

# caah

## the children's hospital at Westmead

### NSW Centre for the Advancement of Adolescent Health

#### About NSW CAAH

The NSW Centre for the Advancement of Adolescent Health (NSW CAAH) works in partnership with NSW Health and other sectoral stakeholders to improve the health and wellbeing of young people aged 12 - 24 in NSW. The key focus areas of NSW CAAH include developing information and resources; capacity building to increase workers' skills and confidence in adolescent health; supporting applied research; advocacy & policy development to increase leadership and action for adolescent health.

NSW Centre for the Advancement of Adolescent Health has now become Youth Health and Wellbeing, NSW Kids & Families. For more information please visit [www.health.nsw.gov.au/kids](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/kids).

#### Adolescent Health GP Resource Kit, 2nd Edition

**Adolescent Health: Enhancing the skills of General Practitioners in caring for young people from culturally diverse backgrounds.**

By Peter Chown, Dr Melissa Kang, Dr Lena Sancic, Verity Newnham and Clin Prof David Bennett AO

A collaboration between NSW CAAH and NSW Transcultural Mental Health Centre

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Adolescent health problems are often complex and require a comprehensive, biopsychosocial approach. This Resource Kit is a General Practitioner's practical guide to providing health care to adolescents from culturally diverse backgrounds. This user-friendly Kit is an essential resource for promoting and providing better health care to our young people. This Kit outlines the skills needed for working with the young person and their family, while addressing the developmental, cultural and environmental factors influencing their health status.

This Kit is endorsed by the RACGP and GP NSW (formerly Alliance of NSW Divisions).

**To order a copy of the Adolescent Health GP Resource Kit, 2nd edition** please phone, fax, or email Kids Health at The Children's Hospital at Westmead:

Phone: (02) 9845 3585

Fax: fax the order form to (02) 9845 3562

Email: Kids Health

Price: \$35.00 for one copy  
\$30 for two or more copies (incl. GST,  
excl. postage and packaging)

# Youth Friendly General Practice: Advanced Skills in Youth Health Care

## Learning objectives

For participants to:

- Understand and apply medicolegal principles relevant to the medical treatment of young people, particularly those under 18 years, in order to ensure patient safety
- Develop a management plan for providing collaborative care
- Apply brief intervention strategies for addressing young people's risk behaviours and psychosocial problems
- Understand and apply the principles of culturally competent consultation
- Identify a range of strategies that could be implemented by a practice to achieve a more youth friendly and culturally sensitive service

## Session outline

### Unit One: Medicolegal issues in the medical treatment of young people

Topics/Activities	Session duration
1.1 Welcome and introduction	15 minutes
1.2 Key medicolegal principles	15 minutes
1.3 Application of key medicolegal principles	40 minutes
1.4 Skills practice: documenting competency assessment and applying medicolegal principles	50 minutes

### Unit Two: Intervention strategies and managing collaborative care

Topics/Activities	Session duration
2.1 Welcome and introduction	5 minutes
2.2 Intervention for health risk behaviours	10 minutes
2.3 Collaborative management of health risk behaviours	30 minutes
2.4 Promoting behaviour change	10 minutes
2.5 Motivational Interviewing	10 minutes
2.6 Demonstration: Motivational Interviewing	15 minutes
2.7 Skills practice: Motivational Interviewing techniques	40 minutes

**Unit Three: Creating a youth friendly and culturally sensitive practice**

<b>Topics/Activities</b>	<b>Session duration</b>
3.1 Cross-cultural issues in adolescent health care	15 minutes
3.2 Culturally competent consultation	30 minutes
3.3 Characteristics of youth friendly general practice	10 minutes
3.4 Making your practice youth friendly	30 minutes
3.5 Local services and referral pathways for young people	25 minutes
3.6 Conclusion, evaluation and distribution of reinforcing activity	10 minutes

# Youth Friendly General Practice: Advanced Skills in Youth Health Care

## Unit One - Medicolegal principles

### Consent to treatment for minors

- A minor is anyone under 18 years in all Australian jurisdictions
- People aged 18 years and older who are intellectually normal can consent to their own medical treatment
- Those under 18 years may still be able to consent to treatment if they are deemed competent to consent
- In NSW and South Australia, legislation exists that afford additional rights to minors to consent

