

Procedure CP: 01.01

Making a report to Child Safety

Policy – Child Protection

Area – Child Protection

Document Control

Responsible Officer: General Manager Children's Services	Procedure Number: CP:01.01
Contact Officer: Wellbeing and Inclusion Advisor	Policy Area: Child Protection
Effective Date: 5 September, 2016	Review Date: September 2018

Scope

This procedure, when read with the policy, provides a framework to guide all actions for the C&K Board, C&K personnel, C&K Central, C&K branch services, FDC educators, C&K affiliate services, children, parents, volunteers, contractors and visitors.

This procedure excludes C&K associate members.

Introduction

C&K is committed to promoting and protecting children's best interests, health and safety. Safe, protective and healthy environments in which children live, learn and are cared for are fundamental to every child having the opportunity to achieve their educational and developmental potential.

C&K educators are not mandatory reporters of child abuse under the *Child Protection Act (1999)*. However, C&K's *CP:01 Policy Child Protection* requires all employees to report all reasonable suspicions of child harm.

This procedure should be read in conjunction with the following:

- *Procedure CP: 01.02 Responding to a disclosure of harm to a child*
- *Procedure CP: 01.04 Family and Child Connect, and*
- Appendix one of this procedure; a flow chart summary of this procedure.
- Appendix two of this procedure; definitions of child harm.

Procedure

1.0 When to make a report to Child Safety

All employees, visitors, students, volunteers and external contractors are required to make a report to [Child Safety](#) if they have a reasonable suspicion a child has suffered significant harm, is suffering significant harm or is at an unacceptable risk of significant harm.

If you believe the child is in immediate risk of harm immediately report the matter to the police (000).

- Document concerns as soon as practical via a *CP: 01.01. F1 Form Child Concern*. Document behavioural observations or details of disclosure. Be contextual and factual. Avoid emotive comments.

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- The [Online Child Protection Guide](#) (developed by the Department of Communities) should be used to determine if a report to Child Safety should be made. The *Online Child Protection Guide* is a guide only and should not be used to replace professional judgement. When possible, the *Online Child Protection Guide* should be completed in conjunction with a Children's Services Manager (CSM) or Wellbeing and Inclusion Advisor (WIA).
- When a child / or family is vulnerable and the child is **not suffering or at risk of significant harm**; contact [Family and Child Connect](#) for advice and information (*CP: 01.04 Procedure Family and Child Connect*).

2.0 Making a report to Child Safety

- Seek support and advice of relevant CSM and / or WIA **before** making a report.
- Telephone *Child Safety*. Refer to the completed *CP: 01.01. F1 Form Child Concern* and the child's *Enrolment Booklet* when providing information. A report may take one (1) hour to complete. Making a report to Child Safety can be distressing. Staff are encouraged to telephone *Child Safety* with a supportive colleague.
- Maintain confidentiality. Only discuss circumstances with those directly involved with helping and protecting the child. Make the report in a private area / room.

3.0 How to make a report to Child Safety

- **Telephoning** [Regional Intake Service](#) during normal business hours.
- **Telephoning** the *Child Safety After Hours Service Centre* (1800 177 135 or (07) 3235 9999) after business hours and on weekends.
- **Online** - Alternatively child protection concerns can be reported online to *Child Safety* via an [online report form](#).

4.0 Protection from liability

- The *Child Protection Act (1999)* makes provisions to protect notifiers from liability.
- A notifier is legally able to share confidential information and is free from liability; providing they acted honestly and in good faith, even if the information is proven to be inaccurate.

5.0 Informing parents / guardians

- There is no obligation to inform parents / guardians a report regarding their child has been made to *Child Safety*.
- Seek CSM and/ or WIA support and advice before communicating information with parents / guardians. When making a decision consider the following:
 - Will communication place the child, staff or others at risk of harm?
 - Will communication result in the child leaving the service, jeopardising future opportunities for the child receiving protection from harm?
 - Are the child's parents / guardians aware their child is being harmed?
 - Is the child's parent / guardian responsible for the alleged harm?
 - Will communication strengthen the relationship with the family and allow continued support for the child and family?

