

Children & Young People Reporting Policy

1. Guiding Values

To ensure the safety of children and young people, we adhere to the following core values, which guide our actions and decision-making. These values serve as a reference for all personnel to uphold their responsibilities:

- **Collective Responsibility:** Safeguarding children and young people is a shared duty that requires the commitment of every individual within our organisation to ensure their safety and well-being.
- **Zero Tolerance for Abuse:** Any form of abuse or neglect towards children and young people is unacceptable. We will take immediate action in response to any report of suspected harmful or abusive behaviour.
- **Child-Centred Approach:** The best interests of the child will be the foremost consideration in all actions and decisions related to their safety and welfare.
- **Commitment to Ethics:** We are accountable to the children and young people we support by maintaining high ethical standards within a culture of openness and transparency.
- **Mandatory reporting:** The Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997 (TAS) mandates that all adults, including prescribed persons such as medical professionals, teachers, and police officers, have a legal obligation to report and prevent child abuse or neglect.

We empower children by informing them of their rights and responsibilities and encourage them to voice any concerns or issues they may have. We actively involve children and young people in decision-making processes regarding services and other matters that affect them.

- Children and young people within our organisation are informed of our policy and provided with the support and mechanisms needed to feel empowered to speak up if they feel unsafe or observe something that doesn't feel right. We uphold their right to be heard, protected, and supported.
- In adhering to this policy, TassieCare personnel will promote equity and respect for the diversity of children, young people, and their parents or caregivers who access our services.
- Our organisation is committed to the wellbeing of all children, including those with additional or intersecting needs, such as children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, LGBTQI+ children, and children unable to live at home.
- We ensure that the concerns of children and their families are addressed in a professional, culturally safe, and inclusive manner, reflecting our organisational values and commitment to best practice in child-focused care

2. Purpose

This policy is integral to our commitment to a zero-tolerance stance on the abuse and neglect of children and young people. The purpose of the Reporting Policy is to ensure that all instances, allegations, disclosures, or reasonable concerns of abuse or neglect involving children and young people are reported accurately and responded to consistently, promptly, and sensitively. The policy has been explicitly approved and endorsed by the Directors of TassieCare Services.

Additionally, this policy delineates the responsibilities of personnel to report any breaches or actions by others within our organization that contravene our policies and procedures, as detailed in our Code of Conduct. Adherence to this policy ensures that all incidents are reported and managed in a manner that addresses the immediate circumstances, respects the rights of those involved, and minimises the risk of recurrence wherever possible.

This policy supports our personnel by:

- **Identifying Types of Abuse and Neglect:** Assisting in recognising various forms of abuse and neglect.
- **Responding to Immediate Needs:** Guiding appropriate responses to the immediate needs of individuals involved in an incident, including personnel.
- **Managing Allegations and Breaches:** Providing direction on how to address allegations and concerns, including breaches of the Code of Conduct.
- **Following Reporting Procedures:** Ensuring adherence to our organization's reporting procedures.
- **Upholding Legal Responsibilities:** Ensuring that legal obligations when working with children and young people are met.

Our policies and procedures are aligned with child-safe legislation and promote best practices in the care of children and young people. The Reporting Policy has been formally approved and endorsed by the Director of TassieCare Services.

3.Scope

The Reporting Policy is applicable to all personnel associated with TassieCare, including employees, volunteers, and contractors.

This policy is enforced across all operational environments and applies universally whenever children and young people are engaged in our organisation's activities, programs, services, and facilities.

4.Responsibilities

All personnel within our organisation have a duty of care and, in some cases, a legal obligation to take 'reasonable steps' to prevent harm to children and young people. Each individual is responsible for fostering a transparent culture by reporting and documenting any actions that contravene our Code of Conduct and Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, regardless of how minor they may seem.

The responsibilities associated with each role concerning the development and compliance of the TassieCare Reporting Policy are detailed in Section 11 of this policy.

4.1 Prevention and Preparedness

All personnel are provided with our Code of Conduct and Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, which clearly outline the expected behaviour around children and young people. Personnel are informed that any breaches, including minor ones, must be reported.

It is the responsibility of all personnel to identify and assess potential risks in both ongoing programs and one-off activities. This includes considering online, physical, and psychological risks associated with activities and developing and implementing risk mitigation strategies in accordance with our organisation's Risk Management Policy.

We are committed to creating a safe environment for children and young people. Our personnel actively employ strategies to support and encourage safe behaviours among children and young people, both with their peers and with personnel, and to empower them to speak up if they feel unsafe.

4.2 Complaints Handling

At TassieCare, we prioritise the rights, safety, and wellbeing of children and young people, including their right to voice complaints through both formal and informal channels.

Complaints may encompass:

- Expressions of dissatisfaction with TassieCare services or interactions with individuals.
- Allegations of abuse or misconduct by personnel or others associated with the organisation.
- Disclosures of abuse or harm made by a child.
- Concerns regarding the conduct of a child at TassieCare.
- Inadequate handling of a previous concern.
- General concerns about the safety of a group of children or a specific activity.