### New South Wales legislation

Not clear cut

- A doctor cannot be charged with assault and battery if they examine or treat a minor aged 14 years and over and believe them to have been competent to consent [Minors (Property and Contracts) Act 1970 s49]
- The Guardianship Act in NSW implies that a young person aged 16 and over can consent to their own treatment [Guardianship Act 1987 (NSW)]
- Bottom line: it is reasonable to assume that an intellectually normal 14 – 16 year old can consent to their own medical treatment, but you still need to be certain that they give informed consent

### South Australia

- A person aged 16 years or above can consent to their own medical treatment in the same way as an adult
- A person under 16 years can also give their own consent if two medical practitioners (or dentists) determine that they are competent to consent (the opinion of the second practitioner must be given in writing)  
[Consent to Medical Treatment and Palliative Care Act 1995 s6]

### Making a competency assessment

- A minor may be legally competent to consent to medical treatment if he or she 'achieves a sufficient understanding and intelligence to enable him or her to understand fully what is proposed'
- Ensure that language is not a barrier
- Consider age, level of independence, level of schooling, maturity, ability to express own wishes
- Consider cultural factors and cultural differences between you and the young person

### Competency means a FULL understanding of:

- What the treatment is and why it is necessary
- Any treatment options
- What the treatment involves
- Likely effects and possible side effects/ risks
- The gravity or seriousness of the treatment
- Consequences of not treating
- Consequences of discovery of treatment by parents/ guardians

### Confidentiality

- Is legally part of duty of care to patients
- Information divulged to health professionals must be kept confidential unless an exemption applies

### Exemptions to confidentiality include:

- Where the patient consents to disclosure
- Where the law makes disclosure essential, eg mandatory reporting, notifiable diseases, court proceedings
- Best interests of the patient (eg suicide risk)
- Public interest (eg homicide risk, intention to commit serious crime)
- Where necessary to treat patient (eg multidisciplinary teamwork)

# Youth Friendly General Practice: Advanced Skills in Youth Health Care

## Case study-Yasmin

Yasmin is a 15 year old girl attending your practice for the first time. She requests contraception and tells you that she has been going out with her boyfriend for 4 months and they are thinking of having sex. She does not want her parents to know.

*Discuss how you will make a competency assessment (5 mins).*




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You have assured Yasmin about confidentiality and its exceptions prior to taking a further sexual and psychosocial history. You ask her about whether she has had sex before and she says that she did have sex a few times with a previous boyfriend, 6 months ago. She says that most of those encounters were protected but that once or twice they did not have condoms. She has never been pregnant and has had no symptoms of STIs. Her previous boyfriend and her current boyfriend are the same age as she is and sexual activity was consensual. There is no history of unwanted sexual activity. You determine that it would be appropriate to offer Yasmin a Chlamydia test based on her sexual history.

*In relation to a Chlamydia test, discuss confidentiality (what your and Yasmin's obligations are in relation to a positive test) (5 mins)*




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Yasmin consents to a Chlamydia test, you discuss the oral contraceptive pill with her and prescribe it for her. Yasmin returns in 2 weeks, her Chlamydia test is negative and she has commenced the oral contraceptive pill. She has not had sex with her boyfriend yet. You ask Yasmin about her parents and whether they are aware of her relationship.

Yasmin becomes teary and eventually reveals that when her older sister, now 19, had a boyfriend at the age of 16, her father 'beat her' and her parents kicked her out of home.

*Discuss how you will further assess abuse or neglect within Yasmin's family (5 mins)*




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Yasmin reveals that her father has always been violent, especially after drinking. Yasmin is the 3rd of 5 children, the younger two are aged 10 and 12 years. Yasmin's father has mostly been violent towards her mother, but has occasionally hit the children when they have been 'naughty'. This happens about once a month, and the 2nd youngest sibling (a boy aged 12) is the one who is usually 'in trouble'. Yasmin is fearful for herself and for her siblings at times. She says that some years ago when she was in primary school the school principal was concerned about abuse and there had been some discussion between the school, 'an authority' and her mother, however no further action was taken.

