

Safe People, Safe Places Factsheet

Health and Safety Directorate



In an emergency the principal should:

Do not delay in following up any alleged indecent or sexual assault between students.

1. Contact Triple Zero (000)
2. Contact the Incident Report and Support Hotline on 1800 811 523 to report incidents and seek advice.

Advice for Principals and Staff

Your school may be required to report an incident to police where a student has alleged to have been followed, approached or assaulted by a known or unknown member of the public. These incidents often involve students being approached by strangers in vehicles.

It is important to accept all such reports as genuine.

Immediate Response

- Reassure the victim(s) and any witnesses that they are in a safe place at school.
- Allow the victim(s) and any witnesses to provide their own recollection of the incident(s) by not using leading questions. Consider separating the victim(s) and any witnesses.
- Establish and record exact descriptions of any vehicle or person of interest and location of the incident.
- Contact the police via the local Police Station or Police Assistance Line (131 444) and provide relevant details. Request that police attend your school to obtain further details.
- Provide writing material to the victim(s) and any witnesses to record information in their own words.
- Contact the parents or carer of the victim(s) and any witnesses.
- Provide appropriate support and privacy to the victim(s) and any witnesses.

When Police Arrive

- Provide a private room for police to interview the victim(s) and any witnesses.
- In the absence of the victim's parents, allow a member of staff to support the victim with police but do not interfere with the police questions.

Further Actions

- Contact the Incident Report and Support Hotline on 1800 811 523 to report the matter and seek further advice.
- Contact the Department's Media Unit on 9561 8501.
- Contact your Director PSNSW.
- Create your own record of the incident and note when it became known to you. Record the actions you took and the times when they occurred. Accurately record the child's initial statement to you and who they had spoken to prior to you. Record all observations including the emotional state of the child.

Advice for Principals and Staff (continued)

- Provide ongoing support to the child through appropriate counselling.
- Consider advising the school community that they need to be especially vigilant at the current time. (Speak to your Director PSNSW about this option.)
- Contact and seek advice from the Department's Media Unit.
- Be conscious that any statements may find their way into the public domain.
- Use the following 'Proactive message for the school community' in your communications with students, parents and carers.

Message to share with your school community

- Make sure your parents or another adult you know is aware of where you are at all times. Always walk straight home or to the required destination. Walk near busier roads and streets, or use paths where there are a lot of other people.
- Know where safe places are – a shop, service station, police station, library or school. If you are frightened, you should go to one of these places and ask them to call the police.
- Learn about safe adults you can look for and talk to if you need help – police officers, teachers at school, adults you know and trust.
- Don't talk to people you don't know and never get into a car with someone you don't know. If a car stops on the side of the road and you don't know the person inside, do not stop.
- If you are scared and can use a phone, call Triple Zero (000) and tell them you are scared.
- If someone tries to grab you, yell out, 'Go away, I don't know you!' This lets other people know you have been approached by someone you don't know.

Be mindful that police will treat the matter as serious and may proactively release information to the public via police media.