

MANDATORY REPORTING



COMMITMENT STATEMENT:

Ballarat YMCA staff and volunteers working with children and young people and their family have an important role to play in protecting children who may be at risk of harm due to abuse or neglect. YMCA staff and volunteers are in daily/regular contact with children and young people and their families, so are well placed to observe when a child or young person appears to be at risk of harm.

The YMCA's wide range of programs and services are provided in communities where there is a focus on prevention and early intervention. It will be clear practice within the YMCA that our approach to child protection and reporting will support all children and young people in various stages of vulnerability.

Duty of Care

Duty of care is the legal obligation each person has to take reasonable care to avoid causing foreseeable harm to another person or their property. The YMCA owes a duty of care to anyone who is reasonably likely to be affected by YMCA activities.

Position on Reporting

YMCA Australia requires that all staff, volunteers and directors report incidents to the relevant State/Territory Child Protection Authority/Department. This reporting requirement is applicable to staff and volunteers during the course of carrying out their professional duties if there is a belief on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is in need of protection.

This reporting obligation relates to suspected abuse occurring either in the context of the child or young person's family/home environment, in places or organisations outside of the family, or specifically in the course of their involvement in YMCA activities. This reporting is in relation to suspected abuse by a YMCA or other organisation staff member or volunteer, or through peer to peer interactions.

Definitions

Child – In respect of the YMCA Australia Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, Procedure and relevant supporting documents a child will refer to anyone under the age of 18 years, as referenced by the United Nations Convention Rights of a Child. Reports should refer to State based legislation for specific age related reporting requirements.

Organisational Approach to Reporting

YMCA of Australia understands the complexity surrounding the disclosure of sensitive information and the potential impact that this may have on staff, children, young people, volunteers and families. It is for this reason that the YMCA encourages a consultative approach to reporting in accordance to State based legislation, upholding our duty of care to the child or young person and the duty of care to the reporter.

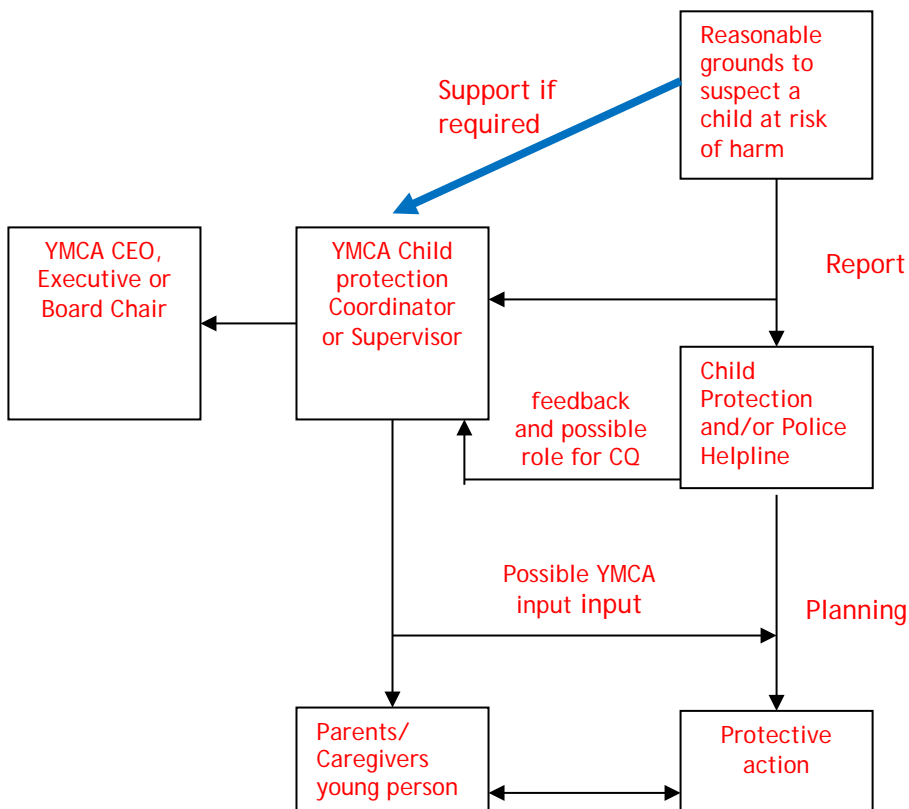
The intent of this consultative approach will in no way delay or impede the reporting requirements. The YMCA understands the importance of having ongoing and comprehensive support and management mechanisms in place when dealing with sensitive information in regards to child protection issues. Consultation processes relevant to each State/Territory are to be followed with particular attention being given to the need for confidentiality in regards to such information. Only those managers and staff that fall within the consultative process, those providing a direct service to the individual involved in the report and State Child Protection Department staff will have access to any documentation of the notification.

The YMCA will be supportive and cooperative of any State Child Protection Department and Police requirements and other agencies as required by law. Compliance to any reasonable request will be met in a timely manner. Staff and volunteers will be resourced and supported by management.

Reporting Processes

YMCA staff and volunteers will be required to work with their direct supervisor/manager during the consultation process to determine that all necessary information has been collated in order to form a belief on reasonable grounds to make a formal report on the allegation of abuse.

YMCA staff and volunteers will be given time within programs to make the report to the relevant State Child Protection Authority/Department. All documentation used during this reporting process will be filed and stored in a confidential manner. This documentation is not to be given to any other party unless clearly falling under relevant State legislation.



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