



Child Protection Policy

NOTIFICATIONS OF ABUSE



IF ANYONE AT THE SERVICE HAS SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE, CONSULT THE **DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITIES (CHILD SAFETY SERVICES)** TO ASSESS WHETHER A CHILD IS AT RISK OF SIGNIFICANT HARM.



WHEN SOMEONE WITH MANDATORY REPORTING OBLIGATIONS HAS REASONABLE SUSPICION OF ABUSE THEY NEED TO CONTACT THE **DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITIES (CHILD SAFETY SERVICES)**
1800 811 810

QUEENSLAND POLICE SERVICE

Southport Police Station
94-96 Scarborough St
Southport, QLD, 4215
(07) 5571 4222



**CONSULT THE SERVICE'S CHILD PROTECTION POLICY
FOR MORE INFORMATION.**

NQS

QA2	2.3.4	Educators, co-ordinators and educators are aware of their roles and responsibilities to respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect.
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National Regulations

Regs	84	Awareness of child protection law
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Objective

To provide a safe and caring environment for all children. We believe that the safety of children is paramount at all times. We aim to protect the child's rights from harm at all times. We also aim to defend the rights of the educators if a complaint is made against them and is found to be unsubstantiated. We will ensure all parties involved in this policy are made aware of their roles and responsibilities with child protection. We aim to provide education to all parties about their roles and signs of abuse and will ensure all requirements of child protection are being met.

Related Policies

Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
Record Keeping and Retention Policy
Physical Environments (Workplace Safety, Learning and Administration) Policy
Death of a Child Policy
Open Doors Policy
Family Law and Access Policy
Relationships with Children Policy
Tobacco Drug and Alcohol Policy

Who is affected by this policy?

Educators
Families
Child
Management

Implementation

Harm is any detrimental effect of significant nature of the child's physical, psychological, or emotional wellbeing.

Harm can be caused by physical, psychological, or emotional abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, exploitation, or shaken baby syndrome.

Indicators of abuse may be found in appendix 1.

In the following situations educators will report concerns to authorities:

1. If a child tells an educator that they have been or are being abused.
2. If you see a child being abused.
3. An educators observations of the child's physical condition behaviours or circumstances cause you to suspect that child abuse has happened or is likely to happen.
4. If another person tells an educator that a child is or has been abused (that other person may be a child).

Educators will be aware of the following factors when reporting to authorities:

1. *Timing*: will the perpetrator have access to the child?
2. *Injury*: is it severe? Is medical treatment required? Is the injury located on the head or genitals?
3. *Child*: are they an infant? Do they have special needs and did they disclose serious abuse?
4. *History*: is there a history of previous abuse or family violence, current or recent episodes of violence?

IF URGENT, TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION TO CALL AUTHORITIES ON 000

Procedure

Educators will be alert to all behaviours and signs that may indicate child abuse or neglect to the child.

If an educator has concerns they will document those concerns and discuss them with the Nominated Supervisor in private.

- **Documenting concerns:**
 - Date and time of making notes
 - Date and time of observations or disclosure
 - Circumstances leading to the concern e.g. child went to the toilet and complained of discomfort
 - Details of observation (who, what, when, where, why)
 - Details of disclosures
 - Details of other witnesses
 - Details of actions taken
 - Names and signatures of record maker/s
 - Keep originals
- **Information to include in reporting:**
 - Name and date of birth of the child
 - Home address of the child and any known previous addresses of the child
 - Current whereabouts of the child
 - Name of parents, any aliases and current contact details
 - Name of siblings with details of sex and age
 - Exact nature of abuse or neglect
 - When it is said to have occurred and how often
 - Details of exactly how educator became aware of the information

- Name of any other adult or child that may have witnessed the abuse or neglect
- Details of disclosures made by the child to educators, other adults or children
- Description of any injuries seen, if possible accompanied by sketches or photos
- Descriptions of behaviour of the child or anything else that has been observed
- Information about other concerning behaviours of the parents or caregivers
- Information about whether the parent/ caregiver has been informed about the suspected abuse or report
- An outline of the attitude of parents, caregivers toward the injury or incident if they have been made aware
- Details of any known support available to the child and their family including any known extended family
- Any information about any previous history of abuse or neglect involving the child, their family and extended family

These documents will be stored under strict guideline for confidentiality.

The Nominated Supervisor will consult with a professional for verification that injury or abuse is present and converse these findings to the relevant authorities immediately. After calling relevant authorities, the departments recommended course of action will be followed.

