# 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 Referral   1. 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*

