

## Policy: Managing communication with children and young people

**Content warning:** The content and the emotional impact of the information covered in this document may be confronting and disturbing as it references child abuse.

You can also access 24 hour phone and online support services on 1800 737 732, or Beyondblue at 1300 224 636 or Lifeline at 131 114.

### Overview

Ahpra may, from time to time, receive notifications from a child or young person<sup>1</sup> or need to communicate with a child or young person as part of the management of a notification.

As part of our obligations under the National Child Safe Standards and to ensure Ahpra is a child safe organisation this document has been developed to provide guidance on who should manage communications with children or young people.

### Policy

Ahpra is committed to ensuring systems and processes are child safe and encourage participation by children and young people.

All notifications/complaints from children and young people are taken seriously by Ahpra and the National Boards.

All staff dealing with notifications that raise allegations of sexual abuse receive additional training including training in relation to dealing with vulnerable people.

All staff who are likely to deal directly<sup>2</sup> with children or young people through their work in notifications will receive additional training in relation to communicating with/interviewing children.

All staff dealing with notifications that raise allegations of sexual abuse and other notifications where children are victims, receive additional and ongoing support due to the increased risk and exposure to vicarious trauma.

All staff likely to deal directly with children or young people through their work in notifications will be required to have a current working with children check.

All children or young people directly involved in the notification process will be referred to the Notifier Support Service or alternate external social work support service.

All children (and victims of historical childhood sexual abuse) will be provided information in relation to relevant referral services in their state or territory.

All children or young people directly involved in the notification process will be able to be assisted by a parent/guardian or appropriate support person.

All children or young people directly involved in the notification process will be provided translation or interpretation services as required.

<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this policy a child or young person is defined as someone under the age of 18 years.

<sup>2</sup> Where information needs to be obtained directly from the child or young person.

### **Action Items:**

Identified members of Notifications team to receive additional training in relation to communicating/interviewing children.

Identified Notifications team members and Operations Managers to obtain working with children clearance. At least one person in each Australian state and territory to have current clearance. See process in each jurisdiction at Attachment A.

### **Attachments**

A – Working with Children Check information and process guide

B – Referral services in each state and territory

# ATTACHMENT A

## Process: Applying for a Working with Children Check

Working with children checks are state or territory based. If this process applies to you, you will need to apply in the state or territory where you are located.

You will need to complete an online application (except in WA). Fees are associated with applying for a Working with Children Check (WWCC) and will be reimbursed by Ahpra.

### To complete your application, you will need:

- information about your full legal name and any names you may have, including previous names, maiden name, names you have legally changed, aliases and informal names (like nicknames);
- your current address and 5 -10 years of address history;
- if you are verifying your identity online (100-point check), you will need an Australian driver's licence or permit, plus one of these:
  - Australian birth certificate or extract
  - Australian citizenship certificate
  - Australian passport.

Below are the links to online applications in each jurisdiction.

Australian Capital Territory

<https://www.myaccount.act.gov.au/WWVPNDIS/s/wwwvp-ndis-new-application-v2>

New South Wales

<https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/apply-working-children-check>

Northern Territory

<https://nt.gov.au/emergency/community-safety/apply-for-a-working-with-children-clearance>

Queensland

<https://ablis.business.gov.au/service/qld/blue-card-system-for-child-related-employment-and-businesses-also-known-as-the-working-with-children-check/4234>

South Australia

<https://www.dcsiscreening.sa.gov.au/SCRequestApplicationIndividual>

Tasmania

<https://www.cbos.tas.gov.au/topics/licensing-and-registration/work-with-vulnerable-people/applications/apply>

Victoria

<https://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/individuals/applicants/how-to-apply-1>

Western Australia

A paper application form must be obtained from and returned to an authorised Australia Post outlet. Further information and to find a Post Office near you see [here](#).

# ATTACHMENT B

## Referral Services

### All jurisdictions

[Bravehearts](#) provide support services, including counselling to those impacted by child sexual abuse.

Information and Support Line - 1800 272 831 [www.bravehearts.org.au](http://www.bravehearts.org.au)

[Blue Knot](#) provides information and support for adult survivors of childhood trauma and sexual abuse - 1300 657 380 [helpline@blueknot.org.au](mailto:helpline@blueknot.org.au) or [www.blueknot.org.au](http://www.blueknot.org.au)

[Knowmore](#) provide legal advice to assist survivors of institutional child sexual abuse 1800 605 762 [www.knowmore.org.au](http://www.knowmore.org.au)

[White Ribbon Australia](#) provide counselling service for those who have suffered sexual assault, family and domestic violence counselling - 1800 737 732 (1800RESPECT) [www.whiteribbon.org.au/Find-Help/Help-Lines](http://www.whiteribbon.org.au/Find-Help/Help-Lines)

[Full Stop Australia](#) provide support services, including counselling to those impacted by sexual abuse 1800 385 578

- Sexual Abuse and Redress Support Service offer support for people impacted by institutional child sexual abuse. 1800 211 028.
- Rainbow Sexual, Domestic and Family Violence Helpline offers support for anyone from the LGBTIQ+ community whose life has been impacted by sexual or family violence. 1800 497 212.

