



Napier Family Centre

making the future happen together

Child and Young Person Protection Policy

1. POLICY

The Napier Family Centre (NFC) is focused on ensuring the wellbeing and safety of children, including prevention of child abuse or maltreatment. This policy provides guidance to staff on how to identify and respond to concerns about the wellbeing of a child, including possible abuse or neglect.

The interests of the child will be the paramount consideration when any action is taken in response to suspected abuse or neglect. The NFC commits to supporting the statutory agencies Oranga Tamariki and the New Zealand Police to investigate abuse and will report suspected cases and concerns to these agencies as per our processes.

Our Designated Child Protection Officer is the CEO and is responsible for the maintenance and review of this policy.

This policy applies to all NFC staff, including contractors and volunteers. Staff will not assume responsibility beyond the level of their experience and training and will seek advice from their Service Division Lead before taking action if they are unsure. The NFC is committed to ensuring staff have access to the training they need.

2. DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Policy definitions and abbreviations are to provide a clear understanding of what is described (remove terms that are not applicable.)

Child/Young Person	A person who is under the age of 18 years
Children's Worker	Children's worker means a person who works in, or provides, a regulated service, and the person's work: a) may or does involve regular or overnight contact with a child or children (other than with children who are co-workers); and b) takes place without a parent or guardian of the child, or of each child, being present.
Core worker	Core worker means a children's worker whose work in or providing a regulated service requires or allows that, when the person is present with a child or children in the course of that work, the person: a) is the only children's worker present; or b) is the children's worker who has primary responsibility for, or authority over, the child or children present. For the purposes of this policy core workers include all staff that are client facing and see clients, such as counselling, psychologists, social workers, teachers, financial mentors, facilitators and any volunteer or student placement roles in social services where they will have access to clients.
ELT	Executive Leadership Team. Made up of the Business Support Manager, Social Services Operations Manager, Early Childhood Education Manager, Funding and Communications Manager, and the Chief Executive Officer.

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Guardian	A legal guardian is an adult who's responsible for the upbringing and care of a child
H&S	Health & Safety
HR	Human Resources
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
NFC	Napier Family Centre
Non-core worker	Non-core worker means a children's worker who is not a core worker. For the purposes of this policy non-core workers includes all administration staff and senior management that do not have caseloads/see clients.
NFC Social Services	Is the delivery of services related to social services within NFC, that is Building Financial Capability, Counselling, Social Work, Parenting Programmes or support, and other client facing social service operations. It does not include Bright Futures home-based early childhood and education, and Sunny Days early childhood education and care centre.
Service Division Lead	A staff member with overall responsibility for the management of the day-to-day provision of an NFC Service.
Staff Member	A person working for NFC, including an employee, contractor, consultant, student, or associate, whether working on a full-time, part-time, casual, or temporary basis.
Volunteer	A person who freely offers their time to support NFC's work, whether working on a full time, part time, casual, or temporary basis. Volunteers that undertake governance work, bread run, or food parcel collectors are not considered a child worker as they do not have contact with children or undertake a regulated service. Volunteers will undertake a police check and this needs to have a clean result before they undertake any volunteer work. Police checks will be updated every three years for Volunteers.

3. PURPOSE, SCOPE AND PRINCIPLES

Our Child and Young Person Protection policy supports our NFC staff to respond appropriately to potential child protection concerns, including suspected abuse or neglect. It is the NFCs commitment to protect children from abuse and to recognise the important roles all our NFC staff have in protecting children.

This policy provides a broad framework and expectations to protect children, including (but not limited to) staff behaviours in response to actual or suspected child abuse and neglect. It is intended is to protect all children that staff may encounter, including siblings, children of adults accessing NFC services and any other children encountered by staff as they provide their service.

In addition to guiding staff to make referrals of suspected child abuse and neglect to the statutory agencies, this policy will also assist staff in identifying and responding to the needs of vulnerable children whose wellbeing is of concern.

Throughout New Zealand statutory and non-statutory agencies provide a network of mutually supportive services, and it is important for our organisation to work with these to respond to the needs of vulnerable children and families/whānau in a manner proportionate to the level of need and risk. If in doubt seek further advice from the Child Protection Officer of NFC or contact Oranga Tamariki contact centre for further guidance.

To ensure that the NFC demonstrates continual improvement in child and young person protection practice, we will work to build and maintain effective relationships with child and young person protection agencies and, support our

staff to protect children and young people from abuse by consulting with experts with specialist knowledge and, providing the necessary training options.

We are committed to recruiting workers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made (see NFC Recruitment Policy) and as part of their induction, new staff are made aware of our Child and Young Person Protection policy.

