



Responding and Reporting — Plain Language Guide

Authorisation

Authorisation: District Governor Name:	[Insert Name]
District Governor Signature	
Date	[Insert Date]
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Read this first

If a child or young person is in immediate danger right now, call Victoria Police on 000. Then come back to this guide.

This guide is for any Rotary or Rotaract member or volunteer who has witnessed, been told about, or formed a suspicion of child abuse on a Rotary or Rotaract program. It walks you through what to do, in plain language, in the order you should do it. If you can do nothing else in the next five minutes, do Step 1 — tell the right person inside Rotary — and the people whose job it is to handle this will take it from there.

A note on what this guide is. This is the friendly version. The formal document is the *Child Safety and Wellbeing Procedure: Responding and Reporting*. If anything here and the Procedure disagree, the Procedure wins — but we've done our best to keep them in step.

Step 1 — Tell the right person inside Rotary, straight away

You don't have to investigate, decide if it's "really" abuse, or handle the report yourself. Your job at this step is to make sure the right Rotary officer knows.

- **If it happened at a club activity** — tell the Club President or the Club Youth Protection Officer (CYPO).
- **If it happened at a District activity** — tell the District Youth Protection Officer (DYPO) at child.protection@rotary9815.org.au.
- **If you aren't sure, or it's between clubs** — tell the DYPO directly. The DYPO is the safe default.

What if my concern is about a CYPO, DYPO, the District Insurance Officer, or the District Governor?

Email the District Governance Chair at governance@rotary9815.org.au instead. They take it from there.

Tell them what, not why. Say what you saw, were told, or suspect. Use the child or young person's own words where you can. Don't add your interpretation, or try to work out why someone might have done what they did — that's for the people who handle this professionally.

Step 2 — Know what happens next

Once you've made your report at Step 1, the CYPO or DYPO completes a form called the F11 (Rotary Youth Protection Incident Report) and sends it at the same time to four Rotary officers:

- the Club President;
- the Club Youth Protection Officer (CYPO);
- the District Youth Protection Officer (DYPO); and
- the District Insurance Officer (DIO).

Why all four at the same time? Each one has a different job in responding — the club leadership, child safety at club level, child safety at District level, and our insurance arrangements. Sending the same form to all four at once means there's one shared version of events and no telephone game.

The CYPO or DYPO then makes any external notifications that are required — to Victoria Police, the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH), the Social Services Regulator, Rotary International, or our insurer — in parallel. Some have strict deadlines (for example, 3 business days to the Social Services Regulator). The CYPO or DYPO knows what applies and when.

Your job once you've made your report is small but important: stay available in case the CYPO, DYPO, or authorities want to ask you more, and write down anything you remember while it's fresh.

Step 3 — If a young person is telling you something right now

How you respond in the moment matters. The five steps below come straight from the Procedure (Appendix B). The shorthand is Listen, Reassure, Close, Record, Follow up.

Listen — while they're speaking

Stay calm. Let them speak in their own words. If you have to ask anything, ask open questions — “what happened?”, “who was there?” — not “why” questions, and not questions that lead them to an answer. Don't show panic or disgust on your face; they may stop talking.

Reassure — as they share

Tell them you believe them, that it wasn't their fault, and that they were brave to come to you. Promise them privacy, but not confidentiality — explain that you will need to tell someone whose job it is to help, in order to make it stop and to keep them and others safe.

Close — ending the conversation

Use age-appropriate language. Tell them you will tell the right people, and that someone will get back in touch. Don't promise specific outcomes (“they'll go to gaol”, “everything will be fine”) — you don't know what will happen next. Make sure they are safe before you leave them.

Record — immediately afterwards

Write down what was said as soon as you can, using their own words wherever possible. Note the date, time, who was present, and where. Keep your interpretation out of it — stick to what was said and observed. These notes feed into the F11.

Follow up — after the conversation

Tell the right person at your level immediately (Step 1 above). Once the F11 is in train, a few days later, check in on the young person — a friendly word matters. Don't contact the person they spoke about. Don't gossip.

Things to avoid

- **Don't investigate.** It's not your job, and it can damage a later investigation by police or DFFH.
- **Don't contact the person the concern is about.** That's a job for law enforcement and the responsible Rotary officers, not for you.
- **Don't promise confidentiality.** You can't keep that promise. You can promise to handle the matter sensitively, and only to tell the people who need to know.
- **Don't wait to be sure.** If you have a reasonable concern, raise it. Better to raise something and have it stand down than to wait.
- **Don't go straight to social media or tell other Rotarians at a meeting.** Tell the right officer, and only the right officer, until you're told otherwise.

If you are a mandatory reporter

Some professions are required by Victorian law (Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic), s.182) to report directly to DFFH Child Protection if they have formed a reasonable belief that a child is in need of protection. These professions include doctors and nurses, registered teachers, school principals and

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counsellors, Victoria Police members, out-of-home care workers, early childhood workers, youth justice workers, registered psychologists, and people in religious ministry.

If you are a mandatory reporter, your obligation under the law applies regardless of any Rotary process. You discharge that obligation independently — you don't wait for Rotary. Telling Rotary at Step 1 above is still expected; the two run in parallel.

Phone DFFH Child Protection on 131 278 (24 hours). The full list of mandatory reporters and the test for “reasonable belief” are in Section 6.1 of the Procedure.

Quick contacts

What	Who / how
Immediate danger	Victoria Police on 000.
Concern about a child or young person at a club activity	Your Club President or Club Youth Protection Officer (CYPO).
Concern about a child or young person at a District activity, or where the level is unclear	District Youth Protection Officer (DYPO) — child.protection@rotary9815.org.au .
Concern about the conduct of a CYPO, DYPO, District Insurance Officer, or District Governor	District Governance Chair — governance@rotary9815.org.au .
You're a mandatory reporter and have formed a reasonable belief	DFFH Child Protection on 131 278 (24 hours). Tell Rotary too, in parallel.
Outside-Rotary support for the young person	Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800; 1800RESPECT 1800 737 732; eSafety Commissioner esafety.gov.au .

Thank you for speaking up. The young people in our programs depend on the adults around them noticing, taking action, and not looking the other way. That you're reading this means you are the kind of adult they need.

Appendix A — Version History

The table below records the version history of this Plain Language Guide. This Guide is a derivative of its parent Procedure; the parent Procedure's own version history table is the substantive audit record. The current authorisation block is at the front of this Guide.

Version	Date	Changes	Authorised
1.3	15 May 2026	Authorisation block added at the front and Version History appendix added at the back, matching the suite convention applied to the substantive documents. Previous PLG versions are not retroactively captured here; the parent Procedure's version history records the substantive evolution of the suite.	B.Rogers
1.4	15 May 2026	Suite-wide cross-reference rule change. All hyperlinks pointing at sibling suite documents removed; each cross-reference now appears as the document title only, plain text with a light-grey placeholder highlight, indicating where a working link will be inserted once the District website hosts the suite. Working external URLs (legislation, Service Victoria, Rotary International learning, rotary.org/dei , rotary9815.org.au/privacy) are unchanged. The body-text parenthetical filename references that previously sat beside each cross-reference have been removed; the Registry of CSW Documents (in preparation) is the canonical record of filenames and versions across the suite.	B.Rogers