



Child Protection Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

All staff have a responsibility to report risk of harm concerns about children and young people, within their roles, and to provide support to children and young people. Child protection reforms introduce an obligation for government and non-government agencies to coordinate decision-making and delivery of services.

AUDIENCE AND APPLICABILITY

All Abbotsford Community Centre employees.

CONTEXT

The NSW Government recognises that care and protection for children and young people is a shared responsibility. It begins with parents, but when government support becomes necessary, it is not the sole responsibility of community services but a collective responsibility.

Keep Them Safe: A shared approach to child wellbeing provides the framework for parents, communities, government and non-government agencies to work together to support children and families.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND DELEGATIONS

Directors and Workplace Managers

Training

- Ensure all relevant staff have participated in child protection training.
- Ensure all staff are aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect of children and young people
- Ensure all staff are aware of their obligation to advise the Director or workplace manager of concerns about the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people that arise during the course of their work
- Ensure that all staff are aware of their mandatory obligation to report suspected risk of significant harm and of the procedures for doing so.

Reporting

- Use appropriate tools to inform decision-making, such as the online [Mandatory Reporter Guide](#), professional judgment or specialist advice, where there are concerns about risk of harm
- Determine whether concerns about the safety, welfare or wellbeing of children or young people constitute risk of significant harm and, if they do, report these to Family and Community Services



- Seek advice from the Child Wellbeing unit where there is uncertainty about whether concerns amount to risk of significant harm
- Contact the Child Wellbeing unit about the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people where:
 - There are concerns about risk of harm, that do not meet the threshold of Significant harm but are not trivial
 - The Mandatory Reporter Guide indicates this should be done
 - A case has been reported to Family and Community Services and did not meet the risk of significant harm threshold
 - There is an observable pattern of cumulative harm that does not meet the threshold of significant harm.

Supporting children and young people

- Establish effective systems in their workplace for
 - Child protection concerns to be identified in the course of the work of staff, reported and action taken, where appropriate, so vulnerable children and young people are supported
 - Reasonable steps to be taken to coordinate decision making and coordinate services to children and young people and their families with other local service providers, if required
 - Collaborative work with other agencies for the care and protection of children and young people in ways that strengthen and support the family and in a manner that respects the functions and expertise of each service provider
- Exchange relevant information to progress assessments, investigations and case management as permitted by law
- Use best endeavours in responding to a request for a service from Family and Community Services provided that the request is consistent with departmental responsibilities and policies.

Educators and Other Employees

Training

- Participate in child protection induction and in relevant updates. This includes all staff – Directors, workplace managers, Educators and off-floor staff (Cook), part-time, temporary and casual staff and those who join during the year.

Reporting

- Adhere to mandatory procedures for conveying risk of harm concerns to the Director or workplace manager.
- Adhere to mandatory procedures for reporting risk of significant harm to Family and Community Services
- Ensure, where they have reported any risk of significant harm concerns to the principal or workplace manager, that the Director or workplace manager has reported those concerns to Family and Community Services



- Report directly to Family and Community Services if they believe the principal or workplace manager has not reported risk of significant harm concerns to Family and Community Services, and they still have concerns about risk of significant harm
- Ensure that any relevant information that they become aware of, subsequent to a report being made to Family and Community Services or following contact with the Child Wellbeing unit, is provided to Family and Community Services or the Child Wellbeing unit respectively. If the additional information forms concern about risk of significant harm a report must be made to Family and Community Services.

Supporting children and young people

- Cooperate with reasonable steps to coordinate service delivery and decision-making with other relevant service providers
- Avoid undertaking any investigation of the circumstances giving rise to a report where risk of significant harm has been reported, without the express prior approval of the relevant Family and Community Services case officer
- Inform students, including apprentices or trainees, of their right to be protected from abuse and of avenues of support if they have concerns about abuse.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

- Directors and workplace managers must maintain a workplace register of staff participation, or they must sight individual records of staff. This applies to all staff including off-floor staff, part-time, temporary and casual staff.
- A record is to be kept of reports to Family and Community Services as confirmation that mandatory reporting requirements have been met. The report reference number should be recorded.
- The record and related papers are to be retained by Directors or workplace managers in secure storage and kept confidential. These records are to be provided to any successor.
- Where a reference number has been provided by the Child Wellbeing unit it must be recorded and kept.



CONSIDERATIONS

Education and Care Services National Law & Regulations	National Quality Standards & Elements	Links to other Service Policies	Other Documentation/ Evidence
84 85 86 87 109 110 114 115 155 170 176 168	2.2.3 5.1.1 5.1.2 7.1.3		Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 Crimes Act 1900 Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 Advocate for Children and Young People Act 2014 Education Act 1990 Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 Ombudsman Act 1974 Keep them safe Child Story Mandatory Reporter Guide NSW Department of Community Services Mandatory Reporting Guidelines NSW Child Protection Interagency Guidelines (2006) Strategies for Policy Implementation

ENDORSEMENT BY THE SERVICE

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