



TWISTERS GYMNASTICS CHILD SAFE POLICY

1. Introduction

Twisters Gymnastics expects children and young people who participate in its activities to have a safe and happy experience. Twisters supports and respects children, young people, staff, and volunteers.

The aim of this Policy is to protect the safety of children in our care and prevent abuse occurring and if allegations are raised in relation to child abuse, to ensure the allegations are properly addressed. All complaints are treated seriously and are fully investigated and handled with confidentiality and discretion.

If a person wishes to make any enquiries in relation to this Policy, please contact the Twisters Gymnastics office via email at admin@twistersgym.com.au.

2. Purpose

Twisters Gymnastics is committed to providing the highest level of membership service. This includes protecting member's privacy, promotion of positive behaviours and attitudes, and protecting the health, safety and wellbeing of members, particularly children.

Specifically, Twisters Gymnastics considers that the health, safety and wellbeing of children takes priority over all other competing considerations. We have a zero tolerance to child abuse and are committed to promoting and protecting children from abuse and neglect to the greatest extent possible. All children have equal rights to protection from child abuse, regardless of their sex, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, etc.

Child protection is a shared responsibility between Twisters Gymnastics, its employees, workers, contractors, associates, parents/guardians, coaches, spectators, volunteers and members of the gymnastics community. Everyone that participates in Twisters Gymnastics activities is responsible for the care and protection of children and reporting information about child abuse. We support the active participation of all children; we listen to their views, respect what they say and involved them when making decisions, where appropriate, especially about matters that will directly affect them, such as their safety.

3. Scope

This policy applies to participants, parents, spectators, contractors, officials, coaches and staff throughout all Twisters Gymnastics classes, activities and events.

This Policy will continue to apply to any applicable person even after they have ended their association or employment with Twisters Gymnastics, if disciplinary action and/or allegations against the applicable person had commenced while they were a member.

4. Related Documents

Twisters Gymnastics policies and procedures, including but not limited to:

- a. Privacy Policy
- b. Code of Conduct
- c. Member Protection Policy
- d. Risk Management Policy
- e. Grievance and Discipline Procedures

5. Policy Breach

It is a breach of this policy for any person to which this policy applies, to do anything contrary to this policy.

6. Screening and Working with Children Check Requirements

We are committed to providing a safe environment for children. As part of this, we will do everything we can to ensure we recruit personnel who do not pose a risk to children. These standards must be met any time an applicable person is applies to work with children.

Working with Children Check laws aim to prevent people who pose a risk from working with children. Twisters Gymnastics strictly requires all staff members over 18-years to hold a valid WWCC. Copies of all current WWCCs will be kept within Twisters HR system. Twisters Gymnastics will not accept any expired WWCCs unless the individual has proof they have renewed their card within 3 months of the expiry.

7. Forms of Child Abuse

Bullying involves the inappropriate use of power by one or more persons over another, generally repeated over time. Bullying can take many forms, including:

- verbal (name calling, put downs, threats);
- physical (hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting);
- social (ignoring, excluding, ostracizing, alienating); and
- psychological (spreading rumors, stalking, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions).

Emotional or psychological abuse occurs when a child does not receive the love, affection or attention they need for healthy development. Such abuse may involve repeated rejection or threats, constant criticism, teasing, ignoring, threatening, yelling, ridicule and rejection, these are all examples of emotional abuse. These behaviours continue to an extent that results in significant damage to a child's physical, intellectual or emotional wellbeing and development.

Family Violence occurs when children are forced to live with violence between adults in their home. It is harmful to children and can include; witnessing violence or the consequences of violence. Family violence is defined as violence between members of a family or extended family or those fulfilling the role of family in a child's life. Exposure to family violence places children at increased risk of physical injury and harm; it has a significant impact on a child's wellbeing and development.

Grooming is when a person engages in predatory behaviour to prepare a child with a view to sexually abusing them at a later stage. Grooming can take place in any setting where a relationship is formed and can include communicating and/or attempting to befriend or establish a relationship or other emotional connection with the child or their parent or carer. There is no set pattern in relation to the grooming of children. For some perpetrators, it may be weeks, months or years before the abuse begins. Sometimes it is hard to see when someone is being groomed until after they have been sexually abused, because some grooming behaviour can look like 'normal' caring behaviour that gradually escalates. Grooming can occur in person or online.

