

Child Safe Environment Policy

Commitment to the safety of children and young people

I am committed to providing a safe environment to all children and young people. My policy complies with the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017, the Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016 and aligns with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. I value and respect children and young people and welcome them regardless of their abilities, sex, gender, or social economic or cultural background. Bullying and harassment won't be tolerated.

Scope of policy

This policy applies to myself as a sole trader, referred to throughout the policy as 'I', 'me' or 'myself'. I am required to agree in writing to accept and act in accordance with the policy.

Communication

This child safe policy and related documents are available to children, young people and their families on my website, or upon request. This child safe policy and related documents are provided to all workers as part of their induction.

I encourage and respect the views of children and young people and involve them in decision making as appropriate. I provide clear age-appropriate or developmentally appropriate explanations to children and young people including their right to safety, their right to be listened to and that they can provide feedback or make a complaint if they have a concern, to any worker or ask their parent/guardian to do this on their behalf. I will listen to and act upon any complaints or concerns that a child or young person raises with me.

Code of Conduct

Caring for children and young people brings additional responsibilities for myself. I am responsible for promoting and protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people by:

- Maintaining the organisations child safe policy at all times and taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and protection of children and young people
- Treating everyone including those of different race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical ability or attributes and religious beliefs with respect and honesty and ensure equity is upheld
- Being a positive role model to children and young people in all conduct with them

- Setting clear boundaries and maintaining appropriate behaviours with children and young people – boundaries help everyone to understand their roles
- Listening and responding appropriately to the views and concerns of children and young people
- Being alert to bullying behaviours and responding promptly and appropriately
- Ensuring another adult is present or in sight where possible when conducting one to one consulting, coaching, instruction or other activity
- Being alert to children and young people who have been harmed, or may be at risk of harm and reporting this quickly to the Child Abuse Report Line (13 14 78)
- Responding quickly, fairly and transparently to any complaints made by a child, young person or their parent/guardian
- Encouraging children and young people to 'have a say' on issues that are important to them.

I will not:

- Engage in rough physical games
- Develop any 'special' relationships with children and young people that could be seen as favouritism such as the offering of gifts or special treatment
- Do things of a personal nature that a child or young person can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
- Discriminate against any child or young person because of age, gender, cultural background, religion, vulnerability or sexuality.

Breaches or suspected breaches of the Code of Conduct should be reported to me either in person, by telephone on 0412 801 081, or via email at kimberley@authenticot.com.au. Breaches or suspected breaches of the Code of Conduct will be taken seriously and dealt with quickly, fairly and transparently. If any breaches of the Code of Conduct are made, depending on severity of the breach, may involve terminating the business.

Working with Children Check

I am a sole trader with no employees or volunteers. In accordance with the Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016, I hold a current, 'not prohibited' Working with Children Check issued by the Screening Unit of the Department of Human Services which permits me to work with children and young people in South Australia and I will renew this every 5 years.

Training, Supervision and Support

I have strategies in place for supervision, training and support for myself to understand my organisation's child safe policy, my mandatory reporting obligations, how to build culturally safe environments and my responsibilities to create a child safe and friendly environment. My strategies include:

- Training:
 - Reading and understanding the Mandatory Reporting Information Booklet available at:
https://dhs.sa.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0003/103179/CSE-Mandatory-notification-information-booklet.PDF
 - Completing 'Safe Environments Through their eyes' and 'Responding to Risk of Harm, Abuse and Neglect' training every 3 years
 - Include child safety as a standing item on meeting agendas
- Supervision:
 - Regular supervision sessions that include a focus on child safety and wellbeing in accordance with this policy and Australia Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) registration standards.
- Support:
 - This policy being readily available for myself and for any future employees should the workplace structure shift.
 - Regular performance reviews within external supervision that provides opportunity to discuss child safeguarding.

Reporting and responding to harm or risk of harm

I aim to ensure that children and young people are safe from harm and risk of harm. Section 17 of the Safety Act defines 'harm' to mean physical or psychological harm (whether caused by an act or omission), including harm caused by sexual, physical, mental or emotional abuse or neglect.

I am a mandated reporter under Section 30 (3) of the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017. I understand my legal obligation to notify the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) on 13 14 78 as soon as practicable if I have a suspicion that a child or young person has been harmed or may be at risk of harm. If the child or young person is at immediate risk, I will report to South Australia Police (SAPOL) on 000.

