

# RESPONSE TRAFFIC LIGHT

## ABUSIVE BEHAVIOUR

**Anything that indicates abuse of a child or young person may be taking place.**

### OBSERVATION

Any disclosures or indicators of abuse, whether physical, sexual, neglect or emotional, should be escalated.

### NON-ACCIDENTAL BRUISES, WELTS, CUTS, ABRASIONS ROPE BURNS, BROKEN BONES

- These are more likely on the on the buttocks, trunk, genitals, ears, neck, top of shoulders and back of hands.
- Bruising caused by a weapon is more likely to be an unusual shape and the bruise will have hard edges.
- Non-accidental burns - particularly on soles of feet, hands, buttocks. Burns that are a particular shape e.g. cigarette burns or from an element.
- Immersion burns where parts of a child's body has been placed in hot water.

### SIGNS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

- Witnessing sexual touching between an adult and child/young person and child.
- Adults / young people engaging in non-touching sexual behaviour with children or younger people, including online or verbal sexual behaviours.

### INAPPROPRIATE PHYSICAL CONTACT

Physical contact is inappropriate if it:

- includes touching the groin, genital area, buttocks, breasts or any part of the body that may cause distress or embarrassment
- frightens, distresses or embarrasses a child
- destroys their trust
- occurs in a private place.

### SIDE LINE ABUSE DIRECTED AT A SINGLE CHILD

- This may include threats or humiliation.

### SIGNS OF NEGLECT

- Untreated medical issues and injuries, signs of malnourishment.

### ACTION

For emergencies or where there is imminent risk, act immediately by calling Police on 111 or Oranga Tamariki - Ministry for Children on 0508 326 459.

For all other cases act as soon as possible by reporting to your CPA, completing the brief reporting template, and lodging your concern within 48 hours to the Oranga Tamariki - Ministry for Children.

Oranga Tamariki - Ministry for Children contact details  
Phone: 0508 326 459 (24/7)  
Email: [contact@mvcot.govt.nz](mailto:contact@mvcot.govt.nz)

## UNSAFE BEHAVIOUR

**Concerning behaviour within rugby that puts children and young people at risk and must not be ignored.**

### OBSERVATION

- Side-line behaviour that is persistently aggressive but not directed at a single player.
- Training that harms a child physically-inappropriate to age and ability of the child, encouraging crash diets or dehydration to lose weight.
- Lack of appropriate boundaries in teams. For example, children weighing in naked, being in showers with adults.
- Insisting on hugging, touching, tickling, kissing, wrestling or holding a child/young person, especially when this attention is not wanted.
- Creating opportunities to get alone time with a child/young person.
- Buying children or young people gifts or food or giving them money for no apparent reason.
- Asking questions about the sexuality of a child/young person and talking about their developing body. This might include inappropriate sexual behaviour in front of children or using sexual names for a child like 'sexy' even in a joking way.
- Not respecting a child/young person's privacy when changing, using bathrooms etc.
- Accidental injuries that need to be reported and reviewed as part of health and safety.
- Isolation of a child/young person socially or physically.

*The more of these signs an adult or older child is displaying the more assertive you need to be in addressing them.*

### ACTION

For Orange signals, act within one week. Orange signals can usually be dealt with at Club/Union Level without reporting externally, though if in doubt contact Oranga Tamariki - Ministry for Children. This may include addressing the individual and/or taking a 'club wide' approach.

### ADDRESSING THE INDIVIDUAL

For example:

*To keep everyone safe we avoid one on one time with kids. I'll come with you to hurry them up in the changing room next time.*

### CLUB WIDE/ BLANKET STRATEGIES

Use your newsletters to remind people of rules. For example:

*Part of our Safe Clubs Safe Kids programme is having adults supervise children in pairs, parents please put your hand up for trips and if your child's coach needs an extra adult during games or training.*

Use your JAB or coach briefings to clear up any confusion about rules for people. For example:

*For any overnight tournaments planned please make sure you and your team have a copy of the travel and overnight stay protocols. These protocols keep everyone safe and help relieve some of the stress for those running events.*

Hang signs in changing rooms etc that remind people of the rules. For example:

*Adult supervision of children should be done in pairs.*

Hang signs that target children in your clubs encouraging children to talk with an adult if they feel unsafe.

If you require further clarification, you can contact Oranga Tamariki - Ministry for Children to discuss the situation.

## HEALTHY BEHAVIOUR

**Behaviour that is not cause for concern.**

### OBSERVATION

Discipline of children that does not cross into abusive behaviour and does not endanger the child in anyway.

### APPROPRIATE PHYSICAL CONTACT

Physical contact is appropriate if it:

- is used to assist in skill development.
- is required for the child's safety.
- occurs with the player's understanding and permission.
- is for the child's benefit, not adult gratification.
- occurs in an open environment.

For example, high-fiving children on their hand as long as the child is comfortable with it.

Physical contact between children and young people is not a cause for concern where it reflects:

- Normal curiosity about their own and other children's bodies that are age and stage appropriate.
- Young people flirting or developing mutual relationships with others of a similar age and stage.

Normal curiosity is usually characterised by being spontaneous, mutual, doesn't involve force, secrecy or pressure being used and is not compulsive or at the exclusion of other activities.

### ACTION

No action needed.

If you require further clarification, you can contact Oranga Tamariki - Ministry for Children to discuss the situation.