

# How to respond to disclosures

Every disclosure of harm is unique and shaped by the individual's circumstances, culture, and needs, so responses may look different in practice. This guidance is meant to provide supportive principles rather than a rigid script to follow in every situation.

## LISTEN

*Ask yourself: is this a safe place to talk?*

*Be present.*

*Let them take their time.*

*Stay calm.  
Silence is ok.*

## BELIEVE

*Tell them:  
"I believe you."*

*"I'm sorry that happened."*

*"Thank you for telling me."*

*Use the language they have used.*

## CHECK SAFETY

*Ask them:  
"Do you feel safe?"*

*"Is there anyone else you'd like to tell?"*

*If they do not feel safe, stay with them and call 111.*

## SUPPORT

*Let them lead.*

*"What do you want to happen next?"*

*Offer to help find the right support agency.*

*Let them know you'll continue to support them.*

If someone is in immediate danger call 111.

If you or someone you know has experienced sexual harm, you can reach out.

0800 2B SAFE | 0800 227 233

Visit [safeguardingchildren.org.nz](https://safeguardingchildren.org.nz) to access information and e-learning modules on how to respond safely and effectively to disclosures of harm from children.

# #START bY BELIEVING



Find out more at [startbybelieving.org](https://startbybelieving.org) or visit [tautokomai.co.nz](https://tautokomai.co.nz)

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