

GOODWOOD PARK HEALTHCARE GROUP

Child Protection

Purpose	This document informs our practices to keep children we provide a service for or we are involved with safe. It aims that potential and actual abuse and neglect, along with general concerns about a child's wellbeing, is identified and appropriately responded to.
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children we engage with as part of our service provision. • Children of tāngata whai ora/tāngata whaikaha who are parents or guardians. • Children of visitors at our service. • Children of households our staff visits to provide a service. • Health care workers we employ or contract (staff). • We require that student placements fulfil the requirements of safety checks. They will not provide a service to children on their own. • Volunteers are excluded from providing a service to children.
Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The safety and security of children is paramount. • This document articulates our organisation's commitment to safeguard children our staff comes in contact or engages with. • We are culturally responsive during processes that safeguard a child or children. • Our service recognises that there is increasing awareness that abuse and neglect of children can and does happen and we are determined to make a positive difference to this problem. • We are committed to promote a culture where staff feel confident that they can constructively challenge poor practice or raise issues of concern without fear of reprisal. • We identify a role that leads our child protection processes. • We debrief and provide support to the staff who observed or a child disclosed abuse and/or neglect to. • Te Whatu Ora funded mental health and addiction services require that we have a child protection policy and procedure.
References	
Legislation	Children's Act 2014 Children's (Requirements for Safety Checks of Children's Workers) Regulations 2015. Crimes Amendment Act 2007 Family Violence Act 2018 Oranga Tamariki Act 1989
Resources	Child Matters Disclosing Information. Oranga Tamariki. Introduction To Principles Guiding Provision Of Health & Disability Services. KidsHealth Oranga Tamariki: Children's Teams. Real Skills Plus ICAMH/AOD Competency Framework. Whāraurau Requirements under the Children's Act Safeguarding Children – Tiakina ngā tamariki Working together to keep children and young people safe
Definitions	
Child	A person who is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under the age of 18 years. • Under the age of 21 years and has been placed in in care. • Under the age of 25 years and is receiving transition support from Oranga Tamariki under <u>Part 7</u> of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989. (Children's Act 2014, Version 1 July 2023)

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Child protection	A reactive approach to address suspected or known cases of abuse and neglect.
Child protection lead	Our child protection lead is a staff member in a leadership position at our organisation. The child protection lead has had training in child protection and information sharing related to child protection. This staff member is responsible for child protection staff training and for being in charge of our child protection processes. Safeguarding Children provides training in all areas of child protection.
Children's Teams	In some areas, coordination of services for children at risk of harm has transitioned from Oranga Tamariki Children's Teams to community-based organisations .
Children's worker	Means a person who works in, or provides, a regulated service, and the person's work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may or does involve regular or overnight contact with a child or children (other than with children who are co-workers); and • takes place without a parent or guardian of the child, or of each child, being present.
Core children's worker	Core children's workers are employed by the state sector or government-funded organisations to provide regulated services. In the course of that work, the person is either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the only person present, or • is the children's worker who has primary responsibility for, or authority over, the child or children present. Examples of roles that may meet this definition are doctors, teachers, nurses, paediatricians, youth counsellors and social workers.
Oranga Tamariki	The agency responsible for investigating and responding to suspected abuse and neglect and for providing care and protection to children found to be in need.
Designated person for child protection	Our child protection lead is responsible for providing advice and support to staff where they have a concerns about an individual child or who want advice about this policy/procedures.
Disclosure	Information given to a staff member by a child, parent or caregiver or a third party in relation to abuse or neglect.
Non-core children's worker	A children's worker who is not a core worker. Examples of roles that may meet this definition are non-teaching school workers, general hospital workers, and many social and health workers.
New Zealand Police	The agency responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responding to situations where a child is in immediate danger. • Working with Oranga Tamariki in child protection work. • Investigating cases of abuse or neglect where an offence may have occurred.
Regulated services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services provided at a publicly funded medical practice or facility, including blood and cancer centres, treatment centres, outreach clinics, and mental health services. • Services provided through medical practices belonging to primary health organisations (PHOs). • Services provided by health practitioners. • Home-based disability support services. • Residential disability support services.
Safe-guarding	Is a preventative approach to child protection by minimising or eliminating harm to a child.

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Tamaiti	Child in te reo Māori.
Tamariki	Children in te reo Māori.