Any complaint made by a child or young person will be promptly addressed and investigated in accordance with our Complaints Policy.

4.3 Responding to a breach of policy or procedure

Whilst an incident and or disclosure or allegation could include a breach of the Code of Conduct and Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, if there is no immediate response required as identified above, it is still deemed an incident, and therefore required to be reported and documented as with all other incidents. Personnel are also required to formally report any concerns for breaches to our organisation's policies and procedures by other personnel within our organisation.

4.4 Consequences of not reporting

Failure by personnel to report instances, allegations, disclosures, or concerns related to the abuse or neglect of a child or young person—whether by members of our organisation or others—is considered a serious matter. Depending on the circumstances, such failure may result in disciplinary action or grounds for dismissal. Additionally, failure to report incidents of abuse, neglect, or harm may constitute a criminal offense under state law.

Our personnel are obligated to report any information related to:

- **Incidents, Allegations, or Concerns:** Instances, allegations, disclosures, or reasonable concerns about the abuse or neglect of a child or young person, whether involving personnel within our organization or others.
- **Breaches of Conduct:** Any actions by personnel that contravene our policies and procedures, as outlined in our Code of Conduct.

Our policy strictly prohibits personnel from:

- **Unauthorised Discussions:** Discussing concerns or allegations with unauthorised personnel, either within or outside the organisation. This prohibition is not intended to limit their rights and responsibilities to report concerns or allegations but is part of our commitment to ensuring privacy, confidentiality, and natural justice.
- **False Allegations:** Making deliberately false, misleading, or vexatious allegations.

5. Incident Management

5.1 Key Steps

There are four critical steps that everyone in our organisation must follow regarding all incidents, allegations, disclosures or reasonable concerns of abuse or neglect, or breaches of policy where appropriate:

1. Responding
2. Reporting
3. Sharing of Information
4. Supporting

5.2 Responding

5.2.1 Responding to an incident

Immediate responses include the care, support and communication actions that take place immediately following an incident to mitigate further harm and ensure the safety of children and young people / other service users, families, and personnel.

1. Reduce the harm and risk of harm to those impacted by the incident including by:

- making the surroundings safe to prevent immediate recurrence of the incident, for example.
- removing potentially harmful person(s)
- increase supervision of children and young people
- move uninvolved children and young people away from incident.
- moving to a safe place
- alerting others to risks that extend beyond the local environment, for example, other areas within the organisation.
- Calling Emergency Services if required 000.

2. Provide immediate care and support to child or young person / other service users, families, personnel, and others involved in the incident including addressing:

- physical well-being e.g. providing first aid or arranging medical treatment if a person suffers any harm or injury as a result of the incident; and
- emotional well-being (including psychological) e.g. arranging for coverage of duties and supervision facilitating access to counselling, debriefing and support for others involved in the incident.

3. Where possible, preserve evidence in situations where allegations or suspicions of abuse and neglect has occurred. This can include;

- ensuring that clothes worn by the person who may have perpetrated the abuse and the child or young person who has been subject to the abuse remain in their clothing, or the clothing is not washed and is sealed securely in a bag.
- not cleaning or disturbing the area in which the abuse has occurred.
- protecting any physical items such as weapons from being touched or removed.

5.2.2 Responding to a complaint

Information on how an adult or child can make a complaint can be found in our Complaints Management Policy When responding to a complaint made by a child or young person (or by another individual on behalf of a child or young person) all personnel should follow the steps outlined in the Complaints Management Policy.

Where the complaint relates to a disclosure or allegation against a member of personnel, follow the same steps listed in the above 'Responding to a disclosure/allegation' section. Personnel should also.

- answer any questions the child or young person asks.
- give clear advice about what will happen next.
- Provide any information about how they will be supported.

5.2.3 Responding to alleged abuse and harm of a child by another child/young person

Responding to harm and abuse of a child by another child or young person may require Child Protection intervention, and/or other additional support services for all children/young people involved.

Children and young people who display harmful sexual behaviours require specific responses and supports that carefully examine the nature of their behaviours, developmental considerations, and any other contextual and contributing factors.

7. Reporting

Once the immediate response to the situation is completed, it is important to fulfill the internal and external reporting requirements.

Our personnel are required to report any reasonable concerns or instances of abuse or neglect (cases in which a child or young person has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm from abuse or neglect) by any person immediately, or if that is not possible, no later than before ending that person's shift or session of work with our organisation.

Personnel should follow the guidance on the Incident Report Form which is located on Visual Care to complete the form accurately and to the best of their ability. All reports must be documented fully and written factually and objectively. Clear and accurate reporting can assist to support any internal or external investigation which may be required after an incident.

The Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997(TAS) mandates that all adults, including prescribed persons such as medical professionals, teachers, and police officers, have a legal obligation to report and prevent child abuse or neglect. This responsibility extends to concerns about unborn children. Prescribed persons must promptly report their concerns to the appropriate authorities, ensuring that detailed evidence and observations support their reports. There are penalties for failing to report, with certain defences available under specific circumstances. Even religious confessions that involve child abuse must be reported.

It is not the role of personnel to identify or investigate an allegation or concern, however personnel must continually report each new instance of suspicion of harm and / or breach of policy as they become aware, and to seek advice from their Line Manager when they are unsure.

7.1 Internal reporting requirements

The Incident Report template is available on Visual Care and accessible to all personnel. All personnel are trained in the Reporting requirements, location and completion of forms and notification requirements and support available. All incidents including minor incidents must be recorded on an Incident Report Template which is forwarded to the Compliance Officer. All incidents are entered into the Incident Register.

1. In adherence to internal reporting requirements, personnel must:

- Report: Any safety or wellbeing concerns for a child or young person, as well as any breaches of policy and procedures.
- Complete an Incident Report: An Incident Report must be completed as soon as possible following any incident. The report must include:
 - Details of those involved: Full names and roles of the person(s) involved.
 - Date, time, and location: The specific date, time, and location where the incident, disclosure, or allegation occurred.
 - Incident type and cause: A clear description of the type of incident and how it occurred.
 - Statements and factual information: A record of what was said and any relevant factual information, without assumptions. Where possible, include the exact words used by the person making the allegation or disclosure.
 - Actions taken: Documentation of any actions taken, including any treatment provided.
 - Record in the Child's File: Where appropriate, details of the incident should also be recorded in the child or young person's file.

2. The Compliance team

- **Ensure Immediate Response:** Confirm that the initial response to the incident was sufficient and take any further necessary action.
- **Assess and Categorise:** Evaluate the incident or breach of policy and categorise it as Minor, Moderate, or Critical, according to the definitions provided in Appendix 3.

- **Complete and Log Incident Report:** Ensure that the Incident Report is thoroughly completed and logged in the Incident Register, located on Visual Care.
- **Notify HR:** Inform Human Resources as required by the nature of the incident.
- **Confirm Completion:** Provide confirmation to the reporter that all necessary steps have been taken to manage the incident appropriately.
- **Ongoing Updates:** Where appropriate, continue to update the reporter on the progress of the incident management until the matter is resolved, while maintaining privacy and confidentiality obligations.

3. Moderate and critical incidents must be reported to the Director immediately.

For critical incidents, the Director may convene a Critical Incident Response Team, consisting of Managers from the affected program(s), personnel with responsibilities in HR, the Executive Team, and Police/Child Protection Liaison.

The role of the Critical Incident Response Team is to ensure that immediate responses are well-coordinated and effective, and to allocate resources to support these efforts. The team serves as the central point for managing and collecting information on incidents and supporting response efforts.

7.2 External reporting requirements

In addition to our internal reporting processes, our organisation has external reporting obligations under applicable legislation and regulatory frameworks, including the NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme) Practice Standards. This includes reporting incidents to the Police, child protection authorities, relevant government bodies, and any applicable professional, accrediting, or regulatory authorities.

All incidents requiring notification to external authorities must be reported to the Compliance Team and may involve Human Resources and the Director. The Compliance team is responsible for initiating any external notifications in accordance with governing legislation and regulatory requirements.

Under the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997 (TAS), all adults, including prescribed persons such as medical professionals, teachers, and police officers, have a legal obligation to report and prevent child abuse or neglect. Additionally, under the NDIS (Incident Management and Reportable Incidents) requirements, our organisation must promptly report any incidents involving participants that meet the NDIS reportable incident criteria, ensuring the safety, rights, and wellbeing of children and participants are maintained.

7.3 Mandatory reporting

Mandatory reporting requirements are the legal obligations of specified professionals to report instances of child abuse and/or neglect when they have a reasonable belief that abuse has occurred or is likely to occur.

If an incident meets the mandatory reporting thresholds, or if there is uncertainty, all personnel within our organisation who are Mandatory Reporters must notify the prescribed child protection authority of their suspicion and its basis as soon as practicable and before the end of their shift. This includes reporting incidents involving personnel within our organisation or others, such as family members.

This requirement does not prevent non-mandated individuals from making a report to child protection authorities or the police if they have reasonable concerns for the safety and wellbeing of a child.

7.4 Criminal Offences under Mandatory Reporting

It is a criminal offence for a mandated reporter to fail to report abuse where they have a reasonable belief that abuse has, or is likely to, occur.

7.5 Reportable Conduct

Our organisation falls within the jurisdiction of Tasmania where the Reportable Conduct Scheme is applicable. All reportable concerns must be reported to the Independent Regulator by the leader of the organisation (or their delegate). If the person raising the reportable concern reasonably believes the conduct to have occurred, this is enough for it to be reported. It is not relevant whether the leader of the organisation also holds that reasonable belief.

Reporting to Registration to Work with Vulnerable People (RWVP) under the Department of Justice Tasmania.

