

Worksheet 5: Report

Safeguarding Children and Young People

Key points:

Reporting concerns and occurrences of abuse can assist in reducing the likelihood of abuse occurring and the severity of harm where it has occurred. SLSA has developed a process for members to follow in deciding the necessary and appropriate action to take in reporting concerns and abuse, and responding to disclosures made by children and young people.

Reporting Concerns for Children and/or Young People's Safety

At this stage in our implementation process, we have put in place policies, practices for safeguarding children and young people (see Worksheets 1-3), engaged with, and promoted educational resources to raise our member's awareness of signs and indicators of abuse (see Worksheet 4). As a complement to this, we also need to be prepared in how to respond to, and report, concerns for safety.

Why is reporting important?

The safeguarding of children and young people relies on community members reporting their concerns. Unfortunately, there have been cases in Australia where abuse has been able to occur because people have taken the perspective that it is none of their business or they have not wanted to get involved.

It is important that we all understand that responding and reporting is not only the right thing to do by the child or young person, but public interest is also increasingly seeing reporting of abuse as part of the legal obligations to protect children and young people from abuse. For instance, in Victoria, government has passed legislation that considers failing to report or protect a child from sexual abuse if a person knows or believes a child is at risk as a criminal offence.

Research tells us people may be reluctant to report because they are unsure if they have all of the facts, or they might worry about making a situation worse. This is why SLSA has taken such a comprehensive approach to educating and raising awareness and increase people's confidence of what constitutes harm, or potential harm. It is also important for people in the SLS movement to be clear that reporting suspected abuse, even if not entirely certain, is better than not reporting at all.

Resources informing SLSA's approach to responding to and reporting concerns

Several resources that inform SLSA's responding and reporting of safety concerns. These include:

- The 'SLSA Member Protection Policy 6.05 – Reports and Complaints Guideline' - provides overall guidelines to handle grievances
- The 'How to Report Concerns for a Child's Safety' section in the 'Safeguarding Children and Young People Guideline' - provides steps to follow in reporting concerns for safety
- The 'Responding to a Disclosure by a Child or Young Person' section in the 'Safeguarding Children and Young People Guideline' - provides steps to follow in responding to and reporting safety issues reported by children or young people
- The 'Guide to Submitting a Report' – provides steps to follow on how to submit an online report – Appendix A.

Your club's role in responding to and reporting concerns for children and young people's safety

It is your club's responsibility to address complaints, reports or disclosures brought to your attention regarding the health, welfare and safety of all those involved with SLS.

Encouraging proactive reporting behaviour in your club assists SLS in investigating and responding to reports of inappropriate behaviour. Making a report is easy - we encourage your club committee to be familiar with the process:

1. Visit sls.com.au/safeguarding and click on 'Make a Child Protection Report'
2. Follow the question prompts, noting you may wish to remain anonymous
3. Click submit once finished! Your report will then be sent to Surf Life Saving Australia's Legal Counsel and your State/Territory Centre for investigation.



Action plan

- Distribute Worksheet 5 to your club committee, encouraging the committee to review the document and be familiar with the document and Appendices A prior to the relevant meeting which you have designated to address these action items
- Encourage discussion at your committee meeting and consider any implications for club practice. For instance, you might conduct a staff and volunteer training session on reporting to ensure key club administrators and officials are aware of the process and can share this knowledge with club members
- Follow up with communication to club.

What next?

We encourage you to disseminate information about reporting to your members and where relevant to stakeholders and broader community. Some strategies include:

- Provide links to the 'SLSA Safeguarding Children and Young People Online Report Form' somewhere prominent on your club website
- Promote the resources for reporting and the Guide to Submitting a Report in your club newsletter and/or via social media
- Schedule an annual review time for the club committee to engage with the resources again, and also promotion out to the club membership and stakeholders to ensure practice is maintained and continuously improved.

Notes

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Appendix A: How to make a Child Protection Related Report

Safeguarding Children and Young People

Surf Life Saving is committed to the protection of children through the Safeguarding Children and Young People Program. Reporting serious concerns is one of the most important parts of the program. We need your help to investigate reports of inappropriate behaviour. Please let us know if you become aware of, or observe something you consider inappropriate. Making a report is easy. Just follow the simple steps below.

1. Visit sls.com.au/safeguarding and click “Make a Child Protection Report”
2. Follow the question prompts, noting you may wish to remain anonymous
3. Click Submit once finished! Your report will then be sent to Surf Life Saving’s Legal Counsel and your State/Territory Centre for investigation

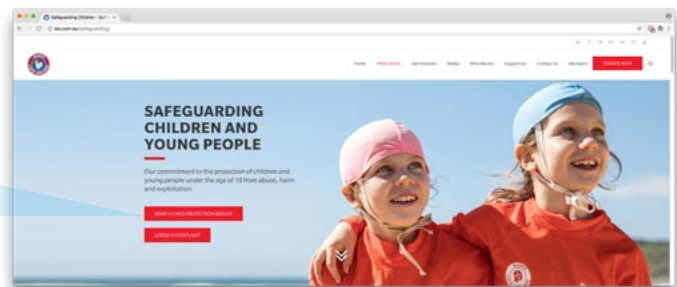


Guide to Submitting a Report

Step 1

Visit sls.com.au/safeguarding and click:

MAKE A CHILD PROTECTION REPORT



Step 2

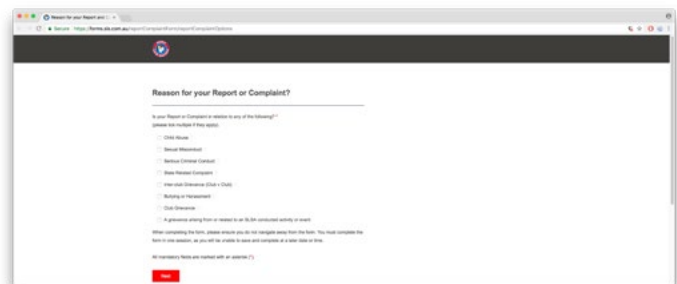
Following the question prompts and select which report or complaint best suits your concern.



Click on the box which relates best to your report. If in doubt and your matter is in relation to the concerns of a child, click the “child abuse” box



There are information icons next to each box to assist you with your selection.



Step 3

Follow the question prompts. You may wish to remain anonymous. If you do choose to remain anonymous please ensure you have supplied detailed information so Surf Life Saving can investigate. If you choose to leave your name and an email address a copy of your report will be sent to your nominated email.

Please note: Not all sections of the report are required to be filled out. Only the fields marked with an asterisk* require information to be submitted, however, the more information supplied the more assistance you will offer with the investigation.

Step 4

Once your report is submitted it will be sent to Surf Life Saving’s Legal Counsel and your respective State/Territory Centre for investigation.

All reports submitted will be treated in confidence and with the utmost respect for all those involved.