*Discuss whether and how you will make a report to a child protection authority in your jurisdiction (10 mins).*



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# Youth Friendly General Practice: Advanced Skills in Youth Health Care

## Reporting abuse and neglect

Relevant authorities and contact details for each state and territory if you suspect a child may be experiencing maltreatment are as follows. This resource sheet is updated on a regular basis, for the most up-to-date information, please go to <https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/reporting-abuse-and-neglect>

JULY 2011

**NCPD** resource sheet  
NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION CLEARINGHOUSE

## Reporting abuse and neglect

### State and territory departments responsible for protecting children

Compiled by Kate Rosier

This Resource Sheet provides contact details and links to the relevant reporting authorities in each Australian state or territory.

**Please note this Resource Sheet provides information for reporting suspected child abuse and/or neglect. However if you believe a child is in immediate danger, please call Police on 000 without delay.**

#### Defining child maltreatment, abuse and neglect

Child maltreatment refers to any non-accidental behavior by parents, caregivers, other adults or older adolescents that is outside the norms of conduct and entails a substantial risk of causing physical or emotional harm to a child or young person. Such behaviors may be intentional or unintentional and can include acts of omission (i.e., neglect) and commission (i.e., abuse) (Price-Robertson & Bromfield, 2009).

Child maltreatment is commonly divided into four subtypes:

- physical abuse;
- emotional maltreatment (including the witnessing of family violence);
- neglect; and
- sexual abuse.

For further information please refer to the NCPD Resource Sheet: *What is Child Abuse and Neglect?* <[www.aifs.gov.au/nch/pubs/sheets/rs6/rs6.html](http://www.aifs.gov.au/nch/pubs/sheets/rs6/rs6.html)>

#### Reporting child abuse and neglect

In Australia, state and territory governments are responsible for receiving reports of suspected child maltreatment from members of the public. Anyone who suspects, on reasonable grounds, that a child or young person is at risk of being neglected or physically, sexually or emotionally abused, should report it to the authority in their state or territory. This Resource Sheet provides information for the general public about how to report suspected child abuse or neglect. However it is important to note that in all states and territories of Australia, certain groups of people are required by law to report any suspicion of abuse and neglect of a child. Further guidelines regarding mandatory reporting can be found in the NCPD Resource Sheet: *Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse* <[www.aifs.gov.au/nch/pubs/sheets/rs3/rs3.html](http://www.aifs.gov.au/nch/pubs/sheets/rs3/rs3.html)>



# NCPA resource sheet

Please note that you do not need to be absolutely certain that abuse or neglect of a child has occurred to call these authorities. If you suspect a child is at risk of maltreatment, you may call the authority to discuss your concerns and they will decide whether an investigation is required.

Relevant authorities and contact details for each state and territory if you suspect a child may be experiencing maltreatment

Australian Capital Territory		
Reporting authority	Further services / information	Contact details
<b>Office for Children, Youth and Family Support</b>	<p>The Office for Children, Youth and Family Support contracts a range of services from the non-government sector to meet the needs of young people, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Youth Centres</li> <li>■ Youth Support Services</li> <li>■ Youth development programs</li> <li>■ Youth Plan and Sector development.</li> </ul> <p>Care and Protection services are responsible for facilitating coordination across government for the care and protection of children and young people.</p> <p>Care and Protection services include three Regional Offices and an After Hours service, who provide a continuum of service delivery to children and young people considered at risk of serious harm.</p> <p>If you are concerned about a child, refer to <i>Keeping Children and Young People Safe</i></p>	<p>Office for Children, Youth and Family Support &lt;<a href="http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au/ocyls">www.dhcs.act.gov.au/ocyls</a>&gt; GPO Box 158 Canberra City ACT 2601 Ph: 1300 556 729</p> <p>If you are a <b>mandatory reporter</b>: Ph: 1300 556 728 Fax: 6205 0641</p>
New South Wales		
Reporting authority	Further services / information	Contact details
<b>Department of Family and Community Services</b>	<p>The Department of Family and Community Services provides services across three key program areas—prevention and early intervention, child protection and out-of-home care.</p> <p>By law, Community Services must assess reports where a child or young person is or may be at risk of significant harm from abuse or neglect. When you make a report, staff will ask you questions to help them find out about the risk of significant harm to the child or children involved.</p> <p>For further information about the process of reporting concerns in NSW about a child's welfare refer to <i>Reporting Suspected Abuse or Neglect</i> &lt;<a href="http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/preventing_child_abuse_and_neglect/reporting_suspected_abuse_or_neglect.html">www.community.nsw.gov.au/preventing_child_abuse_and_neglect/reporting_suspected_abuse_or_neglect.html</a>&gt;</p>	<p>Department of Family and Community Services &lt;<a href="http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/preventing_child_abuse_and_neglect.html">www.community.nsw.gov.au/preventing_child_abuse_and_neglect.html</a>&gt; Head Office 4–6 Cavill Ave, Ashfield, NSW 2131 Locked Bag 4028 Ashfield, NSW 2131 Ph: (02) 9716 2222</p> <p><b>Child Protection Helpline: 132 111</b> (TTY 1800 212 936) for the cost of a local call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.</p> <p>If you are a <b>mandatory reporter</b>, you can call the Child Protection Helpline on 133 627.</p>