Office of Early Childhood and Care:	5562 4877
Department of Communities:	5583 4400 (Robina Town Centre Branch) 1300 679 849 (South East Queensland)
Child Safety Services:	1800 811 810
Police Station:	5571 4222 (Southport Branch)
Arundel Neighbourhood Police Beat:	5563 3596 (295 Napper Road, Arundel 4214)

- **Course of action**
 - Nominated Supervisor, as per the Department of Communities policies will be required to complete and submit the '**Childcare form 25: Reporting of Harm**' with all the relevant details
 - Continue to document observations
 - An investigation will commence within 2 working days.

Code of conduct

Our service expects employers, educators, volunteers, parents, children and students to uphold and follow the code of conduct as outlined in appendix 1.

Training

Educators and employees should receive training in the following areas:

- Identifying, assessing and minimising risk
- The organisations policies and procedures including the code of conduct
- Compulsory training as required by industry standards and law
- Handling a disclosure of harm including reporting guidelines
- Informal and formal training
 - Informal:
 - Inviting police officers, child safety officers or professionals to speak at functions

- Internal monitoring and coaching
- Formal:
 - Education training and service assessment
 - Training offered by external services
 - Training developed and delivered internally
 - On the job training and meeting key objectives

Support and counselling will be offered to all parties involved.

Lifeline:	131 114
Kids Helpline:	1800 551 800
Parent Helpline:	1300 301 300

Internal support may be sought at the Nominated Supervisors discretion.

Information for Families

In accordance with the *Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act, 2000*, the service is required to have a written child and youth risk management strategy to protect the children in our organisation from harm.

The child and youth risk management strategy addresses the following elements:

- A statement of commitment
- A code of conduct for interacting with children and young people
- Procedures for recruiting, selecting, training and managing paid employees and volunteers
- Policies and procedures for handling disclosure and suspicions of harm
- A plan of managing breaches of child and youth risk management strategy
- Policy and procedure for implementing and reviewing the child and youth risk management strategy
- Risk management strategies for high risk activities and events
- Strategies for communication and support

The strategy will help to ensure our organisation is a safe and supportive environment for children and young people by identifying and minimising risk. Screening employees and volunteers through a blue card system is a part of this strategy.

Sources

Community and Disability Services Ministers' Conference (2005). *Creating safe environments for children: Organisations, employees and volunteers: National framework*. Retrieved April 27, 2010, from http://www.ocsc.vic.gov.au/downloads/childsafe_framework.pdf

Community and Disability Services Ministers' Conference (2005). Schedule: Guidelines for building the capacity of child-safe organisations. *Creating safe environments for children: Organisations, employees and volunteers: National framework*. Retrieved April 27, 2010, from http://www.ocsc.vic.gov.au/downloads/childsafe_sched01.pdf

UNICEF (n.d.). *Fact sheet: A summary of the rights under the Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Retrieved April 27, 2010, from http://www.unicef.org/crc/files/Rights_overview.pdf

Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian -
<http://www.ccypcg.qld.gov.au/bluecard/risk-management.html>

Child Protection Act 1999

Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Early Years Learning Framework

Review

The policy will be reviewed annually.

The review will be conducted by:

- Management
- Employees
- Families
- Interested Parties

Reviewed: October 2015

Date for next review: October 2016

Abuse indicators

Sexual Abuse Indicators

1. Sexualised behaviour or promiscuity
2. Inappropriate or persistent sexual play
3. Knowledge of sexual behaviour
4. Disclosures through art
5. Problems with sexual areas
6. Sudden unexplained fears
7. Bed wetting and/or soiling
8. Disrupted sleep patterns
9. Unusual aggressive behaviour towards others or pets
10. Unusual behaviours or changes in behaviours or appetites
11. Questions about sexual topics
12. Indicators involving parents, caregivers, siblings, other adults

Physical Abuse Indicators

1. Unexplained injuries- location, size, frequency and shape of bruises, burns, breaks
2. Inconsistent explanations
3. Childs behaviour- submissive, anxious, fears going home, cowers
4. Delay between injury and receiving medical assistance
5. Parent who shows little concern
6. Parent isolating a child
7. Admissions by parent

Emotional Abuse Indicators

1. Extremes of behaviour
2. Lacks empathy
3. Inappropriate destructive or cruel
4. Poor peer relationships
5. Delayed development
6. Behaviours inappropriate for their age
7. Negative emotions- anxiety, fears, shame, depression
8. Compulsive behaviour
9. Low self esteem
10. Uncharacteristic seeking of attention or affection
11. Erratic appetites
12. Reluctance to go home
13. Rocking, sucking thumbs or self harming
14. Concerning behaviour involving parent or caregiver