Should there be reasonable concern that an individual has acted in a way and or / been charged with or convicted of an offence which makes it inappropriate for them to engage in child-related work, RWVP authorities may need to be notified.

7.6 Reporting to the Australian Childhood Foundation (ACF)

As a Safeguarding Children Accredited organisation by the ACF), reports must be made to ACF by completing the TassieCare incident report on Visual Care

- All critical incidents to be verbally reported to ACF within 24 hours; and
- Any allegations of child abuse or neglect, that involves our personnel within 28 days of the incident in accordance with the requirements of the Safeguarding Children Program.
- It is the responsibility of the compliance team to ensure that this report is made and that at the end of 28 days a review into the incident is completed.

Reports to the ACF will be made by our Compliance team

8 Sharing of Information

8.1 Confidentiality and Privacy

Our organisation maintains the confidentiality and privacy of all concerned (including the alleged perpetrator), except if doing so would compromise the safety or wellbeing of the child or young person and/or investigation of the allegation, or other reporting legislative requirements.

After an incident has been reported and where appropriate, the information sharing process with child/ young person, their families and involved personnel will begin as soon as reasonably possible. The process will be adapted to fit child/ young person, family and personnel needs, the requirements of any investigation processes and any relevant confidentiality, privacy and employment law obligations.

Where appropriate to the circumstances and nature of the report, information will be provided to the child and family about:

- What was done to respond to the report/complaint including any investigation
- The decision or finding, including the main evidence that was obtained or unable to be obtained, and reasons why this decision was made
- Action taken, or that will be taken, to address the report/complaint, including by whom and when
- The family will be provided with regular progress updates even where limited information can be provided.
- Where police and/or child protection are involved, our organisation will provide the authorities with information about the incident to assist them in their investigations.

Where personnel are involved in breaches of Code of Conduct or Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, The Executive Director – People will advise on internal communications regarding action taken, if appropriate.

Where an allegation about the conduct of personnel is received from a child, young person, parent/caregiver, or other member of the community the allegation will be dealt with in a

confidential manner that is respectful to both complainant and respondent. Reasonable steps will be taken to protect personnel information from loss, unauthorised access, use, disclosure or any other misuse during the complaint-handling and investigation process. However, the organisation cannot give an assurance of absolute confidentiality, given statutory obligations and principles of natural justice.

If the incident has reached the threshold to report to external agencies, our organisation will consult with the relevant child protection authority / police to determine what information can be shared with parents / care givers.

This can include:

- Not contacting the parents / care givers in circumstances where they have alleged to have been engaged in the abuse, or the child is a mature minor and does not wish their parent/care giver to be contacted.
- To contact the parents / care givers and provide agreed information as soon as possible.
- Police and/or child protection will be consulted about the disclosing of information to child/ young person, their/ families, and personnel.

The decision to share information will consider:

- whether the ongoing safety of those involved in or impacted by the incident is compromised by the sharing or non-sharing of information
- the advice of police and child protection (care will be taken not to compromise their investigations)
- Relevant privacy legislation and information-sharing provisions (where provisions allow for the responsible exchange of information between relevant parties to promote child safety).
- the rights of those impacted by the incident to privacy, confidentiality, procedural fairness, and a presumption of innocence in accordance with organisational policies and employment law, and
- the need (of those potentially impacted by the incident) to know of the incident.

9. Supporting

It is important to address the support needs of those impacted by the incident including considerations of cultural safety for:

- the child/young person and their family (this includes any specific support needs for those who are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander; Culturally and Linguistically Diverse; or person with a disability; LGBTQI+, or a child or young person who is unable to live at home).
- other children or young people as witnesses to incident
- personnel who witness and/or reported the incident
- any personnel against whom a complaint is made, for example, offering professional counselling and providing them with information regarding procedural fairness
- other personnel impacted by the incident

It is further important to make clear to all other personnel who are aware of the incident that:

- any allegation does not mean the person is guilty, and that the allegation will be properly investigated and will include the right to 'procedural fairness'
- they are not to discuss the matter with any person, except as directed by police, child protection authorities and/or our Executive Direct and only in direct relation to investigation of the allegation.

10. Records and Documentation

All Incidents will be recorded on Visual Care which is TassieCare's Incident Register this will be used to determine the effectiveness of actions taken and to identify areas for improvement.

Our Executive Committee will oversee the administration of the completed Incident Report Form and any other documentation relating to the allegation and subsequent action.

To prevent access by unauthorised persons, our organisation stores any documentation associated with an allegation of abuse or neglect of a child or young person and breaches of policy by having:

hard-copy documentation stored in a locked filing cabinet (or similar)

electronic documentation stored in a password-protected folder (or similar).

We maintain and regularly monitor records of Incident Reports as part of our Incident Management processes to ensure that they are responded to effectively in accordance with this policy and that requirements for reporting to external authorities are complied with. These records will inform reviews of the policy as detailed in section 7.

