

Information to parents and students regarding 'Child Safety'

As you may be aware, the Victorian Government has recently made a commitment to implementing the recommendations arising from the 'Betrayal of Trust' inquiry into the handling of child abuse allegations within religious and other non-government organisations. As part of this commitment, every Victorian government school is implementing a range of recommendations from the report. There are 7 standards which schools are required to meet. One of these standards relates to informing the school community, parents and students about the issue. Within our school we cover aspects of 'child safety' through the Discovery Program, in PE/Health and through various specialised programs organised by our wellbeing team. The child safety standards are also referenced in our school Policy, 'Student Engagement, Safety and Well-being'.

The information below is written for students. This information/resources may be a good starting point to raise these issues with your child. A summary version of this document will be included in the 2017 Student Planner.

Being safe, and what to do if something doesn't feel OK.

You have the right to be safe and free from abuse, including at school. Schools and other child-related organisations have to follow laws to protect children in their organisations from abuse.

What is child abuse?

Child abuse includes:

- sexual or grooming offences
- physical violence
- serious emotional or psychological harm
- serious neglect

Who can I talk to about this?

If you are worried about child abuse, for you or someone you know, there are people you can talk to. At school you can speak to the Principal or Assistant Principals, Student Welfare Co-ordinator, Chaplain, International Student Co-ordinator, Head of Sub-School, Level Co-ordinator or in fact, any staff member in the College. Alternatively, you may contact the police or one of the organisations listed below.

Organisation providing support and advice

Apart from seeking support at school the following services can provide you with support and further information:

Child Wise <https://www.childwise.org.au/>:

Call on 1800 991 099; provides access to expert advice from trained counsellors and an opportunity to speak up about child abuse.

Kids Helpline <https://kidshelpline.com.au/>:

Call on 1800 55 1800. For any time and for any reason - free, private and confidential phone and online counselling, 24 hrs a day, 7 days a week.

Headspace (National Youth Mental Health Foundation) <http://headspace.org.au/>.

Call on 1800 650 890. Headspace can help if you are aged 12 or over and you are going through a tough time. You can talk to someone at Headspace on the phone, online or in person. They also have a lot of information on their website.

Victorian Centres Against Sexual Assault <https://www.easternhealth.org.au/services/item/174-eastern-centre-against-sexual-assault-ecasa>

Call on 1800 806 292. The Eastern Centre Against Sexual Assault provides services to child and adult victims/survivors of sexual assault. The assault may have occurred recently or in the past.

Create Foundation <http://create.org.au/>

Call on 1800 655 105 Creating a better life for children and young people in care.

Youthlaw <http://youthlaw.asn.au/>

Call 9611 2412. Provides legal information and advice regarding access to legal services.