PROTECTING CHILDREN IS EVERYONE'S BUSINESS

MANDATORY REPORTING

WHAT IS MANDATORY REPORTING?

Under the Child Protection Act 1999, mandatory reporters are required to report concerns about a child who may have experienced significant physical or sexual abuse.

WHAT IS SIGNIFICANT HARM?

Harm to a child is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing.

It is immaterial how the harm is caused. Harm can be caused by:

- A single act, omission or circumstance
- A series or combination or acts, omissions or circumstances

WHO ARE MANDATORY REPORTERS?

- **Early childhood education and care professionals**
- Doctors
- Registered nurses
- Teachers
- Police officers with child protection responsibilities
- Child Safety employees and employees of licensed care services
- Employees of the Public Guardian

What is physical abuse?

Physical abuse includes but is not limited to:

- non-accidental injury to a child that you suspect is caused by a parent or other household member.
- actions towards a child by a parent or other adult household member that may have caused, or is likely to cause, a significant injury.
- the child was injured, or nearly injured, during a domestic violence incident involving adults.

What is sexual abuse?

- Sexual abuse is any sexual activity or behaviour that is imposed on a child and results in physical or emotional harm.
- True Relationships offers a range of resources that help professionals identify, understand and respond to sexual behaviours.

What is neglect?

- Neglect is when the child's basic needs of life are unmet by their parent to such an extent that the child's health and development are affected, causing harm, or likely to cause an unacceptable risk of harm to the child.
- The focus is on the consequence of the situation for the child, rather than on parental behaviour, motivation or intent.

What is emotional or psychological abuse?

Emotional or psychological abuse is when the child's social or emotional development is affected, or at unacceptable risk of being affected as a direct result of parental behaviour or attitude.

- This may be a parent who rejects the child or is hostile towards the child.
- You may observe harm to the child from their anxiety, depression, withdrawal, inappropriate attachment or bonding, self harming behaviour or aggressive behaviour towards others.

Who do I talk to if I have a concern?

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