

Yorke town Community Children's Centre

Child Protection Policy

Policy Number 4

Link to CCQA Principles *Family Day Care Quality Assurance (FDCQA) Quality Practices Guide (2004) – Principle 4.6 / Outside School Hours Care Quality Assurance (OSHCQA) Quality Practices Guide (2003) – Principle 7.1 / Quality Improvement and Accreditation System (QIAS) Quality Practices Guide (2005) – Principle 5.1*

Policy statement

This service is committed to child protection and child safe environments.

A child is any persons aged from birth to eighteen years (UNICEF).

The Child Protection Policy:

- reflects the service's philosophy, which can include values, ethics or code of conduct for management, staff, carers, children, families, students, volunteers and the community;
- establishes the procedures for child protection matters including identifying, documenting, reporting and managing concerns or incidents;
- maintains procedural fairness and natural justice concepts in all circumstances;
- identifies safe protective behaviours for all persons¹ who access the service's premises, facilities and/or programs;
- abides by federal and South Australian legislation;
- defines the appropriate direct or indirect physical contact between children and adults in the service;
- identifies and details the procedures when an adult harms a child; a child harms another child; or an adult harms another adult in the service;
- details complaints, grievances and disciplinary procedures;
- demonstrates a commitment to ongoing professional development for staff/carers;
- identifies support and counselling services or agencies for all stakeholders, including strategies to deal with the media; and
- Reflects relevant licensing requirements, for example staff/child ratios.

In addition:

- Yorke town Community Children's Centre has a duty of care to ensure that all persons are provided with a high level of safety and protection during the

¹ For the purpose of this policy, 'persons' include children, families, staff, carers, carers' family, cleaners, maintenance personnel, volunteers, visitors, local community, school community, licensee.

hours of the service's operation. When the Centre is not in operation children are not permitted to use the grounds or facilities unless hired for a particular purpose.

- It is understood by staff/carers, children and families that there is a shared responsibility between the service and all stakeholders that the Child Protection Policy and procedures are accepted as a high priority.
- In meeting the service's duty of care, and legislative requirements outlined in DECS guidelines that the staff implement and adhere to the service's Child Protection Policy, and ensure a level of safety and protection to all children who access the service's facilities and/or programs.

Rationale

Yorketown Community Children's Centre has developed this policy and the procedures contained in it to provide guidelines for the provision of a safe environment for children and strengthen the capacity of our organisation to increase child safety.

Please refer to:

- Community and Disability Services Ministers' Conference (2005). *Creating safe environments for children: organisations, employees and volunteers: national framework*. Retrieved January 18, 2007, from http://www.ocsc.vic.gov.au/downloads/childsafe_framework.pdf

Strategies and practices

Risk management plans

- YCCC uses the attached Risk Management Plan (attachment 1) to evaluate the risk of any given situation to children.

A code of conduct

- The primary consideration during decision-making is given to ensuring activities contribute to children's wellbeing.
- Staff are mindful of the safety of children at all times with all access areas properly supervised.
- Ratio of adults to children ensures proper supervision and is in keeping with DECS regulations.
- Inside and outside environments and equipment comply with with OHSW standards.
- Children are always closely supervised when eating.
- Staff review management practices annually and as needed to ensure that they remain effective.
- All staff have current first-aid training and appropriately stocked first-aid kits are accessible.
- Staff will be familiar with and follow Centre policies and procedures including emergency procedures.
- New and visiting staff will receive induction.
- Staff will consult with individual families about the care of children and notify of unusual occurrences such as injury or upsets.

- The Centre provides comfortable and separate sleeping and nappy change areas.
- Support services will be accessed in consultation with families to meet the special needs of children as required.
- Parents are welcomed to the Centre and invited to participate in activities but will not be given a supervisory role.
- Notes of consent are required for excursions, giving details of the proposed activity and signed by the parent/ carer.
- Staff will follow the Centre's procedures for releasing children and ensure they are released only to authorised persons.
- Staff working alone in the Centre will follow the Centre's safety procedures.
- When discussing children staff will label the behaviour not the child, will ensure confidentiality and will discuss children in privacy.
- Staff will use appropriate language and behaviour (ie non-sexual).
- Staff will observe the DECS values;
- Staff will be familiar with and uphold the Centre's Philosophy Statement.

Privacy and data protection

- Individual children's records are treated as confidential, in line with the Centre's Privacy and Confidentiality Policy.

Participation and empowerment of children

- All forms of abuse are a symbolic representation of 'power' and of the offender's need to control. The promotion of children's participation in the development of child safe strategies and policies is a beneficial step in creating child safe environments.

Inclusive and empowering language

- Staff will use child friendly and/or appropriate terminology relevant to the age of the children that encourages birth to school age children to actively take part in developing a safe environment.