Harm to a child is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing. It is immaterial how the harm is caused. Harm can be caused by:

- physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect;
- sexual abuse or exploitation;
- a single act, omission or circumstance; or
- a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances.

Neglect is the persistent failure or deliberate denial to provide the child with the necessities of life. Such neglect includes the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, adequate supervision, clean water or medical attention to the extent that the child's health and development is, or is likely to be, significantly harmed. Categories of neglect include physical neglect, medical neglect, abandonment or desertion, emotional neglect and educational neglect. The issue of neglect must be considered within the context of resources reasonably available.

Physical Abuse occurs when a person subjects a child to non-accidental physically aggressive acts. The abuser may inflict an injury intentionally or inadvertently as a result of physical punishment or the aggressive treatment of a child. Physically abusive behaviour includes, but is not limited to, shoving, hitting, slapping, shaking, throwing, punching, biting, burning, excessive and physically harmful over training, and kicking. It also includes giving children harmful substances such as drugs, alcohol or poison. Certain types of punishment, while not causing injury can also be considered physical abuse if they place a child at risk of being hurt.

Sexual abuse occurs when an adult or a person of authority (likely older) involves a child in any sexual activity. Perpetrators of sexual abuse take advantage of their power, authority or position over the child for their own benefit. It can include making sexual comments to a child, engaging children to participate in sexual conversations over the internet or on social media, kissing, touching a child’s genitals or breasts, oral sex or intercourse with a child. Encouraging a child to view pornographic magazines, websites, videos or livestreams, or engaging children to participate in sexual conversations online, are also considered sexual abuse.

Sexual exploitation occurs when children are forced into sexual activities that are then recorded in some way and/or used to produce pornography. Such pornography can be in the form of actual photos or videos or published on the internet. Exploitation can also involve children who are forced into prostitution.

8. Identifying Child Abuse

The following information may be distressing or disturbing. We recommend seeking support from your supervisor or a fellow Twisters staff member if you feel overwhelmed. We strongly advise discussing how you feel with others to ‘debrief’.

The information provided below includes indicators of child abuse that may include, but are not limited to, these signs. Some signs of abuse are more obvious than others, trust your instincts, suspected abuse is enough of a reason to raise an issue with an authority to determine how to handle the matter. You do not need proof.

ABUSE TYPE	PHYSICAL INDICATORS	BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS
Emotional	<p>Emotional or psychological abuse may cause delays in physical, emotional or cognitive development.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delays in physical development • failure to thrive • speech disorders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stealing food • staying at school or other activities outside of normal hours to avoid going home • lacks trust in other people • reluctance to attend an activity at a particular club or organisation • tired, lethargic, falling asleep at inappropriate times • abuse of alcohol or drugs • aggressive behaviour • poor peer relationship • indiscriminate with affection • lack of social skills • distress, eg. frequent crying or apathy • demonstrating fear of parent, caregiver or another adult • attention or risk-taking behaviour
Neglect	<p>When a child has been neglected, you may notice they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • suffer from frequent hunger or malnutrition • have poor hygiene • wear inappropriate clothing • remain unsupervised for long periods of time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stealing food or clothing • staying at school or other activities outside of normal hours to avoid going home • lacks trust in other people • reluctance to attend an activity at a particular club or organisation • tired, lethargic, falling asleep at inappropriate times • abuse of alcohol or drugs • aggressive behaviour • poor peer relationship • indiscriminate with affection