11. Communication and Training

We communicate our Reporting policy and its requirements to children, young people and their families and our personnel.

Our organisation ensures all new personnel are informed and supported to understand our organisations safeguarding children and young people policies and procedures, paying particular attention to the practices detailed in this Reporting policy

Copies of this Reporting policy and our organisation's Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Code of Conduct are provided directly to personnel; they are also publicly accessible and available in child-friendly versions.

Our organisation provides training and guidance relating to an individual's safeguarding responsibilities and offers opportunities to seek clarity in relation to the commitments and behavioural expectations set out in our safeguarding policies.

We provide regular ongoing training of our personnel in relation to how keeping children and young people safe will be fulfilled, including training regarding children and young people's rights, voices and participation, cultural safety and humility.

12. Monitoring and Review

This document will be reviewed every three years, in consultation with stakeholders. Some circumstances may trigger an early review, this includes but not limited to legislative changes, organisational changes, incident outcomes and other matters deemed appropriate by the HR Director. Records are retained to document each review undertaken. Such records may include minutes of meetings and documentation of changes to policies and procedures that result from a review.

13. Related Policies and documents

- Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy
- Working with Children policy & procedure Tasmania
- Code of Conduct
- Incident Management Policy

14. Related Frameworks and Legislation

- Our Policy complies with relevant legislation and frameworks:
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989
- National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020
- Child and Youth Safe Organisations Framework
- Australian Human Rights Commission National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
- Children, Young Persons and their Family Act 1997 (TAS)

- Criminal Code Act 1924 (TAS)
- Child and Youth Safe organisations Act 2023 (TAS)
- NDIS (Practice Standards - Worker Screening) Rules 2018
- NDIS (Quality and Safeguards) Commission 2018
- Personal Information Protection Act 2004 (TAS)
- Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013 (TAS)
- Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023 (TAS)
- Disability Rights, Inclusion and Safeguarding Act 2024 (TAS)

15.Supporting Resources

- Appendix 1 Roles and Responsibilities
- Appendix 2 Definitions
- Appendix 3 Key Indicators of Abuse
- Appendix 4 Categories of Incidents
- Appendix 5 Reporting Flow Chart- Four Critical Actions
- Appendix 6 Jurisdictional Information

For clarification regarding this policy, please contact:

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Date: 23/11/2022.

Authorised by: Directors & Executive Team

Date: 29/11/2022

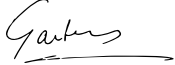
Updated and amended by: Jonathan Bishton, Executive Director - People

Date: 29/08/2024

This policy is Endorsed by:



Joshua Aird
Director



Gautam Chadda
Director

Appendix 1 Roles and Responsibilities

The responsibilities of each role in relation to the development, implementation and compliance of the TassieCare Reporting Policy are detailed below.

Position	Responsibility
Directors & Executive Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide oversight and endorsement of this policy. • Receiving incident reports for specified categories of incidents, provide support and advice as appropriate, and utilise data to inform organisation incident and risk management strategies
Position	Responsibility

<p>Director/HR Director</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement policies and procedures across the organisation. • Ensure personnel have access to and understand this policy and related procedures. • Ensure all managers/supervisors have access to support, advice and resource to understand and implement this policy and related procedures. • Reportable Conduct responsibility • Establish CIRT Term in response to Moderate and Critical Incidents • Initiates external reporting
<p>Workforce/HR/Quality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and update this document and supporting resources in consultation with relevant stakeholders. • Provide training and advice in the application of policy and procedures. • Assist with messaging across organisation if required
<p>Compliance Team Managers/Supervisors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure this policy and related procedure is followed and implemented • Receive and manage incident reports • Assess each situation reported and notify appropriate personnel of the incident as indicated on this policy • Responsible for the response and recovery coordination of an incident • Report to the Critical Incident Response Team where required • Provide support and advice in the application of this policy
<p>Personnel</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of and compliance with this policy and related procedure. • Immediately control the situation including liaising with key stakeholders, obtaining and documenting details of the incident • Complete incident report form and escalate to Safeguarding Coordinator/Manager

Appendix 2 Definitions

Term	Definition
<p>Bullying</p>	<p>Bullying involves the inappropriate use of power by one or more persons over another less powerful person or group and is generally an act that is repeated over time. Bullying has been described by researchers as taking many forms which are often interrelated and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal (name calling, put downs, threats); • Physical (hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting); • Social (ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating); and/or • Psychological (spreading rumours, stalking, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions).

