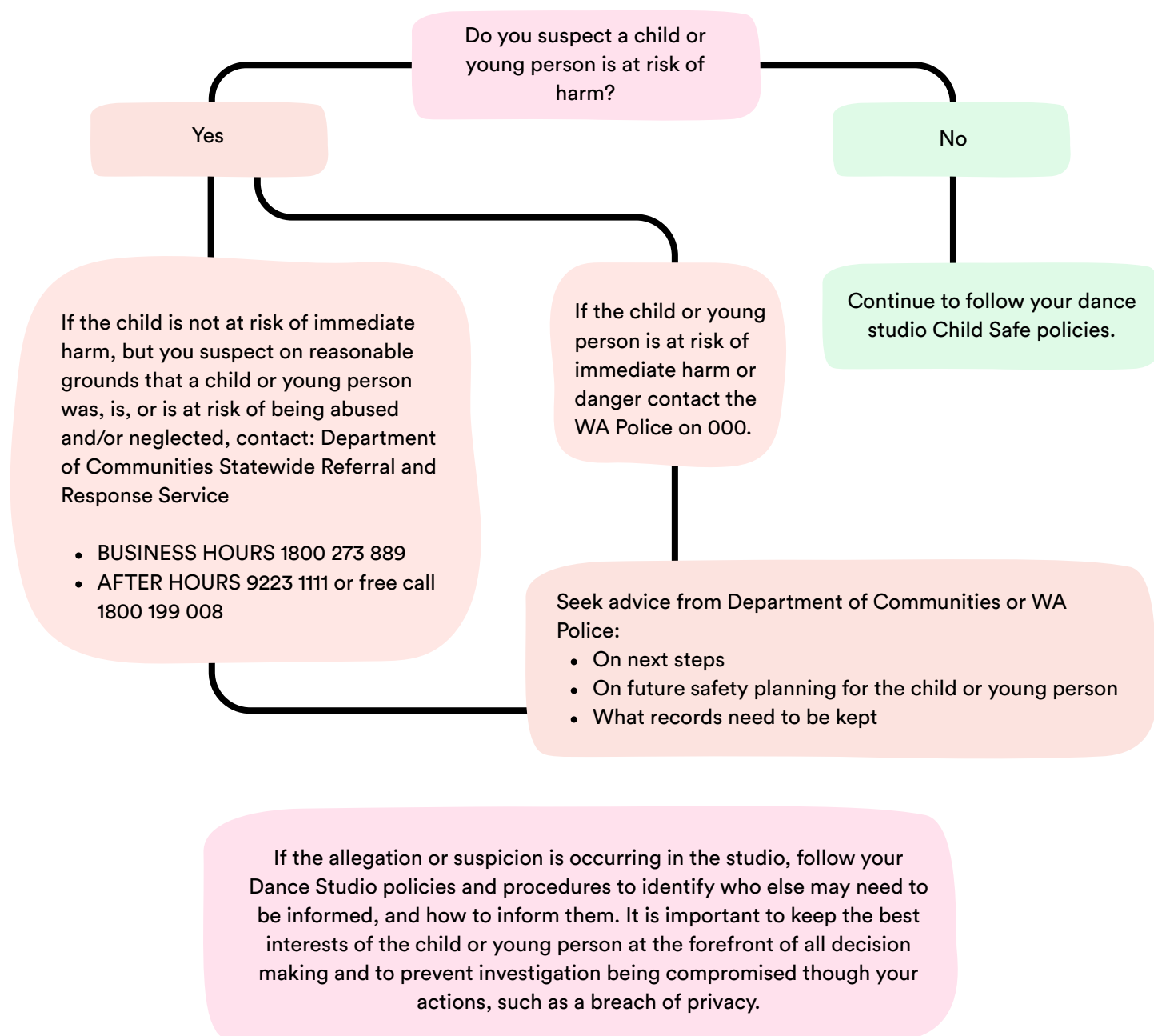


# Concerns for Child Welfare - Reporting Chart

## STEPS TO RESPOND TO CONCERNS OR DISCLOSURES REGARDING A CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON BEING AT RISK OF HARM

As a dance teacher, studio owner or manager, you play a crucial role in protecting children and young people. The chart below highlights the necessary steps to take.



**It is essential to look after your wellbeing, as the matter you're dealing with may be confronting and upsetting. Make sure you seek support if required. Continue to follow your Child Safe policies and procedures and consider legal action if required.**

## What do I need to look out for?

Your concern could relate to:

- Child Abuse (physical, sexual, emotional or psychological, neglect, exposure to family violence),
- Grooming (disregard for professional boundaries),
- Supply of alcohol or drugs, and
- Supply of medicines (except when permitted by law or with appropriate consent and under a valid prescription).

For more information on identifying abuse and neglect, visit the Department of Communities WA website.

## How can I support a young person? What do I need to know or ask?

The best course of action is to raise your concern with Department of Communities. If a student talks to you about worries or feeling unsafe or discloses they are experiencing or have experienced abuse:

- Believe them
- Listen to them without interrupting
- Let them know that:
  - It's not their fault
  - Telling you is the right thing to do
  - You will need to report to someone who can help
- Focus on the best interests of the student
- Write down what they said, using their own words
- You can use the TED acronym to guide your conversation:
  - Tell me more about that?

- Explain to me what happened?
- Describe to me what happened?
- Do not make promises to the student that you may not be able to keep
- Follow the 'How To Report A Concern' process
- Only discuss the child's situation with people dealing with the matter

If for any reason you are not comfortable with the response you get from the Department of Communities or the WA Police, and are still concerned about the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person, call back and ask to speak to a different person or a team leader.

## Common concern areas in dance

### Body Image and Disordered Eating

- Might look like: Weight fluctuation, baggy clothing mood changes, increase in injury/illness, decrease in energy reserves, social withdrawal.
- Concern: Student has developed a negative relationship with body, food, eating and exercise and is at risk of developing an eating disorder.
- How to address: Early identification and intervention are key. Discuss concerns with a parent/family member, encourage a GP appointment and refer for additional support.

### Abuse or Neglect

- Might look like: Unexplained or frequent injuries, sudden weight changes, habitual absences, inappropriate, long or baggy clothing, avoiding physical contact.
- Concern: Student has been, or is at risk of harm.
- How to address: Follow steps above.

## Common concern areas in dance (continued)

Dance teachers and students work closely together, however it is important to act within the scope of your role, model professional physical and emotional boundaries, and prevent behaviour that may be harmful to children and young people.

### Professional boundaries

- Might look like: A teacher who openly shares private and personal details about their own lives, or develops a special relationship with a student.
- Concern: Could be perceived as grooming, favouritism or emotional dependency.
- How to address: Encourage teacher to keep conversations age-appropriate, relevant to dance, and focused on learning.

### Conduct of Teaching Staff

- Might look like: A teacher using inappropriate language or tone, physical contact, bullying or harassment towards students or staff.
- Concern: Safety of young people, escalation and reputation damage.
- How to address: Find out about the Reportable Conduct Scheme and update internal Child Safe Codes of Conduct using Ausdance WA templates.

## Additional Support

- [Mandatory Reporting](#)
- [Cyberbullying](#)
- [Lifeline](#)
- [Support Act](#)
- [Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800](#)

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