

Why are we talking to you?

You have a unique position in children's lives

- Kids feel you “get them”
- Informal guidance very effective
- Special relationship in this setting
- “Duty of care” to keep kids safe



Why we are talking to you

Experts in the field of child abuse recommend :

- Child abuse training for all youth workers.
- Code of conduct for leaders
- Policy and procedures for child protection



What is child abuse?

- Physical :
- Emotional:
- Sexual:
- Neglect:



Indicators of Possible Child Abuse

- There are some things you may notice about a child's behaviour or appearance that could be signs of child abuse.
- Please note that the presence of any of these symptoms does not definitively mean that the child was abused. They are “flags”.

Case Scenario: 1

- David usually interacts really well with all the kids in his group, and especially loves playing soccer each week after the program has finished
- The past 3 weeks he has seemed quite during the program and he has not joined in the soccer game.
- When someone does try to involve him he snaps back rudely or wears at them
- You also then realise he has been wearing long sleeves each week, even though it has been really hot

- He doesn't rush to the gate to meet his dad at pick up time like he used to.
- Seems very quiet and shy even with his dad.
- Last week he said to he wanted to stay back with you after the group instead of going home. He made up the excuse of helping you clean up.

Case Scenario: 2

- Talia has been attending B'nai for a long time now.
- You haven't seen her for a while, and one day you meet her walking home from school with her older cousin, Benny. You try and say hi, but she looks away and avoids you.
- The next week you see her down Carlisle St, and tell her you miss seeing her at B'nai, and ask if she wants to start coming again.

- Talia says she can't come any more as her mum now can't pick her up from the group.
- You suggest someone else could help, but Talia explains that her mum already arranged for Benny to be able to bring her home, but she doesn't want him to do this.
- As you walk back with him up Carlisle St, Talia eventually tells you that she feels uncomfortable about the “bad” things Benny talks to her about and the pictures he shows her on his iPhone.

A Disclosure: what do you do?

Responding to a disclosure of child abuse

- Listen
- Believe
- Validate
- Be calm
- Don't make false promises / keep secrets
- Assess immediate safety
- Report appropriately

Reporting



- Don't delay talking to the appropriate person
- Don't discuss with others, unless necessary
- Be aware of your own response, and ensure support for yourself.

Where to Get More Information or help

- The Jewish Taskforce Support Line 9523 2100

Safespace on www.jewishtaskforce.com.au

- Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800
- Child First 1300 367 441
- Gatehouse centre 9345 6391
- Meridian 9412 6133
- CASA 9594 2289
- Police – caulfield 9524 9500

Appropriate Behaviour

- Mostly your common sense will ensure you do the right thing.
- When is touching ok –when it is welcome, appropriate, non sexual
- Power-imbalanced relationships

Why problematic scenarios may occur

- Easy for feelings of attraction to develop in these settings.
- Often small difference in age between kids and their leaders.
- “Power- imbalanced relationships”



Possible scenarios that may arise

- A child is at a camp meeting and needs a lift home.
- A child is crying and you want to console her.
- The child is in her room alone as she is embarrassed about crying
- A child is unwell and needs to sleep in leader's room for the night .