STUDENT INCIDENT AND RECOVERY UNIT

(03) 9651 3622

##### EMPLOYEE CONDUCT BRANCH

(03) 9637 2595

##### DIOCESAN OFFICE

Ballarat (03) 5337 7135

##### INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS VICTORIA

(03) 9825 7200



PROTECT