Information about making appropriate reports of harm or risk of harm is available from the South Australian Department for Child Protection website:

<https://www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/reporting-child-abuse>.

Following a report to CARL or SAPOL I will support the child or young person by:

- Referring the child, young person or their family to other appropriate services

- Continuing to provide a service to the child, young person and their family and monitor their circumstances.

I will document all information received regarding the report and store this securely in a separate file.

Reporting and Responding to General Complaints or Feedback

Providing opportunities for complaints and feedback ensures that children, young people and their families feel valued and respected and enables us to improve the quality of our service. Children, young people and their families are informed that they can provide feedback or make a complaint at their first appointment.

Compliments, complaints or feedback can be provided verbally to myself either in person, by telephone on [0412801081](tel:0412801081) via email at admin@authenticot.com.au.

I will deal with all complaints and feedback received promptly, sensitively and fairly. I will:

- Listen to the complaint/feedback
- The person receiving the complaint will make a record of it if received verbally
- Advise of the time expected for an outcome
- I will respond to the complainant with an outcome in a timely manner
- Clearly document and securely store decisions and actions taken in response to complaints and feedback
- Make sure that procedural fairness is followed at all times.

If the child, young person or their family is not happy with the outcome from the complaints process they can contact:

- NDIS Commissioner 1800 035 544
- Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner 8226 8666
- Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Agency 1300 419 495
- Australian Human Rights Commission Online: www.humanrights.gov.au Tel: 1300 656 419
- South Australian Equal Opportunities Commission (for complaints relating to discrimination) Online: www.eoc.sa.gov.au Tel: 08 8207 1977.

Risk Management

Identified risk	Actions to minimise risk
Physical contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any physical contact must be appropriate to the delivery of services being provided

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where physical contact is required, this is undertaken in a safe way by explaining why contact is required and what will happen, and asking the child/young person for their permission (or their family if this is more appropriate) before proceeding • Unnecessary physical contact is not allowed
Online communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyber safety and social media guidelines are in place and provided to all workers • Appropriate supervision is provided for all online activities • I must not communicate with children or young people via social media
Transport of children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I must not transport a child or young person unless specifically approved • Parents/guardians must provide consent before transporting a child or young person • I must have a valid, unrestricted driver's licence • Vehicle must be registered, insured and in roadworthy condition • I must not be alone in a vehicle with a child or young person
Supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and young people are to be supervised by parents/guardians when possible • If child/young person not collected by parent/guardian at end of consult/session, I will stay with child/young person until they are collected • If providing one to one consultation with a child or young person, it will be in line of sight of another adult where possible
Taking images of children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consent of child young person and their parent/guardian required • Disclosure will be made as to how the image is to be used and consent must be provided by the child, young person and parent/guardian • Images must be presented in a way that de-identifies the child or young person
Physical environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a risk register that is reviewed annually to ensure effectiveness • Conduct risk assessments for all activities • Ensure all equipment is in good working order
Privacy and confidentiality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All documents containing confidential information will be stored privately in a locked filing cabinet (or similar place with restricted access)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital files containing confidential information shall be protected electronically by restricting the access to only those requiring it to perform their duties • I must not disclose information regarding any child or young person without written consent of the child, young person and their parent/guardian
Off-site activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consent of parent or guardian must be given • Children and young people must be supervised by an adult • Children and young people will not be left under the supervision of unauthorised persons • Children and young people have the right to contact their parents, or another adult, if they feel unsafe, uncomfortable, or distressed during the stay

Policy review

I will, at a minimum, review this policy and the related procedures once every 5 years as required by the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017. I will also review this policy when:

- New or added risks are identified for children or young people, which may require a change in the policy or procedures
- A critical incident where a child or young person has experienced harm through involvement in the organisation
- Concerns are raised by anyone involved in the organisation about child safety or welfare in the organisation
- Awareness or compliance to the child safe policy and/or procedures is low
- Legislative changes/requirements.

I will lodge a new child safe environments compliance statement with the Department of Human Services each time I review and update this policy.

Policy Date: 20/07/2024

Review Date: 20/07/2029

Signature: 

Name: Kimberley Dinham