Term	Definition
Child or young person	A person under the age of eighteen years.
Emotional or psychological abuse	Emotional or psychological abuse occurs when a child does not receive the love, affection or attention they need for healthy emotional, psychological and social development. Such abuse may involve repeated rejection or threats to a child. Constant criticism, teasing, ignoring, threatening, yelling, scapegoating, ridicule and rejection or continual coldness are all examples of emotional abuse. These behaviours continue to an extent that results in significant damage to the child's physical, intellectual or emotional wellbeing and development.
Family Violence	Family violence occurs when children are forced to live with violence between adults in their home. It is harmful to children. It can include witnessing violence or the consequences of violence. Family violence is defined as violence between members of a family or extended family or those fulfilling the role of family in a child or young person's life. Exposure to family violence places children and young people at increased risk of physical injury and harm and has a significant impact on their wellbeing and development.
Grooming	Grooming is a term used to describe what happens when a perpetrator of abuse builds a relationship with a child with a view to abusing them at some stage. There is no set pattern in relation to the grooming of children. For some perpetrators, there will be a lengthy period of time before the abuse begins. The child may be given special attention and, what starts as an apparently normal display of affection, such as cuddling, can develop into sexual touching or masturbation and then into more serious sexual behaviour. Other perpetrators may draw a child in and abuse them relatively quickly. Some abusers do not groom children but abuse them without forming a relationship at all. Grooming can take place in any setting where a relationship is formed, such as leisure, music, sports and religious activities, or in internet chatrooms, in social media or by other technological channels.
Harm	Harm to a child, is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing. It is immaterial how the harm is caused. Harm can be caused by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect. • sexual abuse or exploitation. • a single act, omission or circumstance; and • a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances.
National criminal history record check	Involves identifying and releasing any relevant Criminal History Information (CHI) subject to relevant spent convictions/non-disclosure legislation and/or information release policies

Term	Definition
Neglect	Neglect is the persistent failure or deliberate denial to provide the child with the basic necessities of life. Such neglect includes the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, adequate supervision, clean water, medical attention or supervision to the extent that the child's health and development is, or is likely to be, significantly harmed. Categories of neglect include physical neglect, medical neglect, abandonment or desertion, emotional neglect and educational neglect. The issue of neglect must be considered within the context of resources reasonably available.
Personnel	All who work for the organisation whether in a paid or unpaid capacity, including; employees, casual employees, volunteers, Board and committee members and contractors

Physical abuse	Physical abuse occurs when a person subjects a child to non-accidental physically aggressive acts. The abuser may inflict an injury intentionally or inadvertently as a result of physical punishment or the aggressive treatment of a child. Physically abusive behavior includes (but is not limited to) shoving, hitting, slapping, shaking, throwing, punching, biting, burning, excessive and physically harmful over training, and kicking. It also includes giving children harmful substances such as drugs, alcohol or poison. Certain types of punishment, whilst not causing injury can also be considered physical abuse if they place a child at risk of being hurt. Physical abuse also includes threats to physically harm.
Reasonable belief	A reasonable belief is more than suspicion. There must be some objective basis for the belief. However, it is not the same as having proof and does not require certainty. For example, a person is likely to have a reasonable belief if they; observed the conduct themselves, heard directly from a child that the conduct occurred, received information from another credible source (including another witness)
Reasonable steps	Personnel may breach duty of care towards a child or young person if they fail to act in the way a reasonable or diligent professional would have acted in the same situation. In relation to suspected child abuse, reasonable steps may include (but are not necessarily limited to): acting on concerns and suspicions of abuse as soon as practicable seeking appropriate advice or consulting with other professionals or agencies when the unsure of what steps to take, reporting the suspected child abuse to appropriate authorities such as Police or Child Protection, arranging counselling and/or other appropriate support for the child, providing ongoing support to the child and sharing information with other personnel who will also be responsible for monitoring and providing ongoing support to the child or young person.
Term	Definition
Sexual abuse	Sexual abuse occurs when an adult or a person of authority (e.g. older) involves a child in any sexual activity. Perpetrators of sexual abuse take advantage of their power, authority or position over the child or young person for their own benefit. It can include making sexual comments to a child, engaging children to participate in sexual conversations over the internet or on social media, kissing, touching a child's genitals or breasts, oral sex or intercourse with a child. Encouraging a child to view pornographic magazines, websites and videos is also sexual abuse. Engaging children to participate in sexual conversations over the internet is also considered sexual abuse.
Sexual exploitation	Sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse where offenders use their power, (physical, financial or emotional) over a child or young person, or a false identity, to sexually or emotionally abuse them. It often involves situations and relationships where children and young people receive something (food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money etc.) in return for participating in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can occur in person or online, and sometimes the child or young person may not even realise they are a victim.