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack proper medical attention • fail to thrive • experience abandonment by parents or carers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • desire for adult affection • poor emotional response, lack of expression or enthusiasm • anxiety about being left • frequent rocking and sucking behaviour
Physical	<p>Some indicators of physical abuse may, but is not limited to, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bruises, burns, sprains, bite marks, dislocations, cuts, welts, scratches • fractured bones • poisoning • internal injuries • shaking injuries • strangulation marks • ingestion of alcohol and drugs • dislocations • head injuries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expressing little or no emotion when hurt • offering unlikely explanations for injuries • wearing long-sleeved clothes on hot days (possibly to hide bruising or other injuries on the body) • demonstrating fear of particular care givers, other adults or children • demonstrating a fear of their parents or a fear of going home • being fearful when other children cry or shout • being excessively friendly to strangers • being passive and compliant • being nervous, hyperactive, aggressive or disruptive • telling someone that physical harm has occurred
Sexual	<p>Many of the physical indicators of sexual abuse are only identifiable via a medical examination.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sexually transmitted diseases • semen in the vagina • vaginal or anal injury or scarring • injury to the penis or scrotum • abrasions, tears or bruises to the vagina or anus • chronic urinary tract infections or difficulty urinating • bleeding from the vagina or anus • often the first indication the child gives is when they tell a person whom they trust that they have been sexually abused 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • persistent and age-inappropriate sexual activity • sexual aggression towards younger or more naïve children • sexual invitations or gestures to older people • sexual interactions involving animals or toys • sexual promiscuity or prostitution • regressive behaviour, such as bedwetting and speech loss • challenging and aggressive behaviour • fear of people of a particular type or gender • suicidal and self-harm behaviour including self-mutilation, drug or alcohol abuse • risk taking behaviour such as lighting fires • cruelty to animals • criminal activity • frequent rocking, sucking and biting behaviour

9. Reporting and Responding to Child Abuse Allegations

Twisters Gymnastics has a zero tolerance of child abuse and will treat all allegations of child abuse and/or misconduct with a child seriously, consistent and with a high degree of sensitivity. We acknowledge that every child has the right to be heard, protected and supported and to have their concerns managed appropriately and with sensitivity.

All applicable persons are required to identify, report and respond immediately (or where reasonably practicable no later than before ending a shift) to any concerns, suspicions or incidents of child abuse or misconduct with a child.

If a child is in **imminent risk** of harm or in **immediate danger**, you must report the situation directly to 000.

Twisters Gymnastics will keep a register of any allegations regarding inappropriate conduct.

Twisters Approach to Reports of Abuse

- a. Twisters Gymnastics supports and encourages a person to make a report to the Police or DFFH if they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child needs protection, or they are concerned about the safety, health or wellbeing of a child.
- b. Any person that makes a report in accordance with their reporting obligations (whether discretionary or mandatory) will be supported by Twisters Gymnastics and will not be penalised for making the report.
- c. If a person is uncertain as to whether they should make a report to an external authority in relation to the safety of a child, they may speak to the Twisters Gymnastics Director or the Twisters Gymnastics MPIO for guidance and information. If in doubt, ask for assistance.
- d. If an allegation is made against a staff member or volunteer, Twisters Gymnastics will follow the reporting procedure and take all steps to ensure that the safety of the child is paramount. An initial step will involve the withdrawal of the accused person from active duty, which could entail stepping down, reassignment to a role with direct contact with children, working under close supervision during an investigation, working from home, or any other measure deemed appropriate depending on the seriousness of the allegation.
- e. Twisters Gymnastics will investigate allegations of inappropriate conduct against a child in accordance with procedural fairness and will handle the allegations in a confidential manner to the greatest extent possible.
- f. Twisters Gymnastics will cooperate with the directions of the Police and/or DFFH in relation to any investigation conducted by these authorities.
- g. Twisters Gymnastics will keep a register of any allegations regarding inappropriate conduct.

Prohibitions

Our policy prohibits all persons to whom this policy applies from discussing any concerns with unauthorized persons, within or outside of Twisters Gymnastics. Secondly, making deliberately false, misleading or vexatious allegations.

Mandatory Reporters

- a. Select classes of people in the community (including teachers, early childhood workers, nurses and doctors) are required by law to report to the Child Protection Unit of the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) where they have formed a belief, on reasonable grounds, that a child needs protection because they have suffered, or are likely to suffer, significant harm due to physical or sexual abuse.
- b. This report must be made as soon as practicable and after each occasion where he or she becomes aware of further reasonable grounds for the belief.

Rights

Applicable persons retain the right to report directly to relevant authorities, such as police or child protection agencies, any concerns they may have in relation to the safety and welfare of a child, regardless of whether they have also reported the matter internally.

Reasonable Grounds for Belief

- a. A reasonable belief is formed if a reasonable person believes that:
 - the child needs protection;
 - the child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm because of physical or sexual injury; and
 - the child's parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child.

