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Learning Guide

CHCPRT001 Identify and Respond to Children and Young People at Risk

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This unit learning guide relates to the following National Qualifications:

CHC30113 Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care  
CHC50113 Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care  
CHC40113 Certificate IV in School Age Education and Care  
CHC50213 Diploma of School Age Education and Care

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How To Use This Learning Guide

In this Learning Guide, you will find the information you need to develop the skills and knowledge to become a confident, professional Educator. To help you transfer your skills into practice, we have provided a range of links to videos and other website resources and recommend you take time to look at these. All CRA Learning Guides link to the National Quality Frameworks (NQF) for each unit. This includes the National Regulations, Standards and Approved Frameworks you will need to use as an Educator working in regulated Children’s Service in Australia. We recommend you have these available on your computer or print out a copy so they are available at all times.

On the following page, are a list of icons you will see throughout the Learning Guides to direct you to important and additional information. They will help support your understanding of the topic.
Quality Area 2 Children’s health and safety
2.3.4 Educators, co-ordinators and staff members are aware of their roles and responsibilities to respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect.

Links to NQF

- Quality Area 2 Children’s health and safety
- 2.3.4 Educators, co-ordinators and staff members are aware of their roles and responsibilities to respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect

Links to Frameworks

- Being, Belonging and Becoming
- High expectations and equity
- Partnership
- Secure respectful reciprocal relationships

Links to Policies

- Child protection
- Health and safety

UN Rights of the Child

- Article 3 All organisations concerned with children should work towards what is best for each child.
- Article 18 Both parents share responsibility for bringing up their children and should always consider what is best for each child. Governments should help parents by providing services to support them, especially if both parents work.
- Article 19 Governments should ensure that children are properly cared for and protect them from violence, abuse and neglect by their parents, or anyone else who looks after them.
## Learning Guide Icons

### Reading Time!

When you see our reading icon, go to the document specified and read to expand your knowledge of the topic.

### Recommended Videos

When you see our video icon, you can watch great resources online. If the link does not work, (as website links will change over time) we have provided the full name of the video and location so you can do a web or YouTube search.

### Reflection

Our reflection icon gives you a chance to think about your own experiences or about a question posed. This help will help you to link new knowledge to your past experiences and encourage reflection of your current practice.

### Helpful Websites

When you see our computer icon, you will be asked to go to the specified link for additional information.

### Your Turn!

When you see our pencil icon, you can write in your Learning Guide or on another piece of paper. The exercises are for your learning only and are not part of the assessment.

### Check Your Ideas!

When you see our memo icon, you can compare your ideas, from completing activities, with ours. These provide some feedback to you help assess your understanding of the topic.
Tips for Successful Study!

1. **Active Reading**
   Don’t just read - you will fall asleep: it’s very relaxing, you know!
   a) Read the **Learning Outcomes** first
   b) Read “Welcome to the unit” second
   c) Read the **assessment task**.
   These will tell you what you need to learn and why it’s important. As you read, your brain will notice what you need. You may even think “hey, that’s the answer to question 4!” or “this is the type of Educator I want to be!”

2. **Set yourself goals**
   “Today by 11am, I will have read up to Chapter 2” or “I will have completed the first two questions in my assessment!” Set a clear, realistic goal for the time you have to study. **Write down** your goal. Tell everyone you are unavailable and turn off your phone and social media! Try and finish each session on a positive.

3. **Reward yourself**
   Reward yourself for reaching a goal. This does not need to involve cake as we are going to reward ourselves a lot! It could be a walk to the park, a break for a cuppa, going shopping or just time off. **Whatever says to you: “Well done! You have achieved.”**

4. **I’m not getting this!**
   If you are not understanding something it’s not going to be frustrating.
   **Good!**
   It means you are learning something new, sometimes your views of life may be challenged! It means you are moving out of your comfort zone, growing and stretching in your knowledge and skills. At times this may feel very scary. It can sometimes feel easier to run away, however this is only a temporary solution! It’s ok. Think back to a time when you didn’t know how to do something and then you achieved it e.g. riding a bike, driving a car etc. How great did you feel when you could do it? You can do this.