Northern Territory		
Reporting authority	Further services / information	Contact details
<b>Department of Children and Families</b>	<p>The NT Department of Children and Families provides or funds the following range of services to support children, youth and families:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Support services for individuals and families in crisis, including for victims of family/domestic violence and sexual assault, people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and families in financial crisis</li> <li>■ Family support and parenting support services</li> <li>■ Child protection services</li> <li>■ The Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) provides a counselling service to both adults and children who may have experienced (recently or many years ago) any form of sexual assault</li> <li>■ Foster care services</li> <li>■ Adoption services</li> </ul> <p>For further information about the process of reporting concerns about a child's welfare in the NT refer to the Child Abuse page of the Department's website.</p>	<p>Department of Children and Families &lt;<a href="http://childrenandfamilies.nt.gov.au/index.aspx">childrenandfamilies.nt.gov.au/index.aspx</a>&gt; PO Box 40596 Casuarina NT 0811</p> <p><b>To report instances of child abuse:</b> (24 hours) 1800 700 25</p>

Queensland		
Reporting authority	Further services / information	Contact details
<b>Department of Communities – Child Safety</b>	<p>Child Safety offers the following range of services to support children, youth and families:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Services for children and young people at risk</li> <li>■ Services for children and young people in care</li> <li>■ Adoption services</li> </ul> <p>For further information about the process of reporting concerns about a child's welfare in QLD refer to the Reporting Child Abuse page of the department's website &lt;<a href="http://www.communities.qld.gov.au/childsafety/protecting-children/reporting-child-abuse">www.communities.qld.gov.au/childsafety/protecting-children/reporting-child-abuse</a>&gt;.</p>	<p>Child Safety Queensland &lt;<a href="http://www.communities.qld.gov.au/childsafety/">www.communities.qld.gov.au/childsafety/</a>&gt; PO Box 806 Brisbane QLD 4002</p> <p><b>To report instances of child abuse:</b> South East: 1300 679 849 South West: 1300 683 390 Far North QLD: 1300 684 062 North QLD: 1300 706 147 North Coast: 1300 703 921 Brisbane: 1300 682 254 Central QLD: 1300 703 762 After hours (all areas): 1800 177 135</p> <p>If you aren't sure who to call, or for assistance to locate your nearest child safety service centre call Child Safety Services' Enquiries Unit on: 1800 811 810.</p>

# NCPA resource sheet

## South Australia

Reporting authority	Further services / information	Contact details
<b>Department for Families and Communities – Families SA</b>	<p>Families SA provides support and assistance to the community, especially those experiencing disadvantage or who are in need of care and protection. Services assist young people who offend or are at risk of harm and families and children at risk.</p> <p>For further information about the process of reporting concerns about a child's welfare in SA refer to the Protecting Children page on the department's website &lt;<a href="http://www.dfc.sa.gov.au/pub/default.aspx?tabid=249">www.dfc.sa.gov.au/pub/default.aspx?tabid=249</a>&gt;.</p>	<p>Families SA &lt;<a href="http://www.dfc.sa.gov.au/pub/Default.aspx?tabid=257">www.dfc.sa.gov.au/pub/Default.aspx?tabid=257</a>&gt; Level 7, 108 North Terrace Adelaide SA 5000 Phone: (08) 8124 4185 <b>To report instances of child abuse: 131 478 (24 hours)</b></p>