- b. To form a reasonable belief, you should consider and objectively assess all the relevant facts, such as the source of the allegation and how it was communicated, the nature of and details of the allegation, and whether there are any other related matters known regarding the alleged perpetrator.
- c. A 'reasonable belief' or a 'belief on reasonable grounds' is not the same as having proof but is more than mere rumor or speculation.
- d. You will have reasonable grounds to notify if:
 - a child states that they have been physically or sexually abused;
 - a child states that they know someone who has been physically or sexually abused (sometimes the child may be talking about themselves);
 - someone who knows a child states that the child has been physically or sexually abused;
 - professional observations of the child's behavior or development leads a professional to form a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused or is likely to be abused; or
 - signs of abuse lead to a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused.

Voluntary Reporters

In addition to the mandatory reporting obligations above, any person who believes on reasonable grounds that a child needs protection from any form of child abuse, *may* disclose that information to the Police or the DFFH.

Handling Allegations

- a. The relevant person(s) handling the allegation within the Club will provide guidance on handling the complaint in accordance with this Policy. For the avoidance of doubt, the guidance provided shall only relate to process under this Policy.
- b. If a respondent is 15 years or younger, they must have a parent or guardian present during any part of the complaint process and that parent or guardian must be notified of any complaints concerning their child. If a respondent is 15 to 18 years, they choose whether to have a support person present during any part of the complaint process.

Special Considerations

- a. Twisters Gymnastics understands persons from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds may face barriers in reporting allegations of abuse. For example, people from some cultures may experience anxiety when talking with police and communicating in English may be a barrier for some.
- b. Twisters requires applicable persons to be sensitive to these issues and meet peoples needs where possible. This may include having an interpreter present (could be a friend or family member).
- c. Some children with a disability may experience barriers disclosing an incident. For example, children with hearing or cognitive impairments may need support to help them explain the incident, including sign language interpreters. If needed, seek advice on how best to communicate with people with a disability.

Receiving and Allegation

In receiving a concern, or allegation of child abuse or misconduct with a child, applicable persons will immediately refer the matter to the relevant Child Safety Officer of Twisters. This person will make a determination, based on thorough criteria, as to whether the matter should be reported to the appropriate authority. The person handling the allegation shall not assess the validity of any allegation or concerns but rather listen to the complainant, stay calm and supportive and act promptly to ensure the matter is dealt with appropriately and in accordance with this policy.

For more detailed information on how to handle responding to and reporting all allegations of child abuse, please refer to the "Reporting and Responding to Child Abuse Allegations" within this policy.

Criminal Action Relating to Child Abuse

If applicable persons involved in our organisation are charged with or are investigated by police for criminal matters relating to child abuse placing children at risk, the Directors of Twisters Gymnastics may dismiss that persons and/or revoke, suspend or add conditions to their employment.

Anonymous Complaints

In cases of child abuse, there can be many barriers that community members face when reporting. To help reduce these barriers, Twisters Gymnastics acknowledges that at times an allegation of child abuse may need to be made anonymously. Where possible, allegations should be encouraged to be made openly so the proper investigative processes can be followed. If a person still wishes to remain anonymous, the appropriate person handling the complaint will support this decision.

When an anonymous complaint is received the person receiving the allegation should:

- a. Inform the complainant that Twisters Gymnastics may not be able to take the necessary action without full details.
- b. Encourage the person sensitively to give their full details.
- c. Ask the complainant if they would be willing to be interviewed if an investigation were to be conducted.
- d. Ask if there are any witnesses that would be willing to speak to the applicable person handling the complaint and record their details.
- e. Ask the complainant if there is a reason as to why they wish to remain anonymous and ask what can be done to support them.

Once an anonymous complaint has been made, action must still be taken. Follow the Procedure for Reporting and Responding to Child Abuse Allegations as far as is practicable. Where the complaint is anonymous, the steps that can be taken may be limited. However, it is still appropriate to take some steps as part of an informal investigation, such as:

- a. Checking to see if there have been any previous complaints about the respondent.
- b. Checking to see if the respondent's Working with Children Check details are current and valid.
- c. Speaking to the relevant authority for advice.
- d. Engaging in proactive child safety education with the alleged (without disclosing the anonymous complainant).
- e. Seek further advice from the Child Safety Officer (or other senior staff member).

Recording Allegations of Child Abuse and/or Misconduct with a Child

Twisters Gymnastics expects all members to keep records of all allegations of child abuse or misconduct with a child to ensure we can better identify and respond to patterns of abuse and/or inappropriate behaviour. Vigorous record keeping is essential.