6.0 Follow-up

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- When practical, email the completed *CP: 01.01. F1 Form Child Concern* to CSM and WIA. The WIA will record the child concern on the internal *Online Child Protection Register* and attach the completed *CP: 01.01. F1 Form Child Concern*. The WIA will provide the service / educators with continued advice and support.
- When appropriate, seek the advice and information from [Family and Child Connect](#) to provide appropriate support of the child and family. Refer to *CP: 01.04 Procedure Family and Child Connect*.
- If there are continuing or new reasonable suspicions of alleged **significant** child harm, make further reports to *Child Safety*.
- Reporting suspected harm can be distressing. Take care of yourself. If needed, access the [Employee Assistance Program](#) or [Gallang Place](#) (counselling services that may be of preference to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees).

Links to associated documents

<i>CP: 01.01. F1</i>	<i>Form - Child Concern Form</i>
<i>CP: 01.02</i>	<i>Procedure – Responding to a disclosure of harm to a child</i>
<i>CP: 01.04</i>	<i>Procedure - Child and Family Connect</i>
<i>CP: 01</i>	<i>Policy - Child Protection</i>

Acknowledgements and references

- *Child Protection Act 1999*
- *Child Safety Services Reporting Child Abuse. QLD Government*
- *The Department of Communities Queensland Child Protection Guide. QLD Government*

Revision Record

Version	Approval Date	Authorised by	Effective Date	Review Cycle	Next review date
1.0	11 April 2014	Chris Kyranis	14 May 2014	2 years	May 2016
2.0	16 August 2016	Kathryn Woods	5 September 2016	2 years	September 2016

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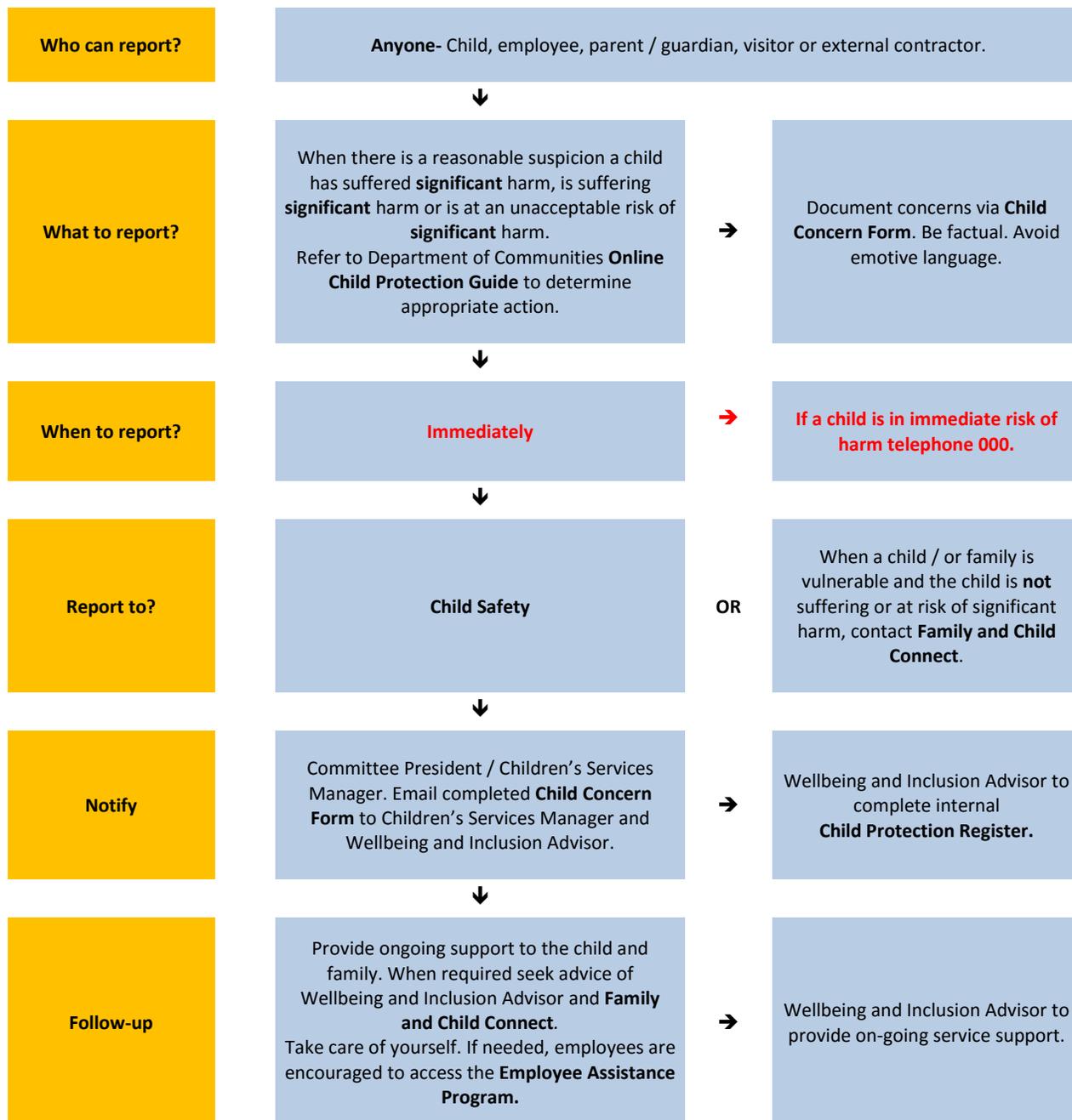
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Appendix one – Flow chart summary

