



Guidelines on responding to a child who has disclosed they have been abused



ENGLAND
HOCKEY

Policy no AFHC CP28v4

- Do not panic- react calmly so as not to frighten the child
- Acknowledge that what the child is doing is difficult, but that they are right to confide in you
- Reassure the child that they are not to blame
- Make sure that from the outset you can understand what the child is saying
- Be honest straight away and tell the child that you cannot make any promises that you will not be able to keep
- Do not promise that you will keep the conversation a secret. Explain that you will need to involve other people and that you will need to write things down
- Listen and believe the child; take them seriously
- Do not allow your shock or distaste show
- Keep any questions to a minimum but clarify any facts or words that you do not understand- do not speculate or make assumptions
- Avoid closed questions (ie questions which invite yes or no answers)
- Do not probe for more information than is offered
- Encourage the child to use their own words
- Do not make negative comments about the alleged abuser
- End the disclosure and ensure that the child is either being collected or is capable of going home on their own
- Do not approach the alleged abuser