

YOUNG LEADERS

YOUTH SERVICES

Our Commitment to Child & Youth Safety

At Young Leaders Youth Services, the safety, wellbeing and empowerment of children and young people are at the heart of everything we do. We believe every young person has the right to feel safe, heard, respected, valued and supported, regardless of their background, circumstances, culture, identity, ability or life experiences. Our role extends beyond providing a service. We aim to build genuine, professional and trusted relationships that create opportunities for young people to develop confidence, strengthen their independence, discover their potential and feel connected to their communities. Above all, the safety and wellbeing of every child and young person in our care comes first.

Safety Comes First

Young Leaders Youth Services has zero tolerance for child abuse, neglect, exploitation, discrimination, grooming or any behaviour that places a child or young person at risk of harm. Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone within our organisation. Our mentors, support workers, employees, contractors and representatives are expected to maintain appropriate professional boundaries, identify and respond to potential risks, take disclosures and concerns seriously, and follow relevant reporting and escalation procedures. We are committed to maintaining child-safe practices that align with applicable safeguarding requirements and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. Safety is not simply a policy we have on file. It is a responsibility that guides how we recruit, train, supervise, communicate, make decisions and deliver our services every day.

Creating Safe and Supportive Relationships

We understand that trust is earned. Many young people accessing support services may have experienced instability, trauma, disengagement, disadvantage or difficult relationships with adults and services. For this reason, our mentors focus on creating consistent, respectful and professional relationships where young people can feel comfortable being themselves.

We listen without judgement.

We communicate respectfully.

We maintain professional boundaries.

We recognise individual strengths.

We provide encouragement without creating unrealistic expectations.

Most importantly, we want every young person engaging with Young Leaders Youth Services to know that their voice matters.

Inclusion, Diversity and Belonging

Every young person deserves to belong. Young Leaders Youth Services is committed to providing culturally safe, inclusive and accessible environments where children and young people from different backgrounds, cultures, communities, identities and abilities are treated with dignity and respect. We recognise that every young person's journey is different. Rather than expecting young people to fit into one approach, we aim to understand the individual and adapt our support to their strengths, needs, goals and circumstances. We believe difference should never become a barrier to opportunity.

Trauma-Informed and Person-Centred Support

We recognise that behaviour often communicates something deeper. Our approach seeks to understand the young person behind the behaviour rather than defining them by their challenges, diagnosis, circumstances or past decisions. Through trauma-informed and person-centred practice, our mentors aim to provide consistency, structure, positive role modelling and opportunities for young people to develop healthier relationships, decision-making skills and confidence. We focus not only on where a young person has been, but on where they can go next.

Empowerment Through Mentorship

Mentorship is at the core of Young Leaders Youth Services. We believe meaningful change can begin when a young person has someone consistent in their corner someone who listens, encourages them, challenges them appropriately and believes in what they can achieve. Through mentoring, community engagement, education, employment pathways, life-skills development, recreational activities and practical programs, we create opportunities for young people to discover their strengths and build skills for their future. Our goal is not to make young people dependent on our services. Our goal is to help them develop the confidence, skills, relationships and independence needed to move forward in their own lives.

Listening to Young People

Young people should have a voice in decisions that affect them. We encourage participants to communicate what they enjoy, what they find difficult, what they want to achieve and how they feel they can best be supported. Where appropriate, we involve young people in planning their goals, activities and supports. We also encourage feedback and provide opportunities for young people to raise concerns without fear of judgement or negative consequences. When a young person tells us something does not feel right, we listen and respond.

Working Together to Keep Young People Safe

Protecting and supporting young people requires collaboration. We value strong relationships with families, carers, schools, community organisations, government agencies, allied health professionals, support coordinators, Youth Justice, child protection services and other relevant stakeholders. Where appropriate and permitted, we communicate and collaborate with those involved in a young person's support network to strengthen safety, consistency and positive outcomes. We believe stronger communication between the people surrounding a young person can create stronger safeguards and better opportunities.

Accountability and Continuous Improvement

Child safety requires ongoing commitment. Young Leaders Youth Services is committed to continually reviewing and strengthening our policies, procedures, training, risk-management practices and service delivery. We welcome appropriate feedback from young people, families, employees, stakeholders and community partners. When concerns are identified, we take them seriously. When improvements can be made, we are prepared to make them. We expect everyone representing Young Leaders Youth Services to uphold our values and safeguarding responsibilities, and we believe accountability is essential to maintaining the trust placed in our organisation.

Our Commitment

Our commitment is simple but significant:

- Every child and young person deserves to be safe.
- Every young person deserves to be heard.
- Every young person deserves to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Every young person deserves opportunities to grow.
- And every young person deserves adults and communities willing to stand beside them while they build their future.

Young Leaders Youth Services will continue working to create environments where young people feel protected, included, empowered and encouraged to become the strongest version of themselves. Safeguarding young people is not one part of what we do. It is the foundation of everything we do.