



# DEALING WITH A DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE



**PROJECT  
PARADIGM**  
WORKING TO END CHILD EXPLOITATION

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A program of  
**IFYS** Limited

## Introduction

Disclosing abuse can be very challenging for children and young people. It is common for them to experience fear and anxiety about the potential consequences of speaking out. Many children and young people will wait months and even years before revealing their abuse. Sadly, for some, they will never tell anyone about their experience. It's crucial that children and young people are given the opportunity to talk to someone about their abuse and to know that when they do, what they say is taken seriously and responded to appropriately.

## How to Help

If you believe a child is in immediate danger, or you have immediate concerns for the welfare of a child, call "000" or local police on **131 444**.

If your concern is about online child exploitation and abuse you can report directly to the Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation at [www.accce.gov.au/report](http://www.accce.gov.au/report)

If you would prefer to report in-confidence visit Crime Stoppers at [www.crimestoppers.com.au](http://www.crimestoppers.com.au) or by phoning **1800 333 000**.

24 hour support is also available for children and young people at Kids Helpline **1800 55 1800** or [kidshelpline.com.au](http://kidshelpline.com.au)

### KEY POINTS

#### Don't panic!

Try not to fear disclosure, try to think of it as a positive thing.

#### Be honest

you don't have to be the expert.

Clarify the limits of **confidentiality**.

#### Create space

and time to talk so it is easier for the young person to disclose.

#### Don't push

you can still help even without a disclosure.

#### Be supportive

How are they feeling?  
Is there any additional support they need?

#### Reassure

Thank them for telling you, it takes courage to disclose. Tell them they did the right thing coming forward.

And most importantly **BELIEVE**. It's important for the young person to know they have been heard.