   Here are some ideas to help:
   - **Ease up on yourself.** It’s ok not to know everything – you are learning! Particularly if you are changing careers and you were an expert in your past field. Remember, you will be learning and building on your past skills but the information may be new to you.
   - **Watch a video related to the topic.** While having a cuppa - this can help your understanding.
   - Relaxing helps you learn.
   - **Leave that bit and move to another bit!** This is particularly important if stuck on a question. You can always come back to that one.
   - **Sleep on it.** We process information at night whilst we sleep. You may find when you wake up the next day, it will all make sense!
   - **Contact your trainer for help.** You are not alone and they are there to help.

5. **I should be spending time with others**
   If you have enrolled in a course it’s because you have a bigger goal and made a decision. How will achieving your goal benefit others in your life? Achieving your goals will contribute to the happiness of yourself and others. Most of all, studying in front of others, including children, models lifelong learning, resilience and provides a positive role model for their own learning.

   **Happy Learning!**
Welcome To The Unit

CHCPRT001 Identify and Respond to Children and Young People at Risk

As someone who may work with or be in contact with children and young people, this may be the most important course of your career and personal life. For some people, this unit may be very difficult to undertake due to the sensitive subjects. Whilst we use the term ‘child abuse’ as a society, we should maybe call it ‘human abuse’ because the trauma which occurs to a person as a child stays with them long into adult life and can often have long lasting negative impacts on the individual person and future generations of the family.

As a professional in a child-related environment, you could be a ‘Mandatory Reporter’ and have the opportunity to keep a child safe.

This unit will give you knowledge and skills to:

- Implement work practices that support the protection of children and young people
- Report indications of possible risk of harm
- Protect the rights of children and young people
- Recognise and develop ethical and nurturing practices in accordance with professional boundaries
- Understand the importance of confidentiality
- Acknowledge need to report risk of harm identify during training

Reading

National Standards

Many professions have National Standards which include references to Child Protection. These are used to develop policies and practices in your organisation. Please consult the Standards related to your profession.

As a professional in a regulated Children’s Education and Care Service, please refer to the following standards and regulations:

- National Quality Standards
- Education and Care Services National Regulations
Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit you will be able to do the following:

CHCPRT001 Identify and respond to children and young people at risk

1. Implement work practices which support the protection of children and young people

1.1 Identify children and young people at risk of abuse or neglect by observing signs and symptoms, asking open and non-leading questions, being aware of protective issues and using child protection procedures where appropriate

1.2 Respond to disclosure, information or signs and symptoms in accordance with state legislative responsibilities and the service policies and procedures

1.3 Routinely employ child focused work practices to uphold the rights of the child and encourage them to participate in age-appropriate decision-making

1.4 Employ communication and information gathering techniques with children and young people in accordance with current recognised good practice

1.5 Ensure decisions and actions taken are within own level of responsibility, work role, state legislation and service policies and procedures

2. Report Indications of possible risk of harm

2.1 Accurately record relevant specific and general circumstances surrounding risk of harm in accordance with state legislation, service policies and procedures and ethics

2.2 Promptly record and report risk of harm indicators including the circumstances surrounding the risk of harm according to service policies and procedures

2.3 Ensure writing in reports is non-judgmental

2.4 Work collaboratively with relevant agencies to ensure maximum effectiveness of report

3. Apply ethical and nurturing practices in work with children and young people

3.1 Protect the rights of children and young people in the provision of services

3.2 Identify and seek supervision support for issues of ethical concern in practice with children and young people

3.3 Employ ethical and nurturing practices and observe professional boundaries when working with children and young people

3.4 Recognise and report indicators for potential ethical concerns when working with children and young people
Chapter 1

Why Do We Need to Know About Child Protection?

Children are vulnerable to abuse or maltreatment by adults, as young children are physically smaller, weaker in strength and have less power. In addition, children usually lack the language and skills to understand or explain what is happening.

