

KEY ACTION AREA 2.4:

Staff and volunteers are attuned to signs of harm and facilitate child-friendly ways for children to express their views, participate in decision-making and raise their concerns.

OVERVIEW

It is extremely important for all SSA staff and volunteers to be aware of what the 'signs of harm' are. If they are ever concerned or have a 'gut feel' that something isn't quite right, they must understand the need to raise these concerns with the relevant person or people at your SSA.

Your SSA staff and volunteers **do not need to be experts** but they need access to relevant information (including escalation points), to enable them to keep children and young people as safe as possible, and know how to raise concerns if they suspect a child or young person is being, or has been, harmed. See [Template 6.4](#) and the Department of Communities [Recognising Child Abuse](#) resource for further information.

At the same time, children and young people need to be informed in child-friendly ways that are developmentally appropriate, that they are encouraged to express their concerns, share their views and have a say in decisions that impact them. This can be done informally through discussions, online through a [two-deep model of communication](#), and via other innovative methods that are identified through discussions and input from children and young people involved in your SSA.

Regular appropriate communication between adults and children and young people such as 'check ins' can encourage general feedback about day-to-day activities and build the confidence of children and young people to speak up if they have concerns that they are at risk of harm or have been harmed.



<p>EXAMPLE SSA ACTIONS TO WORK TOWARDS IMPLEMENTING KEY ACTION AREA 2.4</p>	<p>SSA staff and volunteers are informed about signs of harm for children and young people.</p>
	<p>SSA staff and volunteers know where to go for more information and support if they are unsure about the signs of harm for children and young people.</p>
	<p>SSAs enable and facilitate child-friendly ways for children and young people to express their views, participate in decision making and raise any concerns they may have.</p>
	<p>SSA staff and volunteers who work with children understand the developmental needs of children and young people.</p>
	<p>The SSA, alongside children and young people, identifies barriers to implementing key action area 1.4 and develops approaches to address these.</p>
	<p>The SSA responds to the specific needs of different groups of children and young people – whether this be directly or through the assistance and support of an external organisation(s).</p>
	<p>The SSA encourages staff and volunteers to proactively ‘check-in’ with children and young people.</p>

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If you need support:

- > [Mental health community links](#)
- > [Reporting flowchart](#)

