

Guide | Concerns & Complaints

Simplified English Version

This public document must always be up to date and available via minus18.org.au

1. Why We Made This Guide

At Minus18, we want every young person to feel safe, included and respected.

This guide explains what you can do if something doesn't feel right - how to speak up about things you might be worried about and what we'll do to help.

We follow the laws in Australia that help keep children and young people safe.

Important: We are not a crisis service. If you're in danger or need help right now, please contact the supports below.



If you need help right now:

- **Emergency:** Call **000** (Police, Fire or Ambulance)
- **Child Protection** (Victoria): During business hours (8.45am - 5.00pm, Monday - Friday), call the Child Protection number for the local government area (LGA) that you or the child lives in. Find your local [Child Protection contact here](#).

After hours child protection (Victoria): Call **13 12 78** (5.00pm to 9.00am Monday - Friday, 24 hours on weekends and public holidays)

2. What Can I Speak Up About?

You can let us know if:

- Someone makes you feel uncomfortable or unsafe
- Something happened at an event that didn't feel okay
- A Minus18 staff member contacts you privately on social media
- You had a bad experience with a workshop or online session
- You're upset about something we posted online
- A product or service wasn't what you expected

Examples of things that are not OK

- Homophobia, transphobia or discrimination
- Bullying, name-calling or hurtful comments
- Being left out on purpose
- Sexual harassment or unwanted attention
- Threats or physical violence
- Bringing or using dangerous objects (like weapons) to programs or events
- Smoking, vaping, and drug or alcohol use at events
- Stealing or damaging someone's things
- Any kind of abuse - emotional, verbal, physical or sexual

3. What Do I Do If Something Feels Wrong?

You have the right to feel safe. If something doesn't feel right, we want to know.

Option 1: Talk to Someone At Minus18

You can speak to any representative of Minus18 (like a Youth Worker or employee) at the event or program where your concern has taken place.

You're welcome to bring a friend, family member or support person when you speak up.

The Minus18 representative will listen, and may be able to resolve the issue for you quickly. Otherwise, they'll work with you to find a solution.

If your concerns are resolved, you don't need to take any further steps.

Please note: Minus18 employees and volunteers are not allowed to talk to you on social media or via other private channels.

Option 2: Make a Complaint

If Option 1 did not resolve your complaint, or you wish to contact Minus18's Complaints and Leadership Teams directly, you can use either of the following options:

- **Contact Form**
Fill out the Contact Form minus18.org.au/contact/ and select the subject "feedback, concerns and complaints"
- **Email us directly**
You can contact us directly at complaints@minus18.org.au

4. What Happens Next?

If you speak up:

- We will listen
- We'll take your concerns seriously
- You will *not* get in trouble with Minus18 for making a complaint
- We'll look into the issue and keep it private (unless someone is in danger)

If you give us your contact details, we'll:

- Let you know we received your complaint
- Tell you how long it might take
- Contact you if we need more info
- Check in during the process
- Tell you the outcome if we are allowed

If you're not happy with the outcome, you can:

- Reach out again.

6. Where Can I Get Immediate Help?

We are not a crisis or emergency response service. We are only able to respond to your complaint during business hours (Monday - Friday, 8:00 am - 6:00 pm)

For immediate support Call 000 - Victoria Police and Ambulance

If you need support outside business hours, or are feeling distressed, here are some services you can contact:

- **After Hours Child Protection (Vic):** 13 12 78

- **Lifeline:** 13 11 14 (24/7 phone support)
- **Kids Helpline:** 1800 55 1800 (free, 24/7 for young people under 25)
- **Qlife:** 1800 184 527 (LGBTQIA+ peer support)

7. Words We Use

We use some words throughout this document that might be new to you. Here's what they mean.

Word	Definition
Children	Someone who is under 18 years old
Abuse	Abuse is when someone hurts you or makes you feel unsafe. It can happen in different ways: • Physical abuse – When someone hurts your body, like hitting, kicking, shaking or scratching. • Sexual abuse – When someone involves you in sexual activity without your permission, like touching private parts or showing you sexual images. • Emotional abuse – When someone uses words or actions to make you feel bad, like yelling, name-calling, ignoring you or making you feel unloved. • Neglect – When you aren't given the basic things you need to feel safe and cared for, like food, a place to live, or adult support.
Bullying	Bullying is when someone keeps hurting you on purpose. It can be physical (like hitting), verbal (like teasing), or emotional (like excluding you or spreading rumours). It can happen in person or online.
Discrimination	Discrimination is when someone treats you unfairly because of who you are. This could be because of your race, religion, background, age, disability, body size, sexuality, or gender identity. Discrimination is against

	the law.
Complaint	When you tell us something we did wrong, or something we could do better. If we upset you or made you feel uncomfortable, please let us know. You can email us, use our website form, write a letter, or talk to a trusted staff member.
Concern	When you're worried about something — even if you're not completely sure or don't have proof. It's okay to speak up.
