



Department of  
Creative Industries,  
Tourism and Sport

# Child Safeguarding

Football West  
Club Development Conference

11 April 2026

**Not for further distribution**



# Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Aboriginal people throughout Western Australia as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands, waters, and communities in which we operate.

We are committed to developing strong working relationships with Aboriginal people and are proud to celebrate the cultural diversity, strength and resilience of Aboriginal people, and are deeply grateful for the contributions they make to the State of Western Australia.

We pay our respects to all Aboriginal people and their cultures, and to Elders past and present.



# Before we get started

If the content in this presentation raises issues for you, please consider reaching out to the following organisations for support.

24-hour telephone assistance is available through:

 **Lifeline** **13 11 14**

 **kidshelpline**  
Anytime | Any Reason

**1800 551 800**

**1800RESPECT**  
NATIONAL DOMESTIC FAMILY AND  
SEXUAL VIOLENCE COUNSELLING SERVICE


**1800 737 732**

 **Beyond  
Blue**

**1800 224 636**

 **MensLine  
Australia** **1300 789 978**

# Overview of today's session topics

- CITS Child Safeguarding Implementation Unit
  - Overview - Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse
  - Statistics from the Australian Child Maltreatment Study
  - Child safeguarding risks to children in sport
  - Indicators of child abuse
  - What is grooming?
  - Preventing child abuse
  - Disclosures of abuse/harm
  - Responding and reporting to disclosures and complaints
  - Group discussion with scenarios
- 

# Child Safeguarding Implementation Unit

Department of Creative Industries, Tourism and Sport

- Support organisations to implement child safe policies and practice
- Provide guidance on matters relating to child safety
- Respond and provide assistance



# FINAL REPORT

Sport, recreation, arts, culture,  
community and hobby groups



Royal Commission  
into Institutional Responses  
to Child Sexual Abuse

VOLUME 14

*“This person **took the best of my teenage years** and my [sports] years, stripped me of any and all confidence and **forced me to grow up** much sooner than I should have had to.*

*But worst of all **he took from me my love, passion and commitment for ... the sport** that I dedicated my life to since I was five, the sport that I gave everything to in the hope that one day it would become my life ...*

*I had **nothing but fear of the sport**, fear of the people who were supposed to be our protectors and role models...”*



- National Principles for **Child Safe Organisations**
- Ombudsman WA appointed as **independent oversight** body
- Aligns with **Royal Commission**
- All organisations should consider **steps to take to implement** National Principles

# Australian Child Maltreatment Study (2023)

8500

Australians were randomly selected. We collected data via computer-assisted telephone interviews in 2021.

62%  
of participants had experienced maltreatment in childhood

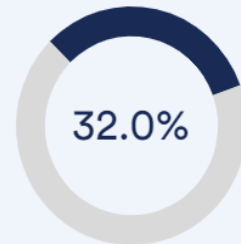
Across the Australian population (ages 16-65+) the study found:

## Overall national prevalence breakdown by sex:

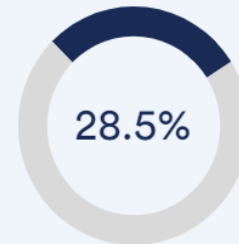
More than 1 in 3 girls experience:  
child sexual abuse



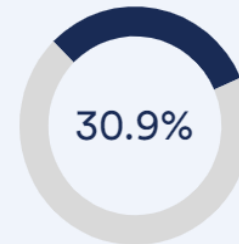
Almost 1 in 5 boys experience:  
child sexual abuse