Types of abuse, neglect and harm (Based on Oranga Tamariki definitions)	
Physical abuse	Physical abuse involves situations where a child has an injury or was at serious risk of injury. The harm could be the deliberate or unintentional result from a deliberate action.
	Examples: Cutting, hitting, beating, biting, burning, causing abrasions, strangulation, suffocation, drowning, poisoning, fabricated or induced illness, shaking (of an infant), and use of an object as a weapon (such as a broom, belt or bat).
Sexual abuse	Sexual abuse is any action where a child is used for a sexual purpose.
	Examples of contact abuse: Touching breasts, genital/anal fondling, masturbation, oral sex, penetrative or non-penetrative contact with the anus or genitals, encouraging the child to perform such acts on the perpetrator or another (person or animal), involvement of the child in activities for the purposes of pornography or prostitution. Examples of non-contact abuse: Exhibitionism, voyeurism, exposure to pornographic or sexual imagery, inappropriate photography or depictions of sexual or suggestive behaviours or comments, sexting, cyber grooming or grooming behaviours (grooming behaviours are not easily recognised but occur when a person prepares the child or significant others and their environment for the abuse of the child without detection).
Emotional abuse	Emotional abuse is when the mental health and social and/or emotional functioning and development of a child has been damaged by the way they are treated.
	Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patterns of degradation, constant and vitriolic criticism, or repeated negative comparison to others. • Deprivation of contact with people significant to the child. • Corrupting, exploiting, or actively scaring and threatening the child. • A significant period of denying access to cultural, faith or other associations that sustain the sense of normality, identity and self-esteem for the child. • Ongoing exposure to whānau or family violence.
Neglect	Neglect is failing to meet the basic needs of the child.
	Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical neglect: not providing the necessities of life such as adequate shelter, food and clothing. • Emotional neglect: not providing comfort, attention and love. • Neglectful supervision: leaving the child without someone safe looking after them. • Medical neglect: not taking care of health needs. • Educational neglect: allowing truancy, failure to enrol in education, or inattention to education needs.

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Serious differences	The child can suffer serious harm when there are serious differences in the relationship between the child and their parent or caregiver, or between parents, guardians or caregivers of the child.
Harmful behaviour	What distinguishes age-appropriate exploration from 'harmful behaviour' is the extent of the behaviour and the impact on the child.
Family violence	The emotional, psychological and physical wellbeing of the child can be affected when they're exposed to family violence.

Unable or unwilling to care for or have abandoned the child	Parents or caregivers that are sometimes unable or unwilling to care for the child or children.
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General signs of abuse and/or neglect (Oranga Tamariki guide)

Some of the signs	<p>Physical signs such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unexplained bruises, welts, cuts and abrasions • unexplained fractures or dislocations • burn marks. <p>Other signs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No clear explanation for any of the above. • Behavioural concerns such as emotional withdrawal, aggression or anxiety. • Developmental delays, changes or signs. • The child talking about, or subtly mentioning, things that may indicate abuse. • Parents seeming stressed or not coping on the money they have. • Drug or alcohol problems. • Parents not having friends or whānau to help. • Adults hitting or yelling. • Mental health problems. • Children are left home alone or seem to be neglected. • Children routinely not going to school.
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Overview: Our processes to safeguard children

Organisational culture	Safe workforce	Safe ways of working	Managing welfare and concerns	Working together
Code of conduct	Safe recruitment	Child protection policy & procedure	Employment relationships: resolving issues	Child and whānau centred practices
Values/ethics	Performance evaluations	Supervision	Listening to children	Collaboration with child protection agencies
Principles	Workforce development	Performance monitoring	Adherence to this policy and procedure	
Service approach	Culturally responsive	Workplace culture	Access to current guidelines	Collaboration with communities

Child protection processes

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Responsibility: Our employee in charge of recruitment processes and appointing.		
Recruitment safety checks: core and non-core children's workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identity verification – confirmation of the identity of the children's worker, sighting required documents, eg, passport, driver's licence or by using an electronic service, such as the RealMe identity verification service. Reference checks – obtaining information from two or three referees about the person's recent work experience and conduct. Interviews with the person and gathering information about their work history. Third party checks with their professional registration body or licensing authority (as appropriate). Police safety checks – Police safety check forms are available from the New Zealand Police website. We provide applicants with a New Zealand Police vetting service request and consent form to complete and sign. Risk assessment – assessing the risk the person would pose to the safety of children if employed in a children's worker role. <p>Details of each process are described in Children's (Requirements for Safety Checks of Children's Workers) Regulations 2015.</p>	Before offering a position.
Rejecting the job applicant	Under the Children's Act people who have been convicted of serious offences (specified in Schedule 2 of the Act) are prohibited from being employed as a children's worker. Our organisation does not support exceptions.	Once the conviction(s) are known.
Responsibility: Our employee in charge of human resource management		
Periodic safety checks: core and non-core children's workers	<p>Updates of safety checks include the following steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmation of any name change by the worker in the past 3 years and provision of any official documents associated with any name change. Police vet that is VCA (Vulnerable Children Act) applicable. Checks with their professional registration body or licensing authority (as appropriate). Risk assessment. 	Every three years
Child protection responses		
Responsibility: All staff		
General questions we might ask ourselves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the behaviour of the child a sign of abuse or neglect, or are there other things going on in the whānau that could affect them? How is the behaviour of the child? How is the development of the child? Has the child or whānau hinted at, or said that something is wrong? Are there signs of whānau violence? Do I sense the whānau is struggling, or the child is at risk in some way? Do I feel uneasy or have concerns how a staff member interacts with a child in our care. 	

