



Child Protection Policy

Major changes to this document: Rebrand.

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people who access Multicultural Australia services is paramount and that we:

- are compliant with relevant legislation, including the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000, the Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld) and relevant subordinate legislation, and
- strive to fulfil our responsibilities under the [National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020](#) by contributing to the development of policy, programs and evidence base and through the promotion of child safety, protection, rights and well being.

2.0 Statement of Commitment and Policy Statement

2.1 Statement of Commitment

We are committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people who access our services and/or premises. We aim to provide a safe, welcoming and friendly environment for children and young people.

Our staff and volunteers will treat children and young people with dignity, respect and understanding at all times, regardless of differences of ethnicity, religion, age, ability, gender, sexual orientation and economic circumstances.

2.2 Policy Statement

We work in a cross cultural environment with people from a wide range of cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds, and acknowledge that the understanding of what constitutes 'safety' and 'wellbeing' in relation to children and young people may differ according to the values, norms and experiences of each community. We will respect different religious norms and values but acknowledges that the safety and wellbeing of children and young people is paramount.

We will work actively to promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people within the communities with which we work through providing information, education, and support. We will also work to create a better understanding of cultural differences in organisations and agencies concerned with the safety and wellbeing of children through advocacy, information sharing and collaboration, as appropriate. In instances where we have provided information/support to external agencies all such data will be clearly recorded in the relevant family/child case notes for evidence based practice and follow up where required.

In the course of their work, our staff, volunteers and Board of Directors will strive to provide positive role models to children and young people and will conduct themselves in a manner consistent with their position as a representative of Multicultural Australia.

3.0 Principles to guide actions

The National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children is underpinned by the following principles that also inform this Policy:

- All children have a right to grow up in an environment free from neglect and abuse. Their best interests are paramount in all decisions affecting them

- Children and their families have a right to participate in decisions affecting them
- Improving the safety and wellbeing of children is a national priority
- The safety and wellbeing of children is primarily the responsibility of their families, who should be supported by their communities and government
- Australian society values, supports and works in partnership with parents, families and others in fulfilling their caring responsibilities for children
- Children's rights are upheld by systems and institutions
- Policies and interventions are evidence based.

4.0 Scope of Policy

All our staff, volunteers and Board of Directors must comply with this policy, and related procedures.

Please note that only staff and volunteers that are engaged in regulated child-related work must be blue card holders. For us this means all staff working in client facing roles.

Under Queensland legislation, we cannot require employees, volunteers or trainee students to hold a blue card or an exemption card unless they are providing child-related services that are *regulated* by the Commission's Act. For further information refer to our [Probity Procedure](#). However, as part of our commitment to provide a safe and welcoming environment to all children and young people who access our services or premises, and to facilitate staff participating in child-related activities outside of work where a Blue Card is required (e.g. activities at their child's school), we strongly encourage all staff, even those who may only have incidental contact with children and young people, to apply for a Blue Card at their own expense.

5.0 Implementing the policy and monitoring compliance

We will provide information, training and support to staff, volunteers, Board Directors and others, as appropriate, to ensure that they have the knowledge and skills required to comply with and implement this Policy and related procedures.

Information and training may be provided internally, e.g. through induction training, organisational updates, staff meetings etc. Records of attendance will be kept where internal information or training sessions are held.

Where external training or support is required, e.g. attendance at formal training courses, conferences and seminar attendance etc. This will be resourced through the relevant professional development budget.

Compliance with the policy and related procedures will be monitored by the Senior Management Team (SMT).

5.1 Breaches

Alleged breaches of this Policy (and relevant related documents) must be reported to the CEO or, where the CEO is the subject of the alleged breach, to the Chair of the Board of Directors.

Alleged breaches are investigated and may result in action being taken through the Multicultural Australia [Grievance and Dispute Resolution](#) Procedure and [Disciplinary Procedure](#).

Serious breaches of this Policy and related procedures will be referred to external investigation bodies and may result in dismissal.

6.0 External Reporting

Mandatory reporting does not currently apply to us. However, as a responsible corporate citizen, we have a duty to report suspicions or disclosures of harm to children and young people to the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women and/or the Queensland Police Service, as appropriate.

Please see [Receiving and Reporting Disclosures of Harm to Children and Young People Procedure](#) for more details.

In Australia, state and territory governments are responsible for receiving reports of suspected child maltreatment from members of the public. Anyone who suspects, on reasonable grounds, that a child or young person is at risk of being neglected or physically, sexually or emotionally abused, should report it to the authority in their state or territory.

However, staffs who have concerns about the treatment of children or young people in the course of their work should discuss this with their line manager before making any formal report as an individual.

7.0 Evaluation/Review

This policy will be reviewed not less than every two years to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with relevant legislation and National/International policy directions.

The policy may be reviewed more frequently in the event of major changes to relevant legislation and/or following any breach of the policy and/or related procedures.

8.0 Related documents

Internal Documents

- [Code of Ethics and Conduct](#)
- [Child Protection Risk Management Strategy](#)
- [Probity Procedure](#) and HR Blue Card Register
- [Receiving and Reporting Disclosures of Harm to Children and Young People Procedure](#)
- [Client-related Critical Incident Procedure](#) and [Report Form](#)
- [WHS Incident Reporting and Investigation Procedure](#) and WHS Incident Register
- [Recruitment and Selection Policy, Procedure](#), and related forms
- [Staff Induction and Commencement Procedure](#) and check lists
- [Grievance and Dispute Resolution Policy](#) and [Procedure](#)
- [Disciplinary Procedure](#)
- [Complaints Policy](#) and [Procedure](#)

Legislation and other External Documents

- [Child Protection Act 1999](#)
- [Child Protection Regulation 2011](#)
- [Working with Children \(Risk Management and Screening\) Act 2000](#) and related forms
- [Working with Children \(Risk Management and Screening\) Regulation 2011](#)
- [National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020](#)

9.0 Definitions

Safety For the purpose of this policy, safety means freedom from harm, injury or danger

Wellbeing For the purpose of this policy, wellbeing means having a good or satisfactory condition of existence in terms

of health, welfare, etc.

- Harm As defined by The Child Protection Act 1999 (section 9)
- 1) 'Harm' to a child is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing.
 - 2) It is immaterial how the harm is caused.
 - 3) The harm may be caused by –
 - a. Physical (e.g. hitting a child), psychological (e.g. name calling, insults, bullying; witnessing family violence) emotional (e.g. repeatedly saying something that upsets the child) abuse or neglect (e.g. not providing basic needs such as food and shelter, hygiene) or
 - b. sexual abuse or exploitation (e.g. sexual contact with the child).
 - 4) Harm can be caused by –
 - a. a single act, omission or circumstance: or
 - b. a series or combination or acts, omissions or circumstances.
- Child For the purpose of this policy a child is an individual under 18 years, as defined by the Child Protection Act 1999.