

## Dealing with Disclosures

Children who are being abused may choose to disclose this to a trusted adult in their life, which could be a library staff member like you. Disclosures are often part of a long, complex and upsetting journey for children, so it's crucial we make sure they feel listened to and supported. Unfortunately, lockdown has seen an increase in cases of child abuse and a decrease in children's access to trusted adults. If a child wants to speak out, it's so important that we're there to support them. Here's how you can help:

**Let children know you're listening** – [watch the animation and access our resources](#)

Adults don't always recognise, understand or react appropriately when children tell them about abuse. So, the NSPCC has worked with children and adults to understand how best to ensure children feel heard. These verbal and non-verbal interpersonal skills show you're listening and taking children seriously when they disclose abuse and/or neglect:



### 1) Show you care, be non-judgemental

- Listen carefully to what they're saying
- Keep your body language open and encouraging
- Reassure them that their feelings are important and they've done the right thing
- Only using open, non-judgemental Qs like 'tell me what happened' instead of 'why did you do that'

### 2) Take your time, slow down

- Give them the tools to talk - see Childline's [guidance for children asking adults for help](#)
- Let them go at their own pace and don't interrupt them
- It may take several conversations for them to fully disclose what's happened
- Remember that you can't promise to keep anything secret

### 3) Show you understand, reflect back

- Make sure the child knows you're interested in what they're telling you
- Confirm you've understood what they've said
- Use the language they've used to show it's their experience
- Explain what you'll do next

## What to do next

- **If a child is in immediate danger, call the police on 999 straight away**
- **Alert your Local Authority Safeguarding Officer**
  - If you're not sure who yours is, ask your line manager
- **Call the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000**
  - If you're worried about a child, you can contact our professional counsellors for help, support and advice, even if you're unsure
- **Report abuse online**
  - If you have concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing, you can use [this form](#) to tell the NSPCC helpline. It will be read within 24 hours by an advisor who'll decide what action needs to be taken
- **Learn more about how to protect young people and prevent abuse online**
  - Access safeguarding research and reports on the [NSPCC Learning website](#)
  - Our [online safety elearning course](#) will help you understand how children use the internet and how to respond to risks they may face online