

Responding to a child, young person or vulnerable adult disclosing abuse or neglect



Responding to a child, young person or vulnerable adult who discloses they have been harmed can be difficult. You may be the first person they have ever disclosed abuse to. Remember that your role is to just listen, reassure, document what you are told and report to your Supervisor or Parish Priest and possibly Authorities if required. Disclosure of abuse and neglect are allegations that the Chancery and Parishes take seriously and will be followed up by the appropriate personnel. The Office for Safeguarding (Chancery) can support you through this process. Your confidentiality is required to ensure allegations are addressed correctly. It is important that you listen without judgement and ensure you understand what they are telling you (try telling them what you understand and check it is correct).

THE 3R'S RESPONSE SYSTEM

- REASSURE THE PERSON
- RECORD THE INFORMATION
- REPORT THE INCIDENT

HERE ARE SOME TIPS ON WHAT TO DO IF THIS HAPPENS IN YOUR ROLE:

DO

- Remain calm;
- Listen carefully without interrupting;
- Establish the welfare and safety of the child, young person or vulnerable adult;
- Make detailed notes and document all the information received (as soon as possible after disclosure);
- Support and reassure them they have done the right thing by talking to you;
- Explain clearly what will happen next;
- Follow the Diocesan Policy - Management of Concerns, Complaints and Commendations;
- Report to your Supervisor, Parish Priest or the School Principal if a CCD catechist.

DON'T

- Express panic, shock, anger or disbelief;
- Ask leading questions;
- Dismiss, minimise or challenge the disclosure;
- Make promises you cannot keep (including keeping the disclosure a secret);
- Confront the perpetrator;
- Discuss with staff, parents, other children and young people unless directed to by your Supervisor or Authorities;
- Make judgements about what you hear.

Every child has the right to feel safe!

Talk to your Parish Priest or supervisor as soon as possible. If you prefer to talk to safeguarding directly, Phone: **02 8379 1605** Email: safeguarding@bbcatholic.org.au www.bbcatholic.org.au/safeguarding



Office for Safeguarding (CHANCERY)

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF BROKEN BAY