

What to do if you suspect a girl member is being abused

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Legal responsibility:

You have a legal responsibility to notify your local child protection agency or the police when you suspect that a child is in need of protection.

Girl protection adviser:

Your provincial girl protection adviser can provide advice on how to proceed or to discuss your concerns. Her name and contact information is available from your provincial office. Contact information for the provincial offices is found on www.girlguides.ca and in the Appendices of Safe Guide.

If a girl comes to you with information:

- ***Believe the girl***

It is unusual for a child to imagine/make up stories of abuse.

Your relationship has allowed for this girl to open up to you – believe her.

- ***Listen openly and calmly***

Do not judge, voice opinions or show emotion other than trust and support.

Talk to the girl in an area that allows for private conversation but is within view of another Guider.

- ***Reassure the girl***

Let her know that you believe and trust her.

Do not promise that you will 'keep her secret'.

Assure her that you will try to get her the right kind of help.

Let her know that you must share the information with someone in order to get her help.

- ***Write down the facts***

Write your notes as soon as possible, using the girl's own words.

Make your notes as detailed as possible.

Do not ask questions or try to clarify the details.

- ***Report to your local child protection agency or the police***

Reporting is to be done within 24 hours.

Confidentiality is essential. Do not discuss the situation with anyone else. Provide your

fellow Guiders with only the information they require to understand the situation and support the girl in the unit.

Complete and submit the GP.01 Form. (If it involves an adult member, complete the GP.02 as well).

- ***Support***

Reporting abuse is never easy, even when you know it is necessary.

Remember that your girl protection adviser is available to provide support for you and other Guiders as requested.

Assisting a girl member in reporting potential abuse

If a girl member becomes aware of a situation and suspects that a child may be in need of protection from potential abuse, it must be reported. She can report the suspected abuse herself. However, she may approach a Guider for assistance. The Guider **MUST** help her to report the situation and keep the information in confidence.