Appendix 3-Key Indicators of Abuse

Abuse	Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> unexplained cuts, abrasions, bruising or swelling unexplained burns or scalds, cigarette burns rope burns or marks on arms, legs, neck, torso unexplained fractures, strains or sprains; dislocation of limbs recurrent injuries bite marks mouth and dental injuries ear or eye injuries disclosure of physical threats being made consistent sickness/nausea from potential poisons covering themselves with clothes inappropriate to weather conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> avoidance of particular staff, fear of a particular person sleep disturbances changes in behaviour (e.g. unusual mood swings, uncharacteristic aggression) changes in daily routine, changes in appetite unusual passivity, withdrawal self-harm, suicide attempts inappropriate explanations of how injuries occurred excessive compliance to staff Rough handling
Sexual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> direct or indirect disclosure of abuse or assault 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sleep disturbances changes in eating patterns

Abuse	Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
Sexual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> trauma to the breasts, buttocks, lower abdomen or thighs difficulty walking or sitting pain or itching in genital and/or anal area; bruising, bleeding or discharge self-harm, abuse, suicide attempts torn, stained or blood-stained underwear or bedclothes sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy unexplained money or gifts recurrent pain on passing urine or faeces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> inappropriate or unusual sexual behaviour or knowledge changes in social patterns sudden or marked changes in behaviour or temperament anxiety attacks, panic attacks, clinical depression refusal to attend usual places (e.g. work, school, respite) going to bed fully clothed excessive compliance to staff inappropriate or excessive masturbation
Psychological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> speech disorders in the case of a child, lags in physical development, failure to thrive injuries sustained from self-harm or abuse suicide attempts anxiety attacks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> self-harm or self-abusive behaviours challenging/extreme behaviours excessive compliance to staff very low self-esteem, feelings of worthlessness clinical depression marked decrease in interpersonal skills extreme attention-seeking behaviour



<p>Neglect</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical wasting, unhealthy weight levels • poor dental health • food from meals left on face and/or clothes throughout the day • dirty, unwashed body and/or face, body odour • person always wearing the same clothes • ill-fitting and/or unwashed clothes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • constant tiredness • persistent hunger • unexpectedly poor • social/interpersonal skills • signs of loss of communication and other skills • staff member, service provider, carer or support person consistently fails to bring the person to appointments, events, activities
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Abuse	Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
<p>Family Violence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • person is always over- or underdressed for the weather conditions • food is consistently poor quality, insufficient, inedible and/or unappetising • persistent illnesses without appropriate medical treatment • suffering persistent infestations such as scabies or headlice • disclosure of being left alone for long periods of time that are inappropriate to age or maturity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • person is persistently denied opportunities to • socialise with others in the community • excessively clingy or fearful
<p>Family Violence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eating and sleeping difficulties • concentration problems • inability to play constructively • clinginess • defiant behaviour • rebelliousness • temper tantrums • cruelty to pets • physical abuse of others • avoidance of peers • dropping out of school • academic failure • delinquency/offending • eating disorders • substance misuse • depression • suicide ideation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fearfulness • numbing • increased arousal • adjustment problems • developmental delay • physical complaints • overly compliant behaviour • withdrawal • loss of interest in social activities • self-harm • poor school performance • use of controlling behaviours • distrust of adults • violent behaviours • violence toward a parent/care giver (particularly their mother) • early pregnancy



Appendix 4- Categories of Incidents

Incident Type	Description	Managed/escalated to
Minor Incident	<p>Events which cause or may cause minor physical stress and or emotional stress to personnel or clients/service users.</p> <p>Near misses and minor breaches of professional standards or agency policy (for example the Code of Conduct) that</p>	Frontline staff and direct Managers/Supervisors/

Incident Type	Description	Managed/escalated to
Moderate Incident	do not compromise the health and safety of clients/service users, including children and young people and personnel.	Compliance Team Compliance Officer/ State Manager – Participant Care & Service Delivery/ HR
Moderate Incident	<p>Events which cause or are likely to cause physical stress or emotional distress to personnel or clients/service users.</p> <p>Near misses and criminal behaviour or breaches of professional standards or agency policy (for example the Code of Conduct) by personnel that may compromise the health and safety of clients / service users, including children and young people and personnel.</p>	Compliance Team Compliance Officer/ State Manager – Participant Care & Service Delivery/ HR
Critical Incident	<p>Criminal behaviour, breaches of professional standards or organisational policy (for example Code of Conduct) by personnel that cause harm to or significantly compromise the health and safety of including client / service users, including children and young people and personnel.</p> <p>A critical Incident, in relation to a child under the care of the Organisation (whether or not at the relevant time the child is on premises controlled by the Organisation or is otherwise under the physical supervision of the Organisation) includes the occurrence of any of the following events or any similar event: the child dies and: abuse or neglect is known or suspected to be a factor in the death. the death is, or appears to be, the result of suicide or accident. the death is, or appears to be, the result of alleged murder, homicide, reckless conduct or an act of violence; or the child is under statutory care.</p> <p>a child has not died but has sustained significant harm or is at risk of harm under the categories described in the relevant jurisdictional legislation of abuse and neglect; ACF notifies the Organisation that a child has been, in the opinion of ACF, subjected to cumulative inaction or wrong action; or ACF notifies the Organisation that an incident and or accumulation of incidents has occurred in relation to the child that, in ACF's opinion, gives rise to serious concerns about the adherence by the Organisation, or any employee, or contractor of the Organisation, to any part of the</p>	Director/HR Director and Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT Coordinator)

