

# What is a complaint?

A complaint can be about anything – an organisation's service, the way staff or another child or young person behaves, or the way a problem was handled.

## Speak up...

- If you don't feel safe.
- If you're being hurt.
- If you're unhappy with the way you're being treated.

**It takes courage to make a complaint. It doesn't have to be a negative experience.**

## Other organisations you can go to:

**Online and phone counselling for children and young people**

Kids Helpline – 1800 55 1800 or  
counsellor@kidshelpline.com.au

**Mental health support for children and young people**

headspace and eheadspace – headspace.org.au

**Complaints about a government organisation**

Search online for the Ombudsman's office in your State or Territory

**Information about children's rights**

Australian Human Rights Commission –  
childsafe.humanrights.gov.au

**Advice for parents**

Parentline or equivalent in your State or Territory – parentline.com.au

**Help for non-English speaking people**

Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) National – tisonational.gov.au

# Speak up and make a complaint

**You have rights!**

*It's always ok to speak up if you're being hurt or if you're unhappy with the way you're being treated.*

Contact details:

[childsafe.pmc.gov.au/children-speak](http://childsafe.pmc.gov.au/children-speak)

**It's always ok to speak up.**

**Speaking up is important. It can make a difference.**



Australian Government  
National Office for Child Safety



Australian Government  
National Office for Child Safety

# How to make a complaint...

## 1 Find support



### Ask someone you trust.

Like a parent, friend, carer, teacher or coach. You can make a complaint on your own or they can support you to do it. You can also get someone who speaks your language to help you.

### Your support person can help you find out how to make a complaint.

Talk to someone you trust in the organisation or place where the problem is or check their website to find out their way of handling complaints.

### Different ways you can make a complaint:

- face-to-face
- by phone
- in writing
- online.

## 2 Tell your support person



Try to be clear about your problem.

- Why are you unhappy?
- How has the problem made you feel?
- What would help fix it?

## 3 Make your complaint

You might feel nervous, worried or upset, just try your best.



You or your support person can take notes to remember what was said. You can also ask:

- Who will be told about your complaint?
- What will happen next?
- Who will follow up and get back to you?
- How long will it take?
- What can you do if the problem is not fixed and you're still not happy?
- How will they make sure you're not treated differently because you made a complaint?

Adults should always listen, answer your questions and treat you with respect.