# A step-by-step guide to making a report to

Child Protection or Child FIRST

## Protective concerns

You are concerned about a child because you have:

* received a disclosure from a child about abuse or neglect
* observed indicators of abuse or neglect
* been made aware of possible harm via your involvement in the community external to your professional role.

## At all times remember to:

* record your observations
* follow appropriate protocols
* consult notes and records
* consult with appropriate colleagues if necessary
* consult with other support agencies if necessary

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| **Step 1** | **RESPONDING TO CONCERNS** | **Step 2** | **FORMING A BELIEF ON REASONABLE GROUNDS** | **Step 3** | **MAKING A REFERRAL TO Child FIRST** | **Step 4** | **MAKE A REPORT TO CHILD PROTECTION** |
| 1. If your concerns relate to a child in need of immediate protection; or you have formed a belief that a child is at significant risk of harm\*.

**Go to Step 4**1. If you have significant concerns that a child and their family need a referral to Child FIRST for family services.

**Go to Step 3**1. In all other situations

**Go to Step 2**.\* Refer to Appendix 2: Definitions of child abuse and indicators of harm in the Protocol – *Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people* | 1. Consider the level of immediate danger to the child.

Ask yourself:* 1. Have I formed a belief that the child has suffered or is at risk of suffering significant harm?

**YES / NO**and* 1. Am I in doubt about the child’s safety and the parent’s ability to protect the child?

**YES / NO**1. If you answered yes to a) or b)

**Go to step 4**1. If you have significant concerns that a child and their family need a referral to Child FIRST for family services.

**Go to Step 3** | Child Wellbeing Referral1. Contact your local Child FIRST provider.
	* See over for contact list for local Child FIRST phone numbers.
2. Have notes ready with your observations and child and family details.
 | Mandatory/Protective Report\*1. Contact your local Child Protection Intake provider immediately.
	* See over for contact list for local Child Protection phone numbers.
	* For **After Hours Child Protection** Emergency Services, call

**131 278**.1. Have notes ready with your observations and child and family details.

\* *Non-mandated staff members who believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection are able to report their concerns to Child Protection* |

For further information refer to *Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people – A joint protocol of the Department of Human Services Child Protection, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Licensed Children’s Services and Victorian Schools*