Everybody in our society has some responsibility to help protect children from abuse, but people who work in a field where there are children or young persons have added responsibilities. These people are referred to as Mandatory Reporters.

The responsibilities regarding reporting suspected child abuse vary between states and territories in Australia. For example, in NSW, we are governed by Department of Family and Community Services, www.facs.nsw.gov.au.

Points to Remember

- A golden rule is that you should never try to protect children on your own. You should always seek advice and assistance from an appropriate source such as your supervisor or director.
- Share your concerns or suspicions with a supervisor straight away, even if you are not sure that abuse may be happening. Telling your supervisor, rather than dealing with the incident on your own, is important as it can:
  - Safeguard yourself from harm
  - Provide assistance with identifying if a child is at risk
  - Provide opportunities for supervisors to help gather information
  - Create a supporting relationship between you and your supervisor
  - Provide additional support when reporting
- Confidentiality is a must in child protection. Maintaining confidentiality not only helps to protect all children and educators, but can also prevent false accusations.
Once you have notified your supervisor of your suspicions, your supervisor or the director will decide who else within the service needs to know about the situation.

**Skills Needed to Protect Children**

- Objectively recording any incidents or concerning behaviour about the child
- Having a knowledge of indicators of child abuse
- Writing down all indicators shown
- Signing and dating everything that you write down
- Knowing how to respond to a disclosure from a child
- Telling the supervisor of your concerns
- Making sure that concerns are reported the child protection department in your state or territory.
Australian Child Protection Legislation

In Australia, state and territory governments are responsible for the administration and operation of Child Protection Services. Legislative Acts in each state and territory govern the way such services are provided.

**What Is The Difference Between An Act And A Regulation?**

An ‘act’ is a piece of legislation that is passed by the government to become a law. The ‘regulation’ is the detailed account of how this law will be enforced, monitored and implemented. These acts and regulations vary between states and territories. Please see below for an example of the Child Protection Act and Regulation for New South Wales.

**Legislation Example:**

**Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998**

The *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* in NSW mandates Family and Community Services (FACS) with the responsibility for the care and protection of children and young people in NSW where there are concerns about their safety, welfare and wellbeing.

**Key Features of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998:**

- The safety, welfare and wellbeing of child is paramount
- Least intrusive intervention methods
- Principle of participation of children and young people
- Risk of Harm
- Early intervention
- Mandatory reporting
The regulation for the Child and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 is the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Regulation 2000.

The Legislation includes:

- Raising the mandatory threshold for reporting to Community Services from ‘risk of harm’ to at ‘risk of significant harm’

- Two new grounds that indicate a child may be at ‘risk of significant harm’:
  1. Parents or Carers have not made proper arrangements and are unable or unwilling for their child to receive an education; and
  2. A series of acts or omissions that when viewed together may establish a pattern of risk of significant harm (cumulative impact)

- An alternative reporting process for Mandatory Reporters in major government reporting agencies (establishing Child Wellbeing Units in the agencies that the Wood Report found made over 60 per cent of all reports) and remove penalties for not reporting.

- Allow disclosure of reporter identity to a law enforcement agency investigating a serious offence against a child or young person, in limited circumstances.

- Simplify and streamline the Children’s Court process, making it more user-friendly whilst also clarifying the Court’s role regarding children in out-of-home care.

- Establish a new approach to out-of-home care based on children being in statutory, supported and voluntary out-of-home care.


United Nations Convention On The Rights Of The Child

Laws and policies about children in Australia should be consistent with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child which is a universally agreed set of non-negotiable standards and obligations.

A full text of the convention can be found at: http://www.unicef.org/crc/

This summary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child was prepared by Amnesty International.