Twisters records all allegations and breaches of this policy in a confidential electronic system that can only be accessed by restricted personnel as part of our risk mitigation processes. To prevent access to these records by an unauthorized person, Twisters stores any documentation associated with abuse or neglect allegations by having:

- hard-copy documentation stored in a locked office; and
- soft-copy documentation stored in a password-protected file.

Legislative Requirements

Victoria has specific legislation regarding mandatory reporting and reportable conduct which includes:

- a. **Failure to disclose child sexual abuse offence.** This offence came into effect on October 27th, 2014. Any adult who forms a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria by an adult against a child under 16 years of age must report that information to police unless they have a reasonable excuse. A reasonable excuse may include fear for safety or where the information has already been reported. This offence applies to **all adults** in Victoria, not just professionals who work with children.
- b. **Mandatory reporting.** Mandatory reporting is the legal requirement for certain professional groups to report a reasonable belief of child physical or sexual abuse to child protection authorities. In Victoria, police officers, registered medical practitioners, nurses including

midwives, registered teachers and early childhood teachers, school principals, school counsellors, out of home care workers, early childhood workers, youth justice workers, registered psychologists, and people in religious ministry are currently mandated to report a reasonable belief that a child is in need of protection from physical and sexual abuse. For more information, visit [the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing website](#).

- c. **Reportable Conduct Scheme (RCS).** Under the RCS, some organisations are required to notify the Social Services Regulator (SSR) of all allegations of reportable conduct by employees and volunteers. For more information about the scheme what organisations are required to make reports and what conduct is reportable, please visit the [SSR website](#).

Confidentiality and Privacy

Twisters Gymnastics expects all applicable persons to maintain the confidentiality and privacy of all concerned (including the alleged offender), except if doing so would compromise the welfare of the child or the investigation of the allegation.

Support

When an allegation of child abuse has been made, the member of Twisters Gymnastics handling the complaint (as applicable) will offer support to all the persons involved (complainant, respondent, staff involved, etc). The designated person handling the complaint will take on the responsibility of offering support and making all necessary arrangements. The type of support offered will be assessed on a case by case basis.

10. Glossary of Terms

Applicable Person means any person to whom this policy or the Member Protection Policy applies to.

Authorised Person is the person handling any case of allegations.

Child means a person involved in the activities of Twisters Gymnastics and under the age of 18-years unless otherwise stated under the law of applicable to the child.

Child protection means any responsibility, measure or activity undertaken to safeguard children from harm.

Complaint means a complaint made under this policy.

Complainant means a person making a complaint.

Mandatory reporter means a person who is legally required to make a report to the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing or the Police if they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child needs protection. It includes registered teachers and early childhood teachers, principals, early childhood workers, registered psychologists, nurses and midwives, registered medical practitioners, police officers, school counsellors, out of home care workers, youth justice workers, and people in religious ministry.

Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO) means a person trained to be the first point of contact for a person reporting a complaint under, or a breach of, this policy. He or she provides impartial and confidential support to the person making the complaint.

Misconduct with a Child means any behaviour that is not child abuse but is in direct breach of the Codes of Conduct (separate policy) that relate to children or any behaviour involving a child that is inappropriate/places them at risk.

Participant is a person who participates in the sport of gymnastics including, but not limited to, athletes.

Personnel is any Twisters Gymnastics employee.

Police Check is a national criminal history record check conducted as a pre-employment, pre-engagement or current employment background check on a person.

Respondent is a person who is the subject of a complaint.

Sexual offence means any act which exposes a child to, or involves a child in, sexual processes beyond his or her understanding or contrary to accepted community standards. Sexually abusive behaviours can include the fondling of genitals, masturbation, oral sex, vaginal or anal penetration by a penis, finger or any other object, fondling of breasts, voyeurism, exhibitionism, and exposing the child to or involving the child in pornography. It includes child grooming, which includes actions deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child (or the child's carer, family or supervisor) to lower the child's inhibitions and prepare them for engagement in a sexual offence.

This policy refers to this Child Safe Policy.

Vulnerable person is a child who is, or may be, unable to take care of themselves or is unable to protect themselves against harm or exploitation by reason of age, illness, trauma or disability, or any other reason.

11. Risk Management Approach

- a. Child safety is part of Twisters Gymnastics overall risk management approach.