The NFC commits to exploring opportunities to work with other providers, including from other sectors, to develop a network of child and young person protection practice in our community.

4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Each child/young person are treated with respect and dignity.
- Each child/young person are given positive guidance directed towards promoting behaviour that is appropriate for their age and state of health.
- The interest and protection of the child/young person is paramount in all actions.
- We recognise the rights of family/whanau to participate in the decision-making about their child and we support families/whanau to protect their children.
- We will comply with all relevant legislative responsibilities.
- We are committed to sharing information in a timely way and to discuss any concerns about an individual with the right people at the right time; this includes working constructively with key agencies such as Oranga Tamariki and the New Zealand Police.
- We are committed to promote a culture where staff and volunteers feel they can constructively identify the signs and symptoms of potential abuse and neglect and can take appropriate action
- We are committed to regular training for all NFC staff who work with children/young people who engage in our services.

5. DEFINITIONS

Child Abuse Legal Definition

Child abuse means the harming (whether physically, emotionally or sexually), ill treatment, abuse, neglect or deprivation of any child or young person.

Section 2 – Oranga Tamariki Act 1989. Children’s Act 2014

Emotional Abuse

- Emotional abuse occurs when a child’s emotional, psychological, or social well-being and sense of worth is continually battered. This includes confinement, isolation, verbal assault, humiliation, intimidation, infantilisation, or any other treatment that may diminish the sense of identity, dignity, and self-worth. We also include exposure to Family Violence in this category.

Neglect

- Neglect is a pattern of behaviour that occurs over a period and results in impaired functioning/development. It is a failure to provide for a child’s basic needs.

Physical Abuse

- Physical abuse can be caused from smacking, punching, beating, kicking, shaking, biting, burning, or throwing the child. Physical abuse may also result from excessive or inappropriate discipline or violence within the family and is considered abuse regardless of whether it was intended to hurt the child. Physical abuse may be the result of a single episode or of a series of episodes.

Sexual Abuse

- Sexual abuse includes acts or behaviours where an adult, older or more powerful person uses a child for a sexual purpose. There are two different types of child sexual abuse. These are called contact abuse and non-contact abuse.
- Contact abuse involves touching activities where an abuser makes physical contact with a child, including penetration. It includes sexual touching of any part of the body whether the child’s wearing clothes or not; rape or penetration by putting an object or body part inside a child’s mouth, vagina or anus; forcing or encouraging a

child to take part in sexual activity; making a child take their clothes off, touch someone else's genitals or masturbate.

- Non-contact abuse involves non-touching activities, such as grooming, exploitation, persuading children to perform sexual acts over the internet and flashing. It includes: encouraging a child to watch or hear sexual acts; not taking proper measures to prevent a child being exposed to sexual activities by others; meeting a child following sexual grooming with the intent of abusing them; online abuse including making, viewing or distributing child abuse images; allowing someone else to make, view or distribute child abuse images; showing pornography to a child; sexually exploiting a child for money, power or status (child exploitation).

NFC Staff should become familiar with possible physical and behaviour clues to child abuse as listed in section 12 of the policy.

6. GENERAL GUIDELINES

The NFC Child Protection Officer will:

- Ensure adherence to policy and provide support when guidance from staff is needed.
- If in doubt talk to your Service Division Lead and if your Service Division Lead needs support, they will talk to the Child Protection Officer for NFC.
- Always prioritise the safety and wellbeing of the child and young person. Take immediate action to ensure their safety.
- Maintain confidentiality. Failure of NFC staff to comply with this policy will be regarded as serious misconduct.
- Maintain and increase NFC staff awareness of how to prevent, recognise and respond to abuse, including learning about appropriate touching.
- Ensure NFC staff are safety checked and re-checking (including Police Vetting) in accordance with the Children's (Requirements for Safety Checks of Children's Workers) Regulations 2015 and Safety Checking Policies for staff.
- Ensure that NFC staff and adults visiting or working in the service are well supported with guidance on how to be visible in the activities they perform with children and young people, through supervision plans and documenting people on site.
- Maintain appropriate records.
- Ensure there are procedures to protect staff from unjustified allegations of abuse.
- Report/refer to the appropriate agencies including Oranga Tamariki or the Police.