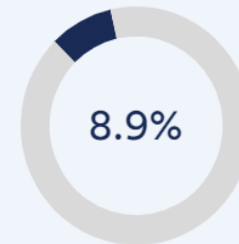
experienced physical abuse



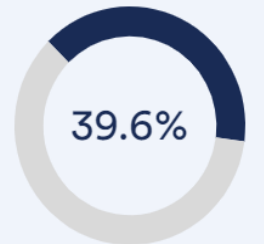
experienced sexual abuse



experienced emotional abuse



experienced neglect



experienced exposure to domestic violence

In childhood before the age of 18\*

# Why is there risk to children in sport?

High level of child participation

Valuing performance over child safety

Normalised violence and harassment

Coaching relationship

Opportunities to be alone with a child

Valuing adults over children

Erosion of personal boundaries

Targeting of vulnerable children

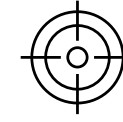
Societal value in sport

# What is Grooming?

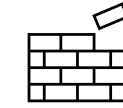
**‘actions deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and establishing a relationship with a child, to lower the child’s inhibitions in preparation for abuse’**



# How does grooming occur?



**Target**



**Building trust**



**Isolate**

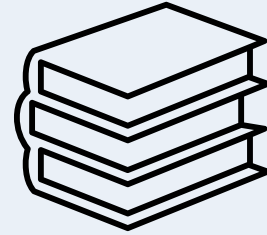


**Sexualisation**



**Control**

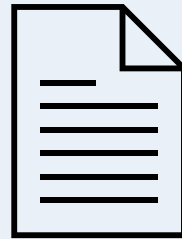
# Preventing and reporting grooming



**Education**

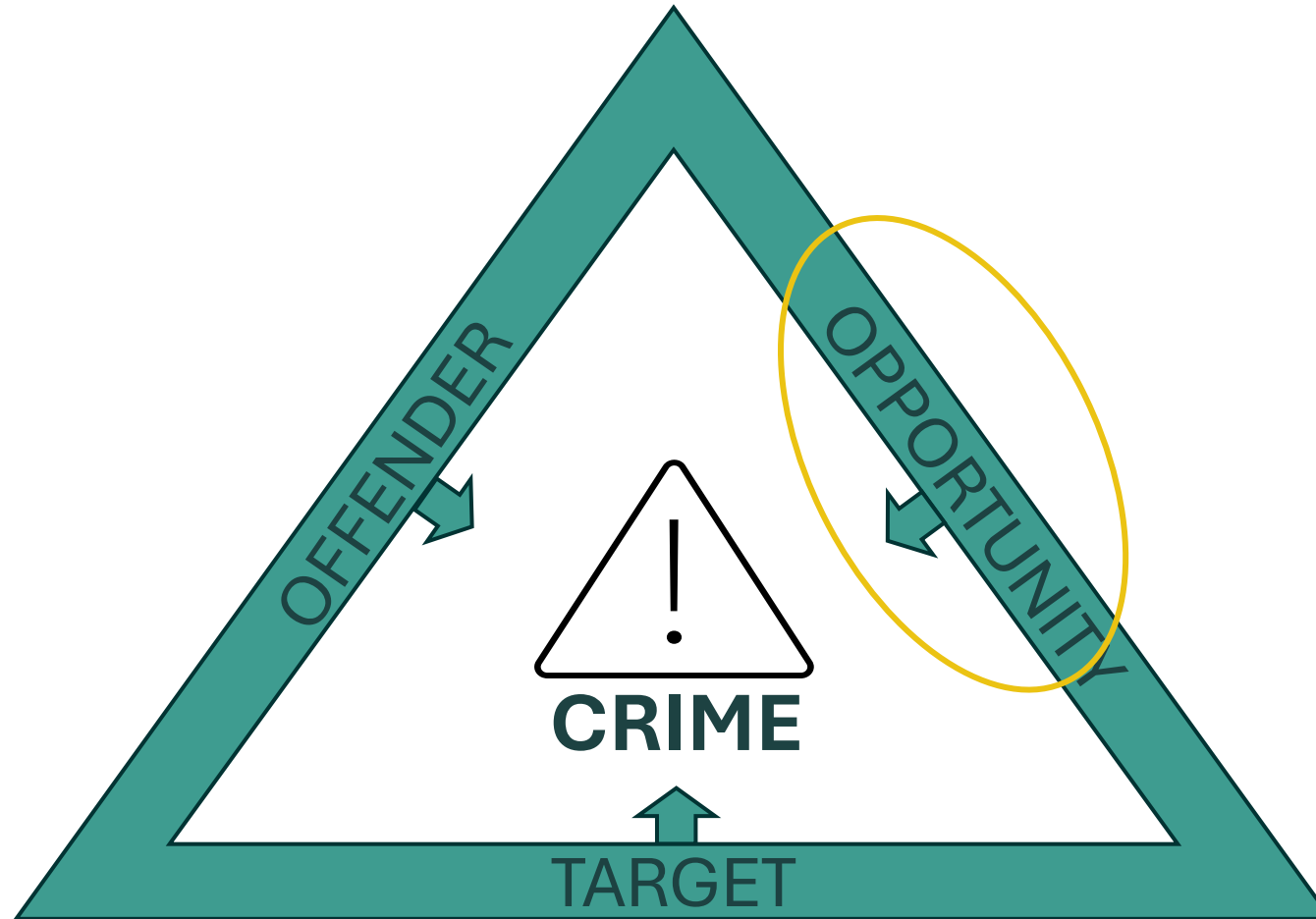


**Identification**



**Reporting**

# Your role in preventing child abuse



# How to prevent Child Abuse

Strong leadership and child  
safe culture

Clear policies, procedures  
and reporting

Safe people and  
environments



# What is Disclosure?

Disclosure refers to a child or young person (or an adult) letting another person know about abuse they have experienced or are experiencing.

The disclosure of abuse by a child or young person is often motivated by the need for safety, protection, support, or information.



