

HEALTH PRACTITIONER

Health Practitioners play their part to protect and care for children and young people in their community by being informed of the links between abuse, early intervention and prevention, as well as being accessible and supportive of families who need assistance.

Share your knowledge in your community to increase awareness of child development, and how adults can support this.

Become informed on the links between abuse, early intervention and prevention. Seek out the opinions of child abuse prevention experts.

Be family-friendly by welcoming children with a smile. The provision of a play area and baby change facilities in your health centre or waiting room demonstrates the value of children and supports families' accessing your service.

Ensure health services are accessible to isolated families by providing outreach. Advocate for free or low cost transport as a means of assistance.

Ask all parents how they're coping and talk to them about the challenges of parenting. Support parents to improve their parenting skills. Introduce them to family support services and parenting courses. Explain that they don't have to wait until they have problems before they can open themselves to learning more.

Share a directory of local services in your health centre and surrounding areas. By improving familiarity and simplifying processes for accessing support, families are assisted in seeking help where and when it's needed.

Develop child focused policies and procedures for your practice, health centre or hospital. A child protection policy should promote wellbeing and early intervention practices. It should provide information on how to recognise and document the signs and symptoms of child abuse, and how to respond in accordance with state/territory mandatory reporting legislation.

A code of conduct for working with children and young people is another practical tool for promoting clear and consistent roles and behaviour. When implemented and supported consistently, these policies work to protect children, workers and the organisation.

Engage with children and young people: as well as investigating symptoms or problems, it is important to talk with young people about their experiences. By using age-appropriate language and listening to what they have to say, you will build trusting relationships.

Think about safe and respectful ways to be an active bystander if you see an adult being inappropriate towards a child or young person.

