# LOOKOUT Education Support Centres and Child Protection

## Fact Sheet

The education of students living in out-of-home care is the shared responsibility of the Department of Education and Training (The Department), Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), community service organisations (CSOs) and carers.

LOOKOUT Centres work with schools, Child Protection Practitioners, carers and CSOs to provide education-related support to students in out-of-home care and ensure they achieve their best with their education.

## Child Protection

Child Protection provides child-centred, family-focused services to protect children and young people from significant harm caused by abuse or neglect within the family. It also aims to make sure that children and young people receive services to deal with the effects of abuse and neglect on their wellbeing and development.

In the context of a whole of community approach, Child Protection has a specific statutory role in protecting children and young people from harm and promoting their rights and healthy development.

Child Protection receives, assesses and responds to reports of alleged abuse and neglect of children and young people. Child Protection Practitioners undertake investigations and develop plans to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. This may include taking matters to court.

## LOOKOUT Education Support Centres

LOOKOUT Centres are an Education State initiative delivered by The Department. LOOKOUT Centres will focus on monitoring the education progress and school transitions of students in out-of-home care and ensuring all agencies are working in the best interests of the student to ensure improved educational outcomes.

The LOOKOUT Centres are being established at a time of substantial policy and service delivery reform in Victoria, and this environment shapes the way in which the Centres support and work with education and care professionals.

## How do children in out-of-home care link into LOOKOUT Centres?

The LOOKOUT Centre student roll includes school-aged children and young people in the out-of-home care placement types across Victoria. DHHS data provides the basis for the LOOKOUT Centre student roll. Data from DHHS is matched with school enrolment data by LOOKOUT Centre staff. The student roll will enable greater visibility of the enrolment status of children and young people in out-of-home care, ensuring no one is left behind.

For more information about how LOOKOUT Centres treat and store personal information, please refer to the LOOKOUT Centre Privacy Statement.

If you have concerns about the safety of a child or young person contacting Child and Family Information, Referral and Support Teams (Child FIRST) is a useful first step. Follow the link for more information on Child FIRST:

[www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-service-providers/children,-youth-and-families/family-and-parenting-support/how-to-make-a-referral-to-child-first](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edrms/collaboration/VCB/KeyProjDocs/LOOKOUT%20Communications/www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-service-providers/children%2C-youth-and-families/family-and-parenting-support/how-to-make-a-referral-to-child-first)

## Can I make a referral to LOOKOUT?

The LOOKOUT Centre doesn’t receive referrals like a traditional service or program. LOOKOUT Centres have statewide coverage to support all Victorian students in kinship, foster and residential care arrangements in government, Catholic and Independent schools.

As children and young people in permanent care are in stable home arrangements, they are not included in the coverage of LOOKOUT.

## Key contacts

If you would like more information or advice, please contact your regional office:

LOOKOUT Centre South Western Victoria Region

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