[Australian Childhood Foundation](#) provides counselling services to children and young people who have experienced abuse. 1300 381 581 [support@childhood.org.au](mailto:support@childhood.org.au) [www.childhood.org.au](http://www.childhood.org.au)

[Kids Helpline](#) provide free, confidential counselling for young people from 5 – 25 years old. 1800 551 800 [www.kidshelpline.com.au](http://www.kidshelpline.com.au)

[Lifeline](#) providing services to those experiencing personal crisis or thinking about suicide 13 11 14 or text 0477 13 11 14 after 6pm [www.lifeline.org.au/get-help](http://www.lifeline.org.au/get-help)

[Beyond Blue](#) provide mental health support services 1300 224 363 [www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support/get-immediate-support](http://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support/get-immediate-support)

### Australian Capital Territory

[Service Assisting Male Survivors of Sexual Assault](#) offers counselling and support to men over the age of 16 years who have suffered any form of sexual abuse, including childhood sexual abuse. 02 6287 3935 or text only to 0488 586 518 [www.samssa.org.au](http://www.samssa.org.au)

[Canberra Rape Crisis Centre](#) provides services and counselling to sexual assault survivors 02 6247 2525 [www.cccc.org.au](http://www.cccc.org.au)

### New South Wales

[NSW Health](#) provides specialist sexual assault services in each local health district including child specific services – see full list [here](#).

NSW Sexual Violence Helpline provides counselling for anyone impacted by sexual assault 1800 424 017

NSW Sexual Assault Services counselling for anyone impacted by sexual assault.

[Survivors and Mates Support Service](#) provide support to male survivors of child sexual abuse 1800 472 676 [www.samsn.org.au](http://www.samsn.org.au)

[Rape and Domestic Violence Services Australia](#) provides support services to people affected by sexual or family violence. 1800 424 017 [www.1800respect.org.au/services/rape-and-domestic-violence-services-australia](http://www.1800respect.org.au/services/rape-and-domestic-violence-services-australia)

## **Northern Territory**

[Sexual Assault Referral Centres](#) provides specialist sexual assault services in each local health district including child specific services – see full list [here](#)

[Ruby Gaea Darwin Centre Against Sexual Violence](#) provides support and counselling to females of all ages and males aged 5 – 17 years who have been impacted by sexual abuse. (08) 8945 0155

## **Queensland**

[Centre Against Sexual Violence](#) offers services and counselling to women and young women aged over 12 years. (07) 3808 3299 [www.casv.org.au](http://www.casv.org.au)

[Murrigunyah Family and Cultural Healing Centre](#) provides support and counselling to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people impacted by sexual violence (07) 3290 4254 [www.murrigunyah.org.au](http://www.murrigunyah.org.au)

[BRISSC](#) provides support and counselling to women over 15 years who are survivors of sexual violence. (07) 3391 0004 [www.brissc.org.au/](http://www.brissc.org.au/)

[Gallang Place Counselling](#) offers counselling services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (07) 3899 5041 [www.gallangplace.org.au](http://www.gallangplace.org.au)

[Living Well](#) offers supports for men who have experienced sexual abuse, their partners or families. 07 3028 4648 [www.livingwell.org.au](http://www.livingwell.org.au)

## **South Australia**

[Yarrow Place Rape and Sexual Assault Service](#) for sexual assault services, including counselling (for persons over 16 years at the time of the assault) (08) 8161 7000 [www.wchn.sa.gov.au/camhs](http://www.wchn.sa.gov.au/camhs)

## **Tasmania**

[Sexual Assault Support Service](#) provide support and counselling (03) for children and adults who have been impacted by sexual violence. (03) 6231 0044 1800 697 877 [www.sass.org.au](http://www.sass.org.au)

Tasmanian Sexual Assault Crisis Line 1800 697 877

[Laurel House](#) provides counselling services to adults and children impacted by sexual violence. 1800 697 877 [info@laurelhouse.org.au](mailto:info@laurelhouse.org.au) [www.laurelhouse.org.au](http://www.laurelhouse.org.au)

## **Victoria**

[Casa House](#) for counselling, support and advocacy services for adults and young people who have experienced sexual assault, including childhood sexual assault. 1800 806 292 or 03 9636 3600 [casa@thewomens.org.au](mailto:casa@thewomens.org.au) [www.casahouse.com.au](http://www.casahouse.com.au)

Victorian Sexual Assault Crisis Line 03 8345 3495 1800 806292

[Drummond Street Services](#) provides services including counselling for those affected by institutional child sexual abuse 03 9663 6733 [www.ds.org.au/life-support-institutional-abuse/](http://www.ds.org.au/life-support-institutional-abuse/)

## **Western Australia**

[Allambee Counselling](#) provides counselling and support services for adults and children impacted by sexual violence (08) 9535 8263 [www.allambee.org.au](http://www.allambee.org.au)

[Sexual Assault Resource Centre](#) provides services and counselling to people aged over 13 years who have been impacted by sexual abuse (08) 6458 1828 1800 199 888 [www.kemh.health.wa.gov.au/other-services/sarc](http://www.kemh.health.wa.gov.au/other-services/sarc)

[Acacia Support Services](#) provides support services and counselling to people aged over 13 years who have been impacted by sexual abuse. (08) 6164 0520 [www.relationshipswa.org.au/services/specialist-support/acacia-support-service](http://www.relationshipswa.org.au/services/specialist-support/acacia-support-service)

[Waratah Support Service](#) provides support services and counselling for people aged over 13 years impacted by sexual abuse (08) 9791 2884 [www.waratah.asn.au/counselling](http://www.waratah.asn.au/counselling)