

# Policy 4.5A | Completing an MRG

Policy Date:	May 2017
Review Date:	June 2018
Applies to:	Educators /Families
Related Policies and Forms:	4.5 Child Protection Policy
Material Sources:	In-Home Standards for In-Home Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 <a href="https://reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/s/article/ka32800000090WqAAM/Process-For-Completing-Mandatory-Reporter-Guide">https://reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/s/article/ka32800000090WqAAM/Process-For-Completing-Mandatory-Reporter-Guide</a>

## Policy Statement

NSW In-Home Childcare Services (NSWIHCS) is committed to ensuring each the safety and wellbeing of each child in Care.

## Strategies and Practices

### Steps

**Step 1.** From the [START MRG](#) page, select the risk type that best represents your concern for the child/young person. If you have more than one concern, start with the most serious concern.

NOTE: If the decision is 'Immediate report to the Child Protection Helpline', it is NOT NECESSARY to complete any additional decision trees. Contact the Child Protection Helpline and explain ALL of your concerns, even if you did not complete a decision tree for each one.

**Step 2.** Start with the first question in the selected decision tree. Apply the definition to the information known to you and determine whether a YES or NO answer best fits. Follow the arrow for either YES or NO to the next question or to a decision point. In the online MRG, the definition appears on the right of the screen with every question.

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**Step 3.** Apply the definition provided to EVERY question you are asked.

**Step 4.** If you arrive at a decision point, proceed to step 6.

**Step 5.** If you are uncertain whether the best response is YES or NO, you should consider the following steps in the order outlined:

- a. You may consult with a professional or refer to your CWU. It is possible that there is another way to consider the answer or that you already have sufficient information that a supervisor/colleague could illuminate.
- b. Are any other decision trees relevant? If so, complete those.
- c. You (or someone from your CWU or agency) may attempt to obtain the information that would determine either a YES or NO answer. This should not be construed as conducting an investigation, but simply as an effort to help make a reporting decision. Whether you do this depends on the piece of information that would help, how easy it would be to gather, your relationship with the child/young person or parent/carer, and your comfort and skill in gathering this information. You may consult with FACS or your CWU before deciding whether to attempt this step. In some instances, the necessary information will not require talking to family members at all, just checking records or talking with a colleague who may know the family. If you need to speak with the family, limit this to the specific piece of information needed, asking the most open-ended question possible.
- d. If the above does not lead to a clear answer, you must answer the question in the direction that is less likely to lead to a report because the threshold for reporting is a reasonable suspicion. Answering in a way that leads to reporting the concern in the absence of reasonable information to support the answer is inconsistent with the threshold of reasonable suspicion.

For example:

On the physical abuse decision tree, if you have some hint that the parent/carer uses a form of discipline that often results in significant harm, but not enough to answer YES, you should answer NO.

On the physical abuse decision tree, if you have some hints that the parent/carer is NOT following through with intervention to address a substance use issue that is contributing to volatile behaviour, but not enough to answer NO, you should answer YES.

**Step 6.** The decision point you arrive at will be the one that reflects the flow of your YES/NO responses. Please treat this as a GUIDE, not a PRESCRIPTION. You may be aware of unique circumstances that were not considered during the course of completing the decision tree. You may:

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- a. Follow the recommendation.
- b. Consider whether to complete an additional decision tree.
- c. Consult with your CWU, or another professional if you do not have access to a CWU.

NOTE: The MRG does not restrict a mandatory reporter from contacting the Child Protection Helpline. If you do report, tell the Child Protection Helpline about your actual path through the decision tree and the facts that supported your YES and NO responses, as well as any unique circumstances that led you to determine that a report was necessary.