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General 'Do not' responses	<p>When disclosure, observation or suspected abuse and/or neglect is happening, do not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempt to deal with the situation yourself. • Formally interview the child: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Never ask leading questions. ○ Never push for information or make assumptions. ○ Only necessary relevant facts should be obtained. • Make assumptions, offer alternative explanations or diminish the seriousness of the behaviour or alleged incidents. • Keep the information to yourself or promise confidentiality. • Take any action that might undermine future investigation or disciplinary procedure, such as interviewing the alleged victim or potential witnesses, or informing the alleged perpetrator or parents/carers. • Permit personal doubt to prevent you from reporting the allegation to our child protection lead.
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Report of concern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff who are worried about a child should initiate making a report of concern to Oranga Tamariki or the Police. • Staff might be worried about the child's behaviour or an interaction with others they have observed. • Staff need to discuss this with the person whose role it is to lead all child protection responses at our service. • Reports of concerns are made to Oranga Tamariki by calling 0508 326 459 or by emailing contact@ot.govt.nz • If staff believes a child is in immediate danger, they need to call the Police on 111.
A child discloses abuse	<p>Listen to the child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disclosures by children are often subtle and need to be handled with particular care. • Let the child know what you are doing at each step. <p style="background-color: #fde9d9;">If the child is in immediate danger: Contact the Police immediately.</p> <p>Reassure the child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let the child know that they are not in trouble. • Let the child know that they have done the right thing. <p>Ask open ended prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What happened? • What happened next? • Do not interview the child. • Do not ask questions beyond open ended prompts. • Do not make promises that can't be kept, for example 'I will keep you safe now'. <p>If the child is visibly distressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide appropriate reassurance. • Engage in appropriate activities under supervision. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As soon as possible, inform our child protection lead of the situation. • Follow their instructions. • Ensure the child is not at risk from further abuse while in our care. <p>As soon as possible formally record the disclosure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word for word, what the child said.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The date, time location and the names of any staff or other people that may be relevant. The factual concerns or observations that are relevant to the disclosure. For example physical, behavioural or developmental concerns. The actions taken by our organisation. Any other information that might be relevant.
Decision	<p>Our child protection lead:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As soon as possible, record our organisation's response. If there is a belief that the child has been, or is likely to be, abused or neglected our lead in child protection will contact Oranga Tamariki (24/7) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0508 3264 59 contact@ot.govt.nz At this stage, do not record details of the disclosure and response on the organisation's adverse event/incident system.
Disclosure/allegation of child abuse/neglect by a staff member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As per disclosure process above up to 'Decision'. Notify our leadership/management team. Management consults with Oranga Tamariki or the Police. Management refers to the staff member's employment agreement. Management or Oranga Tamariki advises the staff member and seeks a response (depending on outcomes and discussions with statutory agencies). We advise the staff member or their right to seek support/advice from their union or other appropriate representatives. Our leadership/management team will discuss the removal of the staff member from engaging with children. Our leadership/management team will continue to liaise with Oranga Tamariki and/or the Police.
Settlement agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We commit not to use 'settlement agreements' where these are contrary to a culture of child protection.
Observing a child being abused or observing signs of being abused/neglected	<p>Respond to the child's needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the child is safe from immediate harm. Call the police if the child is in immediate danger. Attend to any physical or emotional distress in the child – if necessary take it to hospital if appropriate. Immediately contact our child protection lead or delegate and follow their directive. Write a report that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Date, time and place of the observation. Names of anyone present. What the child says – exactly. The physical and/or behavioural signs of abuse/neglect. <p>Child protection lead:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure having a full signed report from the person who identified the abuse/neglect. Offer them support. Tell them what action will be taken. If concerned about the child going home, inform Oranga Tamariki or the Police and seek their guidance.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensures the child is not at risk from further abuse while in our care. If unsure about how to proceed, contact Oranga Tamariki to discuss the steps that need to be taken. Follow their advice. If appropriate complete a Report of concern. Initiate de-brief and support for the staff member who identified the abuse/neglect.
Sharing information	
Responsibility: all staff	
Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People's safety comes first. We obtain consent to share information when it's safe to do so. We must consider sharing information if we think it will protect a victim or if we receive a request. We can share information for specific purposes. We must only share relevant information. We check that the information is accurate. We record reasons for your decisions. We have legal protection from liability when we share information, unless we share in bad faith.

Helpline	<p>This helpline and email address provide support for agencies and practitioners on the information sharing laws in the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 and the Family Violence Act 2018. They can give us general advice on the information sharing process and how to use the guidance documents.</p> <p>Phone: 0508 463 674</p> <p>Email: infosharinghelpline@ot.govt.nz</p>
Information sharing guidance	<p>Oranga Tamariki: https://www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/working-with-children/information-sharing/</p>