## Tasmania

Reporting authority	Further services / information	Contact details
<b>Department of Health and Human Services – Child Protection Services</b>	<p>The role of Child Protection Services is to protect children and young people who are at risk of abuse or neglect. Child Protection Services offers intake, response, case management and out of home care and adoption services.</p> <p>For further information about the process of reporting concerns about a child's welfare in TAS refer to the Child Protection Services webpage on the department's website &lt;<a href="http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/children/child_protection_services">www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/children/child_protection_services</a>&gt;.</p>	<p>Child Protection Services &lt;<a href="http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/children/child_protection_services">www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/children/child_protection_services</a>&gt; GPO Box 125 Hobart, TAS 7001 <b>To report instances of child abuse:</b> Ph: 1300 737 639 at any time Fax: (03) 6230 7821</p>

## Victoria

Reporting authority	Further services / information	Contact details
<b>Department of Human Services – Children, Youth and Families</b>	<p>The Child Protection Service is specifically targeted to those children and young people at risk of significant harm. The main functions are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ investigate matters where it is alleged that a child is at risk of significant harm;</li> <li>■ refer children and families to services that assist in providing the ongoing safety and well-being of children;</li> <li>■ take matters before the Children's Court;</li> <li>■ supervise children on legal orders; and</li> <li>■ provide and fund out of home care services, specialist support services, and adoption and permanent care.</li> </ul> <p>The Child and Family Information Referral and Support Teams (ChildFIRST) initiative provides access to integrated family services has ensured that vulnerable families and children receive early intervention and support services before statutory involvement.</p> <p>For further information about the process of reporting concerns about a child's welfare refer to the About Child Abuse page of the department's website &lt;<a href="http://www.cyf.vic.gov.au/child-protection-family-services/library/abuse">www.cyf.vic.gov.au/child-protection-family-services/library/abuse</a>&gt;.</p>	<p>Department of Human Services – Children, Youth and Families &lt;<a href="http://www.cyf.vic.gov.au/child-protection-family-services/library/abuse">www.cyf.vic.gov.au/child-protection-family-services/library/abuse</a>&gt; Level 9, 50 Lonsdale St Melbourne VIC 3000 <b>To report instances of child abuse:</b> <i>Metropolitan</i> Eastern: 1300 360 391 Southern: 1300 655 795 North &amp; West: 1300 664 977 <i>Rural</i> Barwon S/West: 1800 075 599 Gippsland: 1800 020 202 Grampians: 1800 000 551 Hume: 1800 650 227 Loddon Mallee: 1800 675 598 <b>All regions after hours: 131 278</b></p>

Western Australia		
Reporting authority	Further services / information	Contact details
<b>Department for Child Protection</b>	The Department for Child Protection offers a range of services including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Adoption services</li> <li>■ Case management &amp; co-ordination</li> <li>■ Counseling services</li> <li>■ Child migrant services</li> <li>■ Child advocacy services</li> <li>■ Homelessness services</li> <li>■ Parenting support</li> <li>■ Out of home care placement services</li> <li>■ Intensive in home Family support services</li> </ul> For further information about the process of reporting concerns about a child's welfare refer to the "If You are Concerned about a Child" page on the department's website < <a href="http://www.dcp.wa.gov.au/ChildProtection/Pages/Ifyouareconcernedaboutachild.aspx">www.dcp.wa.gov.au/ChildProtection/Pages/Ifyouareconcernedaboutachild.aspx</a> >	Department for Child Protection < <a href="http://www.dcp.wa.gov.au/Pages/Home.aspx">www.dcp.wa.gov.au/Pages/Home.aspx</a> > Central Office PO Box 6334 East Perth WA 6892 Ph: (08) 9222 2555 TTY: (08) 9325 1232  <b>To report instances of child abuse:</b> (08) 9222 2555 or 1800 622 258 After hours: (08) 9223 1111 or 1800 199 008  If you are a <b>mandatory reporter</b> : Ph: 1800 708 704 Fax: 1800 610 614

References

Price-Robertson, R., & Bromfield, L. (2009). *What is Child Abuse and Neglect?* (NCPC Resource Sheet). Retrieved from <[www.aifs.gov.au/nch/pubs/sheets/rs6/rs6.html](http://www.aifs.gov.au/nch/pubs/sheets/rs6/rs6.html)>



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