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3.1 Child Care Services Taree & Districts Inc.

Child Safety Policy

As an NDIS Service Provider Child Care Services Taree & Districts Inc. (CCSTD) are committed to children and young people who participate in our service to have a safe and happy experience.

We support and respect our children, young people, staff, support workers, volunteers and students. We will listen to children's' views, respect what they say and involve them when we make decisions, especially about matters that will directly affect them.

This Policy is supported by CCSTD Child Protection Guidelines Policy 1.9.

The Purpose of the Policy:

Ensure children are safe, happy and empowered. We support and respect all children. We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our policies and procedures. We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability

Child Safety Responsibilities

Training and Supervision

Training and education is important to ensure that everyone in our organisation understands that child safety is everyone's responsibility.

Our organisational culture aims for all staff, support workers and volunteers (in addition to parents/carers and children) to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns. We train our staff, support workers and volunteers to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse.

We also support our staff, support workers and volunteers through ongoing supervision to: develop their skills to protect children from abuse; and promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability.

New employees, support workers and volunteers are required to complete Child Protection Training on engagement and are supervised regularly to ensure they understand our organisation's commitment to child safety and that everyone has a role to play in protecting children from abuse, as well as checking that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate.

Recruitment

CCSTD will take all reasonable steps to employ skilled people to work with children. Our organisation understands that when recruiting staff, support workers and volunteers we have ethical as well as legislative obligations.

We actively encourage applications from Aboriginal peoples, people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with a disability.

All people engaged in child-related work, including volunteers, are required to hold a Working with Children Check and to provide evidence of this Check. National Criminal History Record checks are used only for the purposes of recruitment.

If during the recruitment process a person's records indicate a criminal history then the person will be given the opportunity to provide further information and context.

Fair Procedures for Personnel

The safety and wellbeing of children is our primary concern. We are also fair and just to personnel. The decisions we make when recruiting, assessing incidents, and undertaking disciplinary action will always be thorough, transparent, and based on evidence.

We record all allegations of abuse and safety concerns using our incident reporting form. All records are securely stored.

Risk Management

Assessing the Risks and completing a Risk Assessment and/or an Excursion Risk Assessment is a good way to ensure the prevention of any accidents or incidents. Support Workers are to follow the below Guidelines:

- Successful assessment of risk depends on effective communication and consultation with stakeholders including: Identifying or assessing hazards or risks. Making decisions on how to control risks. Making decisions about procedures.
- Identify the external and internal risk management issues and establish a context within which risks are to be managed.
- The Standard recommends a systematic approach and use of a structured process to help identify any risk. Initially it is useful to ask the following questions in relation to a potential hazard: What can happen, where and when? Generate a comprehensive list of potential sources of risk. Why and how can it happen? Consider possible causes and scenarios.
- Evaluate the controls that are already in place, and consider their effectiveness. Examine each risk in terms of 'consequence' (what could happen) and 'likelihood' (the probability of something happening). This will help when making the decision about treating the risk/s.
- Make a decision about rating each of the risk/s using the Risk Assessment Matrix and Form. The risk rating can determine the appropriate action. Different risks require different levels of action.
- There are a range of options for treating risks: Identify the options for treatment. These may include: removing or avoiding the risk entirely where practicable reducing the likelihood of the risk by putting control measures in place, for example, installing a barrier or relying on close supervision and keeping children within reach
- Ongoing monitoring and review is essential. Regularly review the effectiveness of the risk treatment to ensure it is the most appropriate action.

Privacy

All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved, whether they be staff, support workers, volunteers, participants and their families, unless there is a risk to someone's safety. We have safeguards and practices in place to ensure any personal information is protected. Everyone is entitled to know how this information is recorded, what will be done with it, and who will have access to it.

Allegations, Concerns and Complaints

Our organisation takes all allegations seriously and has practices in place to investigate thoroughly and quickly. Our staff, support workers and volunteers are trained to deal appropriately with allegations.

We work to ensure all children, families, staff, support workers and volunteers know what to do and who to tell if they observe abuse or are a victim, and if they notice inappropriate behaviour.

We all have a responsibility to report an allegation of abuse if we have a reasonable belief that an incident took place.

Child Protection is everyone's responsibility. CCSTD recognises that even where a report is made, we may still have a role in supporting the child or young person. This support may include referring the child, young person or their family to other appropriate services

Relevant Legislation and Standards

- NDIS Practice Standards
- NDIS Code of Conduct
- NSW Disability Service Standards (NSW DSS)
- NDIS Terms of Business
- Freedom of Information Act 1982
- Privacy and Personal Information Act 1988 (NSW)
- The Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (NSW) and Disability Inclusion Regulation 2014 (NSW)
- Mental Health Act 2007 (NSW)
- Ombudsman Act 1974 (NSW)
- NDIA National Quality and Safeguards Policy 2018
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998
- NSW Interagency Child Protection Guidelines
- Keep Them Safe Legislation
- Child Accident Prevention Foundation of Australia