

Child Wellbeing & Protection Policy



CHILD WELLBEING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

This policy articulates the professional and legal responsibilities of all health workers to promote the health, safety, welfare and well-being of children and young people. These responsibilities apply whether workers are providing health care directly to children and young people or to adult clients who are parents / carers or are pregnant. This policy aims to provide a consistent response to child protection and wellbeing.

MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

Every health worker is a mandatory reporter and has a responsibility to protect the health, safety, welfare and wellbeing of children or young people with whom they have contact. The legal responsibilities of health services and health workers are identified in the following legislation:

- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998
 - Collaborate with interagency partners and comply with information exchange provisions to promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people, including taking reasonable steps to coordinate the provision of services with other agencies.
 - Meet requirements for mandatory reporting of children and reporting of young people (or classes/groups of children or young people) at suspected risk of significant harm (ROSH);
 - Report unborn children where it is suspected they may be at ROSH after their birth.
 - Respond to the needs of children and young people after making a report to Community Services
 - Respond to Community Services' and Children's Court requests to provide health services and or Community Services and Police Force requests to provide medical examinations and treatment.
 - Assist with Children's Court proceedings when required.
- Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998 / Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012
 - Meet requirements to ensure that only people with valid Working with Children Checks are engaged in child related work (where a child is under the age of 18 years).

The policy responsibilities of health workers are to:

- Recognise and respond appropriately to the vulnerabilities, risks and needs of families, children and young people when providing any health service.
- Collaborate across Health services and with interagency partners to support and strengthen families and promote child health, safety, welfare and wellbeing.
- Use the Mandatory Reporter Guide on the FACS website to make a report where required.
- Actively seek feedback from Community Services after making a child protection report and continue to support the child, young person or family consistent with the health worker's roles and responsibilities.
- Collaborate in joint investigation and response to matters involving alleged child sexual assault or serious child abuse or neglect leading to criminal proceedings.
- Participate in mandatory and / or other child protection training as deemed appropriate by Management.
- Refer to 'A Mandatory Reporter's Guide to Selecting a Decision Tree'
<https://reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/s/article/Guide-To-Selecting-A-Decision-Tree>



Steps to follow when reporting:

1. Upon learning that a child may be at risk, it is expected that clinicians will take steps to report this risk and the surrounding events for the safety and well-being of the child.
2. Visit www.facs.nsw.gov.au, follow the prompts to the Mandatory Reporter Guidelines and complete the form to determine if reporting the event is the appropriate course of action. If so, contact the Child Protection Helpline on 13 21 11, explain the situation to the FACS Worker and ensure reporting of the event is complete, with file number.
3. If the child is in immediate danger or risk of harm, determine by whom the child is risk from and be prepared to contact emergency services to remove the child from harm.
4. Ensure that the child is safe prior to leaving the child. Communicate with administration staff and the office manager if amendments to the daily schedule need to be made for the prioritisation of the at-risk child.
5. Complete an incident form as per incident management procedures outlined in the *Client Safety and Security Policy*.
6. Mandatory reporters refer to *Client Safety & Security Policy* regarding Notifiable Incidents and NDIS commission reporting requirements.

Key contact

Questions about how to implement this procedure should be directed to the Operations Manager.

Version control



Version No.	Date	Reason for update
0	18/02/2019	New Document
1	25/2/19	Update of mandatory requirements section
2	21/8/20	Update of mandatory requirements section
3	27/09/2022	Update to key contact plus formatting
4	7/10/2022	Formatting + update to description of company structure

Approval

Name	Title	Signature	Date
Monica Tanyous	Director		24/02/2019
Monica Tanyous	Director		25/2/19
Monica Tanyous	Director		21/8/20
Sandra Mikhail	OM		27/09/2022
Sandra Mikhail	OM		7/10/2022