



MANDATORY REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE POLICY

Responsibility

In the Northern Territory reporting suspected child abuse and neglect is everybody's responsibility.

Any person must make a report if they reasonably believe a child has been harmed or exploited or that a child is likely to be harmed or exploited. This is a legal responsibility mandated in legislation and is called mandatory reporting. The purpose of imposing a legal obligation to report suspected child abuse, is to protect children/young people from further harm. Individuals are safeguarded under the law from any legal liability if they make a report in good faith.

The Northern Territory Government agency responsible for child protection is the Department of Children and Families. http://www.childrenandfamilies.nt.gov.au/Child_Protection/Child_Abuse/

Legislation

The legislation relevant to the Northern Territory is the *Care and Protection of Children Act*. http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nt/num_act/capoca200737o2007315/

What is child abuse?

In the Northern Territory a child is a person under the age of 18 years.

Broadly speaking, child abuse is about an adult/parent/caregiver causing significant harm or injury to a child. This is through the actions or behaviour of that person, including events that are repeated across time and/or inaction by that person resulting in the failure to protect a child from harm.

The types of harm that a child can experience are:

- **Physical Harm** – non accidental physical injuries or actions of a parent or caregiver that are likely to result in a child being injured.
- **Sexual Harm** - any sexual activity involving a child and includes a child being encouraged to do, watch and hear sexually explicit activity.
- **Emotional Harm** – the failure to provide for a child's emotional needs for safety and security and their emotional development through the negative behaviour of a parent or caregiver towards a child.
- **Neglect** – when a child's basic needs (eg. food, shelter, clothing, safety, health, education) are repeatedly unmet by their parent or caregiver.

<http://childrenandfamilies.nt.gov.au/library/scripts/objectifyMedia.aspx?file=pdf/54/35.pdf>



Darwin Netball Association

Reporting child abuse and neglect

Any member of the Darwin Netball Association who through their involvement with Darwin netball reasonably believes that a child has been harmed or exploited or that a child is likely to be harmed or exploited must make a report by contacting the:

24 hour toll free number
1800 700 250