

Parent Information Fact Sheet 9

CHILD PROTECTION

Centacare Child Care Services [CCCS] and St. Andrew's Outside School Hours Care is committed to ensuring that the safety and wellbeing of children are maintained at all times during their participation in activities at child care facilities under its sponsorship and/or management.

CCCS aims to promote a safe environment that can minimise the risk to all children and assist all staff, and volunteers to recognise child abuse and neglect and follow the appropriate notification procedures when reporting alleged abuse or harm. Child abuse or neglect can be defined as Physical Abuse, Emotional Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Neglect, Domestic Violence and Bullying.

It is every child's right to be safe and protected from all forms of abuse, neglect, violence or exploitation. It is the legal and moral obligation of every adult who works with children to ensure their safety and wellbeing. This duty of care is held by all those involved in the outside school hours care services including owners, sponsors, management committee members, licensees, coordinators, casual and permanent child care professionals, students and volunteers.

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CCCS acknowledges that child abuse and or neglect, and the reporting of allegations of child abuse and neglect are highly sensitive, and should be dealt with in a sensitive, consistent, professional and confidential manner.

If an incident of child abuse occurs or is suspected to have occurred in a Child Care Service it is not the responsibility of persons within that service to take it upon themselves to determine whether the allegation is true or false. It is the responsibility of the Regional Coordinator CCCS to follow policy and procedures that support best practice, and follow Queensland legislative requirements, notifying the Office for Early Childhood Education and Care (OECEC), Department of Child Safety and Queensland Police Service as appropriate.

Depending on the nature of the allegations and the extent of the situation, the OECEC, Department of Child Safety and Queensland Police Service will determine the manner in which the matter will be investigated.

Regional Coordinators are responsible for implementing the Child Protection policy within their services and Service Coordinators/Directors are responsible for ensuring staff and volunteers who have contact with children and young people as part of their day-to-day work have access to relevant information so they are aware of their responsibilities.

Staff responsibilities are to ensure adequate supervision of children and adherence to the code of conduct to ensure that harm does not occur whilst children are in care; and respond to any suspicions they might have that a child has been abused by reporting their concerns to appropriate authorities.

Staff are also responsible for keeping their skills and information up to date regarding; the different types of child abuse and the warning signs that can indicate a child may have been abused, the reporting process and the information most helpful to the child protection practitioners working in the Department of Child Safety, the legislative responsibility to maintain confidentiality of specific information that relates to children in care and the protection provided by legislation for people who report their concerns about a child to either the Department of Child Safety or the Queensland Police Service.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN

A service that values the right of children to a safe environment, including access to child care professionals that are accepting and easy to talk to can send a powerful message to children that the adults in the service will look after them, keep them safe and help them if they have a problem. Our recruitment and selection process supports the provision of a safe environment for children.

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Prior to commencement all staff and volunteers apply for a Positive Notice Blue Card and suitability is checked for all in house guests, sports program deliverers and bus drivers for excursions.