

Key concepts and definitions

Advocate	A person chosen as someone who will speak, act or write on behalf of the child or adult throughout the matter of concern process, to promote and protect the best interests and well-being of the child or adult involved.
Another entity	An entity that is considered the most appropriate for meeting a child's particular protection and care needs, for example, a particular medical or residential facility may be the most appropriate placement for a child with a disability (Child Protection Act 1999, section 82(1)(f)).
Approved carer	An individual who holds a certificate of approval as an approved foster carer, kinship carer or provisionally approved carer.
Emotional harm	The child's social, emotional, cognitive or intellectual development is impaired or at unacceptable risk of being impaired as a direct result of parental behaviour/attitude. This includes significant emotional deprivation due to persistent coldness, rejection or hostility. The harm to the child may have a cumulative effect and/or be observable in behaviours such as severe anxiety, depression, withdrawal, indicators of inappropriate attachment or bonding, self-harming behaviour or aggressive behaviour towards others.
Detrimental effect or risk of detrimental effect	<p>For a detrimental effect or risk of detrimental effect to be of a significant nature it must have, or be likely to have, more than a minor impact upon a child's physical, psychological or emotional well-being. It must be substantial, serious and demonstrable - that is, measurable and observable on the child's body, in the child's functioning or behaviour.</p> <p>A detrimental effect of a significant nature may also be indicated by the detrimental effect being likely to be long-term (more than transitory), or adversely affecting the child's health or well-being to an extent which would be considered by the general public to be unacceptable.</p> <p>In assessing harm, it is important to focus on the level of detrimental effect, or the risk of detrimental effect experienced by the child, rather than on the actions or inactions of the approved carer or staff member alone.</p>
Licensed care service	A service, operated under a license, to provide care for a child in the custody or guardianship of the chief executive. This includes licensed residential care facilities and foster and kinship care services.
Matter of concern	Any concern raised in relation to the quality of care provided to a child placed in an out-of-home care placement under the <i>Child Protection Act 1999</i> , section 82(1), where a breach of the standards of care is indicated.

Neglect	The child's basic necessities of life are unmet by his/her parent to such an extent that the child's health and development are affected, causing harm, or an unacceptable risk of harm, to the child.
Out-of-home care	Refers to placements with approved carers, licensed care services or another entity, as defined under the <i>Child Protection Act 1999</i> , section 82(1).
Physical harm	A child has suffered, or is at an unacceptable risk of suffering, serious physical trauma or injury of a non-accidental nature, due to the actions of his/her parent.
Recognised entity	May be an individual or organisation that is appropriate to be consulted about an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child's protection and care under an agreement between Child Safety Services and the entity.
Sexual abuse	Child sexual abuse refers to any sexual activity or behaviour that is imposed on a child by his/her parent or a household member. It includes the inducement or coercion of a child to engage in, or assist any other person to engage in, sexually explicit conduct or behaviour for the sexual gratification or profit of the person responsible. It also includes circumstances where there is an unacceptable risk that the child may be sexually abused.
Staff member (of a licensee or another entity)	A person employed by the licensed care service or another entity. This includes a range of possible contractual arrangements, such as fee-for-service and volunteers who may be associated with the service.
Standards of care	Refers to the legislated statement of standards (<i>Child Protection Act 1999</i> , section 122).
Support person	A person chosen as someone who will enable the effective participation of the child or adult who is involved in a matter of concern process. A support person does not act as a legal advocate or representative and does not intervene in, or influence, assessment procedures or outcomes.
Threshold for a matter of concern notification	Must meet the legislative definition of harm, that is, harm to a child, which is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's physical, psychological or emotional well-being, and it is immaterial how the harm is caused. Harm can be caused by either: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect• sexual abuse or exploitation.