# SAFER steps for responding to a disclosure from a child or young person

1 Stay calm 

2 Ask open questions 

3 Focus on safety 

4 Explain next steps 

5 Report 

# Reporting

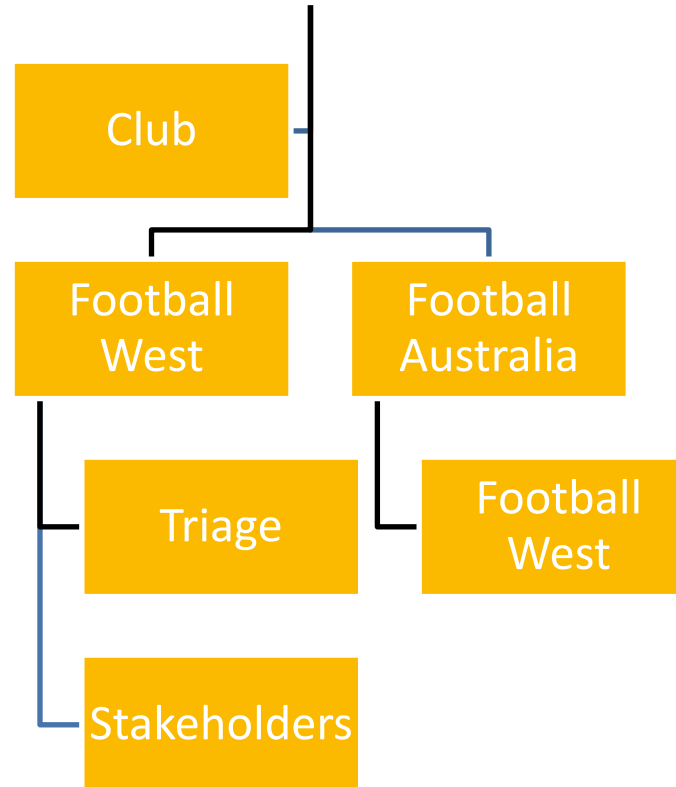


## Western Australia Police

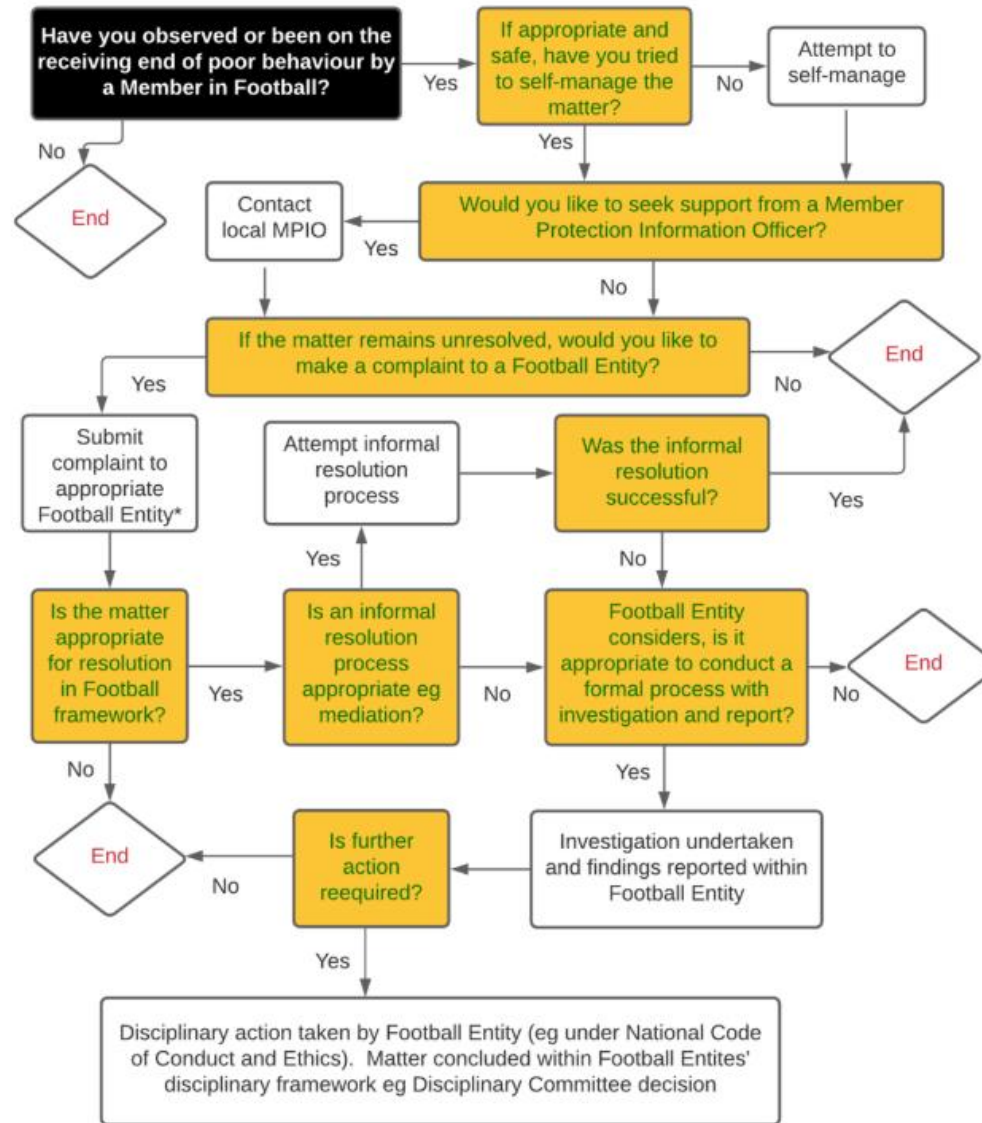
*Non-urgent police assistance Ph: 131 444*

**Department of Communities**

1800 273 889



# Complaints Flow Chart



## Reporting to authorities

If you have an urgent concern about the safety, health or welfare of a child, contact **emergency services on 000** immediately.

If you have reasonable grounds to suspect a child has been or may be at risk of harm or abuse, contact **local police on 131 444** and you can request to speak to a member of the Child Abuse Squad.

If you have concerns for a child's wellbeing and welfare, contact the **Department of Communities on 1800 271 889**.

# Safe 2 Say

WA Police Safe2Say platform enables you to anonymously report sexual crimes, including child abuse matters



**Questions?**

**Contact us:**

[childsafeguarding@cits.wa.gov.au](mailto:childsafeguarding@cits.wa.gov.au)

