

Child Information Sharing

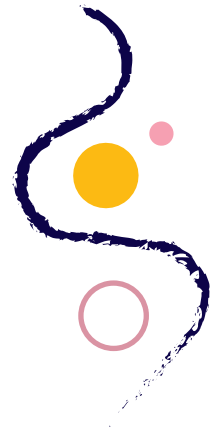


Why do you want to share my information?

Caring for Victorian children

To help all Victorian children live safe and happy lives, the Victorian Government is improving the way information is shared by certain professionals who work with children.

Many services already share information. The Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS) makes it easier for these professionals to see the full picture of the child they work with, helping them understand what they can share, and how to protect a family's privacy.



Many children will need support at some stage in their lives. From the time they're born, until they turn 18, the Child Information Sharing Reforms help children and their families get better support from professionals and organisations.

How does it help families?

How does it help professionals?

Child Information Sharing enables professionals who support and care for children (such as teachers and nurses) to share their knowledge about a child with each other, while also providing guidelines on what to share, and how to protect a family's privacy.

Example:



Taj has just changed schools. His new teacher, Sarah, notices that he's reluctant to speak up in class, and has trouble completing his schoolwork. By requesting information from Taj's former school, Sarah learns that he has dyslexia, which makes him hesitant to participate in class.

This is an example of information that can be shared through Child Information Sharing, as it allows Taj's teacher to create a lesson plan that supports Taj's learning needs.

Who are you sharing it with? How will it be used?

The type of information shared

Any information which supports the wellbeing or safety of children can be shared. This could be information such as professional support that the child is receiving, or insight about family relationships.

What the information is used for

Making sure you won't need to tell your story twice

Involving the right people who can help

Seeing the full picture

Helping children thrive

Who can share and access information?

Only certain people have authority to share information – not everyone. These people are professionals who have an obligation in caring for and protecting children, such as teachers, doctors, social workers and counsellors, nurses and police.

Example:



Lisa is a school nurse who's been working with Alice, and her five-year-old daughter, Jasmine, who has a minor heart condition. With Jasmine starting primary school, Lisa talks with Alice, and seeks her views on sharing information about Jasmine's condition with the nurse of her primary school, in order to ensure that they are aware of her needs. Lisa is aware of Alice's views before sharing the information.

This is an example of when a professional can choose to share information, and who they can share it with.

When can information be shared?

Information cannot be shared unless:

1

It will be used to promote the wellbeing or safety of the child (or group of children).

2

Sharing will assist in providing services, making plans or investigating or managing risks to children.

3

It will not endanger anyone, be legally prohibited or be excluded under the regulations.

For the full list of conditions which must be met before information can be shared, visit www.infosharing.vic.gov.au

How is information shared?

Legally authorised organisations and professionals can either ask for information or decide to share it.

Keeping information private and secure

Part of protecting children is ensuring their information is also kept safe and secure. Child Information Sharing supports existing privacy laws by telling professionals when they can share information under those laws. It is an offence to share confidential information when it isn't needed. In addition, all information must be securely stored by individual organisations. Training is provided to those authorised staff members, so they are aware of their responsibilities.

Example:

Andy is a social support worker who receives a request from the admissions officer of a high school to share information about Lee. Andy supported Lee's family when they were briefly homeless. After consulting with Lee and his family, Andy does not share information about their living situation, as he suspects it might be used to exclude Lee from enrolling at the school.

This is an example where professionals cannot share information – the admissions officer is not an authorised professional, and the information isn't being used to support the wellbeing or safety of Lee or his family.

Complaints

If you are concerned that information might have been shared in a way that is not permitted, you have the right to provide feedback and make a complaint.

To make a complaint in the first instance, speak to the organisation who shared the information. All organisations should have procedures in place for dealing with complaints.



If you are not satisfied that the matter has been resolved, a complaint may be made to:

The Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner if the complaint is about personal information

Website: ovic.vic.gov.au / Telephone: 1300 666 444

The Health Complaints Commissioner if the complaint is regarding health information

Website: hcc.vic.gov.au / Telephone: 1300 582 113

If you would like more information about the Child Information Sharing Scheme you can:

Call us: 1800 549 646

Write to us: CISandFVIS@education.vic.gov.au

Visit the website: vic.gov.au/child-information-sharing-scheme