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Appendix 2 – Definitions

Harm	<p>Child Protection Act (1999) defines harm to a child as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's physical, psychological or emotional well-being. It is immaterial how the harm is caused. It can be caused by physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect, or sexual abuse or exploitation. <p>Harm can be caused by a single act, omission or circumstance, or a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances.</p>
Child in need of protection	<p>A child in need of protection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has suffered significant harm, is suffering significant harm or is at an unacceptable risk of significant harm, and Does not have a parent able and willing to protect the child from harm.
Reasonable suspicion	<p>Anyone may report to Child Safety a reasonable suspicion that a child may be in need of protection or an unborn child may be in need of protection after they are born. A reasonable suspicion can be formed when there is information to suggest that a child has suffered significant harm, is suffering significant harm or is at unacceptable risk of suffering significant harm.</p>
Significant harm	<p>'Significant' means sufficiently serious to warrant response by a statutory agency, irrespective of a family's consent. Significant harm:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> may reasonably be expected to produce a substantial and demonstrably adverse impact on the child's safety, welfare, or well-being is not minor or trivial, and may be a single act or omission or an accumulation of these. <p>When determining harm as "significant" additional consideration should be given to younger children and those with disabilities as they have an increased vulnerability.</p>
Physical abuse	<p>Physical abuse occurs when a child has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, non-accidental physical trauma or injury. It can include (but not limited to) hitting, pushing, dragging, shoving, dragging, throwing objects or making threats to physically harm a child. Physical abuse does not always leave a visible mark or injury.</p>
Sexual abuse	<p>Sexual abuse occurs when an adult, stronger child or adolescent uses their power or authority to involve a child in sexual activity. Sexual abuse can be physical, verbal or emotional and can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> kissing or holding a child in a sexual manner exposing a sexual body part to a child having sexual relations with a child under 16 years of age talking in a sexually explicit way that is not age or developmentally appropriate making obscene phone calls or remarks to a child sending obscene mobile text messages or emails to a child fondling a child in a sexual manner persistently intruding on a child's privacy penetrating the child's vagina or anus by penis, finger or any other object

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• oral sex• rape• incest• showing pornographic films, magazines or photographs to a child• having a child pose or perform in a sexual manner• forcing a child to watch a sexual act• child prostitution.
Emotional abuse	Emotional abuse occurs when a child's social, emotional, cognitive or intellectual development is impaired or threatened. It can include emotional deprivation due to persistent rejection, hostility, teasing / bullying, yelling, criticism and exposure of a child to domestic and family violence.
Neglect	Neglect occurs when a child's basic necessities of life are not met, and their health and development are affected. Basic needs include food, housing, health care, adequate clothing, personal hygiene, hygienic living conditions, and timely provision of medical treatment or adequate supervision.