

# SIGNS OF CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT



**Edition no** 1, December 2016

**Owner** Executive Manager

**Policy reference** National Child Protection Policy, Scouts Australia, 2016

**Location** h:\policies\fact sheets\child safe\ signs of child abuse or neglect

## Introduction

Scouts Victoria maintains a strict Zero Tolerance policy towards child abuse, and all adults in our community have an obligation to act if they become aware of child abuse. The signs below *can* suggest a child is being abused or neglected. This does not mean that they always do.

However, if these signs, or any other information you've received, give you reason to believe that a child is being abused (whether by a leader at Scouts, a parent or carer, or anyone else in the community), you **must** report it. In the case of sexual abuse, you are required to do so by law.

## What to do

If the child or suspected abuser is a member of Scouting, follow the procedures on our *Child*

*Abuse Reporting Procedure* factsheet, ensuring you make a report to the Incident Line on 03 8543 9877 as soon as possible.

If neither are members of Scouts Victoria, report directly to Victoria Police (000) or the Department of Health and Human Services (13 12 78).

It is important to follow our two-deep and no-one-on-one contact policies. If you are given reason to be suspicious of other adults with access to children, you **must** raise this through appropriate reporting lines.

## Further information

For further information, please refer to our Child Safe Scouting factsheets and policies on our webpage.

If anyone is in immediate danger, always ring 000 first.

- Is the child:
  - Displaying a fear for their safety or wellbeing?
  - Showing unexplained/ unlikely physical injuries; eg. bruises, scalds, burns, cuts, marks, fractures, sprains, strains, dislocations?
  - Seeming to regularly be underfed, not have a suitable place to sleep, or lack basic suitable clothing?
  - Regularly speaking negatively of themselves?
  - Suddenly unusually aggressive or overly compliant?
  - Suddenly unusually fearful, anxious or regressive?
  - Persistently or significantly inappropriately talking about or displaying sexual activity that is not age appropriate?
  - Regularly mentioning unexplained health or wellbeing concerns; eg. stomach aches, headaches, crying, heightened sensitivity?
  - Expressing or suggesting suicidal thoughts?
- Is there any suggestion by the child or others of grooming behaviour by any adult in contact with the child; eg. special gifts, secrets, alone time together, special names, online contact?
- Has anyone else suggested that any of the above may apply to a child, including other children?



## SCOUTS VICTORIA

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