

Who can I talk to while there is an investigation?

During the investigation process you may feel a little overwhelmed or scared, which is completely okay. It's important to surround yourself with people you feel safe talking to and those who can update you on how the investigation is progressing.

Your parents or carers, the school principal, caseworker or a counsellor are all people who may help in this area.

They may need to speak with the Office of Safeguarding investigator who will be able to help you with any updates required.



What happens when the investigation is finished?

Once the investigation is finished, the investigator will call your parents or carers and let them know what the final decision of the investigation was.

The investigator and the person in charge (e.g. principal, caseworker etc.) will talk about what they think needs to happen to make sure that you and other children are kept safe and supported.

Your parents or carers may decide that it would be good for you to speak to a counsellor if you are still worried about things. This could be the school counsellor or someone outside of school.

It is important to tell someone if you are upset or scared so people can help you.

Websites that may help?

Kids Helpline: www.kidshelpline.com.au

What's Ok At Home: www.woah.org.au

Youth Law Australia: www.yla.org.au

Australian Human Rights Commission: www.humanrights.gov.au

Department of Communities and Justice: www.facs.nsw.gov.au

Office of Safeguarding: www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au



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What happens in an investigation

For children of the Diocese

www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au



What is an investigation and why is it happening?

When a child says that they have been hurt or mistreated by someone who works or volunteers in our Diocese, this is called an 'allegation' and is taken very seriously.

If this occurs, the Office of Safeguarding, who are the team of people at the Diocese that help everyone to keep children safe, looks at how serious the incident is and will start getting more information from people (including the child who was hurt). This is what is called an 'investigation'.

An investigation is needed to find out what happened and what needs to happen to keep children and adults safe.

What happens in the investigation?

Consent to participate

If you are part of an investigation, the investigator (the assisting adult) will:

- ▶ speak to your parents or carers to ask if they can talk to you
- ▶ give your parents or carers some information about what they are investigating and why
- ▶ let your parents or carers know that it is very important that they do not talk to you about it until the investigator has talked with you.

When an investigator comes to talk with you (most of the time this will be in your home) they want you to feel safe and supported. They will make sure at least one parent or trusted adult is with you during the interview.

The investigator will ask to make an audio recording of what you tell them so that they don't miss anything. You can also choose not to talk to the investigator, or your parent/carer may not want you to talk and that is okay. The investigator will then try to look at other ways they can hear your story.

Once the investigator speaks to you, they may also want to talk to other people to get more information. Once they have enough information, they will make a decision about what changes need to be made to make sure you and other children are safe and supported.

When an investigator comes to talk with you, they want you to feel safe and supported.

Who else knows about this?

The fewer people who know about the investigation, the better it is for everyone involved.

The investigator will tell everyone they speak to, including yourself, that it is important that they (and you) don't talk about the investigation with friends. The investigator will talk to you about who else you could speak to should you want to.

The investigator will also need to speak to the person who you said hurt you. They will ask them what they believed happened as well. When they question this person they will always make sure that you are safe.