12. Policy Breaches

- a. It is a breach of this policy for any person or organization to which this policy applies, to have been found to have done anything contrary to this policy. Any person who may breach this policy are subject either to the *Member Protection Policy* or to the Twisters Gymnastics Discipline Process, whichever is relevant.

13. Policy Promotion

- a. This policy will be made available to all members when requested.
- b. This policy will be communicated and made available to all staff members.

14. Review Process

- a. This policy will be reviewed by Twisters Gymnastics on an annual basis.
- b. If you would like to provide Twisters Gymnastics with any feedback or suggestions to improve this policy, please contact the Twisters office via email at admin@twistersgym.com.au.

15. Making a Report to Child Protection

For the most up to date information on when to make a report and what's involved in reporting to child protection, it's important to visit the [Victorian Department of Families, Fairness and Housing website](#).

For Immediate Help

- To report concerns that are life threatening, ring Victorian Police on **000**.
- To report concerns about the immediate safety of a child after hours, call After Hours Child Protection Emergency Service line on **13 12 78**.

Numbers to call to make a report during business hours, Monday to Friday, are:

- North Division intake: 1300 664 977
- South Division intake: 1300 655 795
- East Division intake: 1300 360 391
- West Division intake (metropolitan): 1300 664 977
- West Division intake (rural and regional): 1800 075 599

If you are concerned about a child's wellbeing, but don't believe the child is in need of protection, consider The Orange Door (details found through the DFFH website, link above).

16. Additional Documents

- a. Code of Conduct
- b. Code of Behaviour
- c. Procedure for Reporting and Responding to Child Abuse Allegations
- d. Confidential Record of Child Abuse Allegation Form
- e. Child Abuse Risk Assessment Tool

17. National Support Services

If you, or someone you know, is at immediate risk, call Emergency Services on **000**.

If you, or someone you know, is in crisis and you are unsure which service to contact, call Kids Help Line on 1800 55 1800 or Lifeline on 13 11 14. Both are available from anywhere in Australia, 24 hours a day (toll free) and can provide generalist crisis counselling, information and referral services.

1800 Respect (**1800 737 732**)

24/7 telephone and online crisis support, information and immediate referral to specialist counselling for anyone in Australia who has experience or been impacted by sexual assault or domestic or family violence.

1800 THE LINE (**1800 695 463**)

A national relationships helpline for children to talk to someone about the relationship issues they may be experiencing or if they are unclear where to draw the line between what is/is not a respectful relationship.

Lifeline (**13 11 14**)

Generalist and crisis telephone counselling, information and referral service, provided by trained volunteers who are supported by professional staff.

Blue Knot Foundation (**1300 657 380**)

Staffed by trained trauma-informed counsellors, this support line offers information, support and referral to adult survivors of childhood trauma and abuse, and partners, family and friends of survivors.

Bravehearts (**1800 272 831**)

Open to anyone wanting information, advice, referrals and support regarding child sexual assault.

Child Wise National Child Abuse Prevention Hotline (**1800 99 10 99**)

Confidential support services for individuals who have experienced abuse in an institution setting and/or need support and counselling after giving evidence to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, or for professionals supporting these individuals. This helpline can provide information, short-term counselling, and referrals.

Children and Young People with Disability Australia (**1800 222 660**)

National body for children with disability. Provides information and systemic representation.

Counselling Online (<https://www.counsellingonline.org.au/>)

A free online and SMS/text based service, providing assistance to Australian residents concerned about alcohol or other drugs.

Headspace (**1800 650 890**)

Free and confidential telephone and online services for people aged 12 to 25. Qualified youth mental health professionals provide support to young people worried about their mental health or experiencing issues such as depression, bullying and isolation. Support is also available to concerned parents and carers.

Healing Foundation (<https://healingfoundation.org.au/>)

Service to help build the capacity of Indigenous organisations and support the development of the LinkUp network.

Kids Helpline (1800 55 1800)

Kids Helpline is Australia's only free, private and confidential 24/7 phone and online counselling service for young people aged 5 to 25.

People with Disability Australia (1800 422 015)

National telephone line to provide information and referrals to people with disabilities.

QLife (1800 184 527)

Provides early intervention, peer support telephone counselling and referral services for people who identify as LGBTQI+ (gender diverse, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, intersex and all other sexual identities).

Sexual Assault Counselling Australia (1800 211 028)

National telephone counselling service for people who have experienced abuse.