Child protection awareness programs and plans

- Children will participate in developing Centre guidelines for playing safely.
- During term two of each year, and ongoing, children in the Preschool and Rural Care Programs will participate in the Child Protection Curriculum.
- Our Centre is committed to teaching each child about 1/ The right to be safe, 2/Relationships, 3/Recognising and reporting abuse and 4/ Protective strategies.

Employee recruitment and selection

- It is the Directors responsibility to ensure that all employees or volunteers have a current, cleared criminal history check, have current First Aid qualifications and have a current Mandatory Notification certificate.
- Employees will be recruited for employment following guidelines set out in the DECS "Panellist Handbook" 2007 update, and through liaison with Site Human Resources.

Job descriptions or duty statements

- Staff/carers, students and volunteers will hold a clear description of their roles either through a Job and Person Specification for their position, or as negotiated with the Director.
- Daily tasks and responsibilities of staff are found in the Policy and Induction folder, and posted on the wall in the office.
- The Rural Care staff have contact with and supervise the children enrolled in the Rural Care program, the Kindy staff have contact with and supervise children enrolled in the Kindy program. Both sets of staff work together to ensure care, education and supervision of all children at the Centre.
- Special Needs Support staff roles are individually negotiated with the Director to meet the unique needs of the children in their care.
- Additional support staff are present over the Wednesday lunch time to care for and supervise children during staff meetings.

Staff/Carer support, supervision, performance review and professional development

- Staff will access regular Mandatory Reporting training to ensure a "current" status for this.
- Staff undertake performance management twice annually to identify strengths, growth areas, individual goals and training needs.
- Staff are encouraged to access both required and voluntary training opportunities to maintain current knowledge.
- Staff are encouraged to share their learning with others in the team.
- Our site has a commitment to professional development and ongoing training in child protection issues.

Grievances and complaints management (including disciplinary proceedings)

- Grievances and complaints procedures are described in the Centre's Grievance and Complaint Management Policy. Our policy reflects fairness and natural justice concepts.

Protective behaviours and practices

Staff, carers, students and volunteers as role models

- Children learn through example and role modelling is an important strategy in teaching children about protective behaviours.
- Staff/carers, students and volunteers comply with the Child Protection Policy.

Communication with different stakeholders

Children

- Children are involved in discussion about what we need to do at Kindy to stay safe and healthy. Possible scenarios are given and children are asked to suggest how we might stay safe at the Centre in this situation.
- Children are involved in emergency evacuation/ invacuation practice each term.

Families

- Families are informed of the Centre's Child Protection Curriculum each year through the newsletter and are offered a parent information session.
- The Child Protection Curriculum slideshow (provided with the CPC training) is used to help inform parents of the Curriculum.

- Child protection behaviours and practices and child safe environments are outlined in the Centre Handbook, enrolment forms, newsletters and excursion permission forms.
- Child protection and safety information will be displayed on noticeboards.
- Families will be encouraged to implement the service's child protection behaviours and practices when engaged in service experiences and excursions.

Staff/Carers

- Staff are involved in annual review of the Child Protection Policy.
- Staff are involved in teaching the Child Protection Curriculum to children annually, and presenting it to parents annually.

Policy review

- The service will review the Child Protection Policy and procedures, and related documents, including behaviours and practices every year and as necessary.
- Children and families are encouraged to collaborate with the service to review the policy and procedures.
- Staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be encouraged to be actively involved.

Procedures

- Staff and volunteers are required to report suspect incidences of child abuse or neglect to Family and Youth Services (**FAYS ph: 131 478**) as outlined in mandatory reporting regulations.
- Staff members identifying suspected abuse by other staff members are also required to report this on the above phone number.
- New employees and volunteers to the service are provided with induction into the Centres policies and practices including Child Protection and are required to sign an Induction Checklist (contained in the Induction and Policy Folder).
- Our site uses the mandatory "DECS Child Protection Curriculum" documents when planning, implementing and evaluating an effective child protection and safe environment awareness program for children. This program is an integral part of the everyday curriculum and is also focussed on once per year. Families are offered a Family Information Session annually using the DECS provided slideshow (located on the admin computer under "Preschool Education").
- This policy will be developed and reviewed annually in consultation with staff, parents/ carers and Governing Council annually. It will be posted on the parents' information board for perusal when undergoing review.
- Complaints against a staff, student, volunteer and/or visitor will be managed using the Centres Grievance Management Policy.
- New families to the Centre will be provided with a copy of this Child Protection Policy upon induction into the service.

Links to other policies

- Confidentiality and privacy
- Grievance and complaints management
- Hygiene and infection control
- Occupational health and safety
- Supporting children's individual health needs

Sources and further reading

- Community and Disability Services Ministers' Conference (2005). *Creating safe environments for children: Organisations, employees and volunteers: National framework*. Retrieved January 18, 2007, 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 January 18, 2007, 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 January 18, 2007, from http://www.unicef.org/crc/files/Rights_overview.pdf

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Signatures