Neglect Indicators

1. Signs of malnutrition
2. Poor hygiene
3. Unattended physical or medical problems

4. Inadequate supervision
5. Child appears constantly tired
6. Frequent lateness or absence
7. Inappropriate clothing
8. Alcohol or drug abuse in the house
9. Frequent illness
10. Self comforting behaviours or craving attention
11. Home environment inappropriate

Shaken Baby Syndrome Indicators

1. Unconscious, or decreased level of consciousness or drifting in and out of consciousness
2. Irritability- ranging from mild to extreme
3. Lethargy and limpness, lack of movement, inability to stay awake
4. Committing
5. Pale or blue tinged skin particularly around the lips
6. Loss of appetite or difficulty feeding
7. Increased respiratory rate or breathing problems
8. Convulsions or seizures
9. Slow heart rate
10. Cold to touch- low temperature
11. Pupils fixed and dilated, or different sizes
12. Bruising of the head and face
13. Bleeding leaking into the eyes
14. Bruising from grabbing around arms or on chest, or painful areas around the ribs, collarbone, or long bones that could indicate broken bones
15. Loss of eye control- inability to focus or eyes crossing over
16. Clear fluid from the ears
17. Change in sleeping pattern or inability to be wakened
18. No pulse
19. Swelling of the head- a forehead that appears larger than usual, or a soft spot that seems to be bulging
20. Inability to lift head or move
21. Tremors or shakes
22. Not smiling or vocalising
23. Poor sucking or swallow reflexes
24. Going rigid or stiff

Child Protection Risk Management Strategy – Code of Conduct



Management

Code of Conduct

Our service upholds the following code of conduct in relation to employers, educators, volunteers, students, families and children:

For Employers:

- Ensure that all employees are:
 - Clear about their roles and responsibilities regarding child protection.
 - Aware of their obligations to immediately report suspected abuse to the Child Protection Hotline.
 - Aware of the indicators when a child may be at risk of harm or significant harm.
- Provide training and development for all employees in the recognition and reporting of abuse and harm.
- Provide reporting procedures and professional standards for care and protection work.
- Conduct a Working with Children Check for anyone that will be heavily involved with service operations.
- Report to the Ombudsman any reportable allegations and convictions made against an employee and ensure they are investigated by the Head of the Agency with appropriate actions being taken when the investigation is complete.
- Notify the Commission for Children and Young People of details of employees against whom relevant disciplinary proceedings have been completed and or persons whose employment has been rejected because of a risk identified in employment screening processes.
- Enable educators to have access to relevant acts, regulations, standards and other resources in order for them to complete their obligations.

For Educators:

- Report any situation where they suspect a child is at risk of significant harm to the Child Protection Helpline.
- Promote the welfare, safety and wellbeing of children at the service.
- Have an awareness of referral agencies for families where concerns of harm do not meet the significant harm threshold.
- Be aware of obligations as per the Mandatory Reporter Guide.
- Assist in supporting children and families when liaising with relevant government agencies.
- I will not drink alcohol or use illicit substances while on the service's premises and I will not come to the service while under the influence of alcohol or illicit substances.

- I will not smoke on the service's premises.
- I will not show favouritism towards any child.
- I will refrain from developing close personal relationships with children out of the carer/child relationship.
- I will refrain from using the abusive, derogatory or offensive language.

For Families:

- Treat all children at the service equally and respectfully.
- Report any suspicions to the most senior person on duty when at the service.
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person, regardless of their abilities, gender, religion or cultural background.
- Respect the decision of employees and teach children to do likewise.
- Focus on encouraging children's efforts and learning.
- Support all efforts to remove any form of abuse in the service and encourage a safe and supportive service environment.
- I will not drink alcohol or use illicit substances while on the service's premises and I will not come to the service while under the influence of alcohol or illicit substances.
- I will not smoke on the service's premises.

For Children:

- We will respect other children and adults at the service.
- We will cooperate and will follow our Classroom Rules.
- We will listen to our Educator's instructions and follow them.
- We will control our temper and talk to an Educator if we are feeling upset.
- We will have a say in what activities we are involved in.
- We will speak to an Educator if we are worried or concerned about something.
- We will not bully other children.
- We will tell an Educator if we see a child bullying another child.