All children, from birth to 18 years, have:

- The right to life
- The right to a name and nationality
- The right to be with their parents or with those who will care for them best
● The right to have ideas and say what they think
● The right to practice their religion
● The right to meet with other children
● The right to get information they need
● The right to special care, education, and training (if needed)
● The right to health care
● The right to enough food and clean water
● The right to free education
● The right to play
● The right to speak their own language
● The right to learn about and enjoy their own culture
● The right not to be used as a cheap worker
● The right not to be hurt or neglected
● The right not to be used as a soldier in war
● The right to be protected from danger
● The right to know about their rights and responsibilities

Who Are Mandatory Reporters?

A ‘Mandatory Reporter’ is any person who delivers healthcare, welfare, education, Children’s Services, residential services or law enforcement wholly or partly to children (aged under 16) as part of their paid work and includes any person who directly manages or supervises such work.

If you are a Mandatory Reporter with current concerns that a child aged 16 and under is at risk of harm, you are required to make a report to FACS.

For example, as stated in the legislation in New South Wales, a Mandatory Reporter is defined as and has the following requirements:

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Chapter 3

Record Relevant Information

As professionals it is important to record accurately what we have seen or heard as quickly as possible.

Can we always be objective? The answer is no! When we observe, we always bring with us our own belief, values and our past knowledge or schemata which distorts what we actually see!

A great example is eyewitness accounts of bank robberies where the statement of the same experiences varies greatly. Incorrect information can include the gender of the person, what they were wearing, age, height and other aspects of appearance. In a number of bank robberies eyewitnesses have stated that the robber was carrying a gun when in fact, they did not. A reason for this error is our past schemata. Our past experience with bank robberies, possibly from television, tells us that “bank robbers have guns”. When retelling the experience the gun was included (Tuckey & Brewer, 2003).

I know what you are thinking! These people were under duress at the time. Other brain research suggests that at any one moment our senses including our eye and ears take in over 1,000,000 bits of information per second. Out of these only we only notice 7,000. Who decides what gets left out?

Our beliefs, values and past experiences filter and make sense of new information and because every person brings with them their own unique past, every observation to some degree will vary. As a professional, it is important to be aware of this and work at implementing strategies which increase the accuracies of your information.
Why Is It Important To Learn To Write Accurate Observations?

When making a report it is important to provide clear, concise and detailed information to the appropriate authorities. Learning to write an observation is a great skill and an effective way of producing accurate objective information. It helps you to only record what you see and makes you aware of when you are being judgemental. It teaches you to think and write without bias. This will help explain:

Your Turn!

Look around the room, wherever you are, and write down everything that you see…

Check Your Ideas!

Here are some suggestions. You can compare your ideas with ours!

You may have written down:

- Window
- Door
- Desk
- Pens
- Kitchen sink
- Computer
- Trees
- Table
You will notice you are feeling unemotional about the items. You are just successfully recording what you see. During the writing of this observation you were being what is called **objective**. Below are more activities to help you extend on this idea and develop this skill.

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**Your Turn!**

**Look at the picture of this child.**

Describe what you think the child is doing in the picture.

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We hope you found this Learning Guide informative and are now ready to implement your new understandings into practice to protect the rights of children.

Want to know more?
Please see our recommended reading list for additional readings on this topic.
Resource Guide

Online Video Resources:

A Child of rage - a video interview with a young child which demonstrates the long term emotion toll of abuse. This video may cause distress to some viewers. Video also available on Youtube

Education and Care Services National Law, Regulations and Standards
www.acecqa.gov.au

Websites:

Department of Community Services www.community.nsw.gov.au

Working with children check: NSW Commission for children and young people www.commissioncnw.gov.au

Child Abuse Prevention Service: mail@childabuseprevention.com.au
(information and resources). (02) 9716 8000

NSW Interagency Guidelines for Child Protection Intervention
www.community.nsw.gov.au

www.legislation.nsw.gov.au

ACECQA Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority
www.acecqa.gov.au

Children Services Central www.cscentral.org.au

Early childhood Australia Association www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au

Mandatory Reporter checklist available at: www.community.nsw.gov.au


NSW Ombudsman - Employment-related child protection notification. For forms and more information please visit: NSW Ombudsman.
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References


NSW Interagency Guidelines for Child Protection Intervention- Revised 2006