Safeguarding Children Program (Definition as per the ACF Accreditation Terms and Conditions Contract)	
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Appendix 5 – Responding to incidents – Four Critical

5.1 Actions

Responding		
Responding to an incident <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a child or young person is at immediate risk of harm, you must ensure their safety provide immediate support Contact 000 emergency services if required 	Responding to a disclosure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen and provide reassurance Believe the child/young person Record notes as early as possible 	Responding to a breach of policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide immediate response as necessary All breaches, however minor, must be reported and documented



Reporting		
Internal Reporting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All incidents and breaches to policy are to be reported to Safeguarding Children Coordinator/Service Delivery Manager/Compliance Manager on 03 6421 6066 All incidents and breaches of policy are to be recorded via Incident Report on Visual Care Safeguarding Coordinator/Compliance to categorise incidents, initiate a response and escalate moderate and critical incidents to HR Manager/Director 	External and Mandatory Reporting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> External authorities such as police and child protection services may need to be contacted. Commission for Children & Young People: 03 6166 1361 Report to Australian Childhood Foundation. 	Reportable Conduct and/or WWVP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of justice TAS



Sharing of information
<p style="text-align: center;">Confidentiality and Privacy</p> <p>Information sharing judgments will be guided by the best interests of the child and, where appropriate, guided by external authorities the HR Director will advise of internal communications where breaches of policy have occurred</p>



Supporting
<p style="text-align: center;">Supporting</p> <p>Ongoing support should be provided to those impacted by incident. Consideration should be made to cultural safety, equity, and diversity</p>

Appendix 6 – Jurisdictional Information

Tasmania

6.1 TAS Related Legislation Table

Tasmania	Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997 (Tas.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption Act 1988 (Tas.) • Child Care Act 2001 (Tas.) • Child Protection (International Measures) Act 2003 (Tas.) • Children, Young Persons and their Families Amendment Act 2009 (Tas.) • Commissioner for Children and Young People Act 2016 (Tas.) • Community Protection (Offender Reporting) Bill 2016 (Tas.) • Education Act 1994 (Tas.) • Family Violence Act 2004 (Tas.) • Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013 (Tas.) • Youth Justice Act 1997 (Tas.) • Justice Legislation Amendment (Organisational Liability for Child Abuse) Act 2019
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6.2 Mandatory Reporting Guidance Resource

Mandatory reporting laws require specified people to report suspected abuse and neglect to government child protection services in Australia.

Tasmania mandatory reporting laws cover an extensive list of professions, and the details of the reporting requirements are provided in the table below.

Legal provisions	Sections 3, 4 and 14 of the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997 (Tas.)
Who is mandated to report?	All members of our Organisation Medical practitioners; registered or enrolled nurses; persons registered under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Tasmania) in the midwifery, dental (dentists, dental therapist, dental hygienist or oral health therapist) or psychology professions; police officers; probation officers; principals and teachers in any educational institution including kindergartens; persons who provide child care or a child care service for fee or reward; persons concerned in the management of an approved education and care service, within the meaning of the Education and Care Services National Law (Tasmania) or a child care service licensed under the Child Care Act 2001; a member of the clergy of any church or religious denomination; a member of the Parliament of this State; any other person who is employed or engaged as an employee for, of, or in, or who is a volunteer in, a government agency that provides health, welfare, education, child care or residential services wholly or partly for children, and an organisation that receives any funding from the Crown for the provision of such services; and any other person of a class determined by the Minister by notice in the Gazette to be prescribed persons.

<p>What must be reported?</p>	<p>Knowledge, or a belief or suspicion on reasonable grounds that: a child has been or is being 'abused' or 'neglected' or is an affected child within the meaning of the Family Violence Act 2004 (a child whose safety, psychological wellbeing or interests are affected or likely to be affected by family violence); or there is a reasonable likelihood of a child being killed or abused or neglected by a person with whom the child resides; or while a woman is pregnant, that there is reasonable likelihood that after the birth of the child: the child will suffer abuse or neglect, or may be killed by a person with whom the child is likely to reside; or that the child will require medical treatment or other intervention as a result of the behaviour of the woman or another person with whom the woman resides or is likely to reside, before the birth of the child.</p> <p>Note on extent of harm required to activate the duty (section 3(1) definition of 'abuse and neglect': for all forms except sexual abuse, reports must be made where: (i) the injured, abused or neglected person has suffered, or is likely to suffer, physical or psychological harm detrimental to the person's wellbeing; or (ii) the injured, abused or neglected person's physical or psychological development is in jeopardy. All instances of suspected sexual abuse must be reported.</p>
<p>Abuse and neglect types that must be reported</p>	<p>Sexual abuse (any) Physical abuse Emotional/psychological abuse Neglect Exposure to family violence</p>

6.3 For immediate help

- To report concerns that are life threatening, ring TAS Police: 000
- To report concerns about the safety of a child contact the Child Safety Service: 1800 000 123
- Mandatory reporters with less serious concerns can [report online](#).