FOUR CRITICAL ACTIONS FOR SCHOOLS
Responding to Student Sexual Offending

1. IMMEDIATE RESPONSE TO AN INCIDENT
If there is no risk of immediate harm go to Action 2.

If a child is at immediate risk of harm you must ensure their safety by:
- separating alleged victims and others involved
- administering first aid
- calling 000 for urgent medical and/or police assistance to respond to immediate health or safety concerns
- identifying a contact person at the school for future liaison with Police.

Where necessary you may also need to maintain the integrity of the potential crime scene and preserve evidence.

You must identify a contact person at the school for future liaison with Victoria Police and/or Child Protection and seek advice about contacting parents/carers (see Action 3).

*See the Four Critical Steps for Schools: Responding Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse for further guidance in these circumstances.

2. REPORTING TO AUTHORITIES
As soon as immediate health and safety concerns are addressed you must report incidents, suspicions and disclosures of student sexual offending as soon as possible.

VICTORIA POLICE
All instances on 000

DHHS CHILD PROTECTION
If you believe that:
- the victim’s parent/carer are unable or unwilling to protect the child
- the student who is alleged to have engaged in the student sexual offending is:
  - aged over 10 and under 15 years and may be in need of therapeutic treatment to address these behaviours
  - may be displaying physical and behavioural indicators of being the victim of child abuse

INTERNALLY
ALSO report internally to:
- School Principal and/or leadership team (all instances)
- Government Schools: DET Security Services Unit
- Catholic Schools: Diocesan education office

You must consult with Victoria Police or DHHS Child Protection to determine what information can be shared with parents/carers of all impacted students. They may advise:
- not to contact the parents/carers (e.g. in circumstances where contacting the parents/carers is likely to adversely affect a Victoria Police investigation or where the student is a mature minor and has requested that their parent/carer not be notified)
- to contact the parents/carers and provide agreed information (this must be done as soon as possible, preferably on the same day of the incident, disclosure or suspicion).

3. CONTACTING PARENTS/CARRERS
Your Principal must consult with Victoria Police or DHHS Child Protection to determine what information can be shared with parents/carers of all impacted students. They may advise:
- not to contact the parents/carers (e.g. in circumstances where contacting the parents/carers is likely to adversely affect a Victoria Police investigation or where the student is a mature minor and has requested that their parent/carer not be notified)
- to contact the parents/carers and provide agreed information (this must be done as soon as possible, preferably on the same day of the incident, disclosure or suspicion).

4. PROVIDING ONGOING SUPPORT
Your school must provide support for students who are victim to a student sexual offence AND students who have engaged in a sexual offence. This is an essential part of your duty of care requirements.

This support should include the development of a Student Support Plan in consultation with wellbeing professionals, outlining support strategies. Strategies may include the development of a safety plan, direct support and referral to wellbeing professionals.

You must take action as a school staff member, you play a critical role in protecting children in your care.
- You must act by following the 4 critical actions as soon as you witness an incident, receive a disclosure or form a suspicion that a student is a victim of a student sexual offending and/or a student has engaged in sexual offending.
- You must act even if you are unsure and have not directly observed student sexual offending (e.g. if a victim, or another person tells you about the offence).
- You must use the Responding to Student Sexual Offending template to keep clear and comprehensive notes.

CONTACT

DHHS CHILD PROTECTION
AREA
North Division 1300 664 977
South Division 1300 655 795
East Division 1300 360 391
West Division (Rural) 1800 075 599
West Division (Metro) 1200 664 977
AFTER HOURS
After hours, weekends, public holidays 13 12 78

CHILD FIRST
www.dhs.vic.gov.au

VICTORIA POLICE
000 or contact your local police station

DET SECURITY SERVICES UNIT
(03) 9589 6266

STUDENT INCIDENT AND RECOVERY UNIT
(03) 9651 3622

EMPLLOYEE CONDUCT BRANCH
(03) 9637 2595

DIOCESAN OFFICE
Melbourne (03) 9267 0228
Ballarat (03) 5337 7135
Sale (03) 5622 6600
Sandhurst (03) 5443 2377

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS VICTORIA
(03) 9825 7200

FORWARD