Napier Family Centre Staff will:

- Always prioritise the safety and wellbeing of the child.
- Maintain confidentiality. Failure of staff to comply with this policy will be regarded as serious misconduct.
- Maintain and increase their own awareness of how to prevent, recognise and respond to abuse, including learning about appropriate touching.
- Consult with their Service Division Lead and/or the Child Protection Officer as necessary and work on next steps when working through any allegations, concerns or complaints.
- Ensure that staff and other adults visiting or working in the service are well supported with guidance on how to be visible in the activities they perform with children through supervision plans and documenting people on site.
- Respond appropriately to a child who initiates physical contact in seeking affection, reassurance, or comfort. It is not appropriate to force any form of unwanted affection/touching on a child. Touching should not be initiated to gratify adult needs. Physical contact during the changing or cleansing of children must be for the purpose of that task only and not be more than is necessary for the job.
- Maintain appropriate records.
- Ensure they regularly seek out training and, educational and informational resources if needed for their role to support them to document concerns or report/refer to the appropriate agencies.
- Ensure immediate care for a vulnerable child
- Service Division Leads will carry out staff safety checking as outlined in the Staff Safety Checking Policy.
- Service Division Leads will ensure that staff induction covers this policy and adequate training is provided.

7. GUIDELINES WHEN RESPONDING TO SUSPECTED ABUSE OR NEGLECT

The following measures will be taken by any person whom this policy applies to who needs to respond to suspected abuse or neglect:

- All allegations of child abuse will be taken seriously, and child safety and welfare will guide all key decisions.
- Believe what children tell you and what you see.
- Act on your concerns. Do not leave it for someone else or hope it will not happen again.
- Always take immediate action in the short term to ensure the immediate safety and protection of the child/ren. This will involve consideration if the person who has been alleged needs to be excluded from contact with the child. Advice should be sought from Oranga Tamariki or the Police if there is an immediate risk of the child being abused again.
- When suspected or alleged abuse or neglect is first disclosed, you must follow the process outlined below and if you need to report use the Record of Disclosure, Observation or Other Concerns in Appendix B. If necessary, use the Body Map Form in Appendix C to record any visible signs of harm or abuse.
- Record clear concerns and observations, factual statements with dates.
- Do not make decisions alone. All suspicions or observed instances or reports of incidences should be reported as soon as possible, and within 24 hours to your Service Division Lead, for support and guidance on next steps.
- The Child Protection Officer will be involved and consulted on key decisions where needed.
- If there is clear evidence, or reasonable cause, to believe an instance of child abuse has taken place:
 - Ensure the child's immediate safety
 - If there are immediate safety concerns ring the Police or Oranga Tamariki and seek advice.

8. PROCESS IF ABUSE IS DISCLOSED BY A CHILD

Any person whom this policy applies to will:

Listen to the child

Disclosures by children are often subtle and need to be handled with particular care, including an awareness of the child's cultural identity and how that affects interpretation of their behaviour and language

Reassure the child

Let the child know that they:

- Are not in trouble.
- Have done the right thing.

Ask open-ended prompts, e.g. "What happened next?"

Do not interview the child (in other words, do not ask questions beyond open prompts for the child to continue). Do not make promises that can't be kept, e.g., "I will keep you safe now".

If the child is visibly distressed

Provide appropriate reassurance and re-engage in appropriate activities under supervision until they can participate in ordinary activities.

If the child is not in immediate danger

Re-involve the child in ordinary activities and explain what you are going to do next.

9. RECORDING AND NOTIFYING ORANGA TAMARIKI

Recording

Formally record anything said by the child/young person. Note the date, time, location and names of people that may be relevant.

Record the factual concerns or observations that have led to the suspicion of abuse or neglect (e.g., any physical, behavioural or developmental concerns).

Any other information that may be relevant.

Decision making

Discuss any concern with your Service Division Lead or the Child Protection Officer

Notifying Authorities

Notify Oranga Tamariki promptly if there is a belief that a child/young person has been or is likely to be abused or neglected. A phone call to the National Contact Centre is the preferred initial contact with Oranga Tamariki as this enables both parties to discuss the nature of the concerns and appropriate response options. Oranga Tamariki advice will include what, if any, immediate action may be appropriate, including referring the concern to the Police.

Oranga Tamariki – Making a report of concern call: [0508 326 459](tel:0508326459)

Or email contact@ot.govt.nz

Storing relevant information

Keep a confidential record of any related discussions (including copies of correspondence, where appropriate) and document any advice received, the action NFC took.

10. ALLEGATIONS OR CONCERNS ABOUT AN NFC STAFF MEMBER

When there are suspicions or allegations of abuse by an NFC staff member, the Service Division Lead, must immediately ensure that the suspected individual does not have any contact with the child making the allegation.

A risk assessment must be undertaken to determine what level of access, if any, that person should have to other children. The suspected staff member will be prevented from having further unsupervised access to children during any investigation and will be informed fully of their rights.

To ensure the child and staff member are kept safe, the Service Division Lead, in consultation with the Child Protection Officer, may take steps to remove the staff member against whom an allegation has been made from the environment. We recognise added stress to staff in such situations and will ensure support is available. The person managing the child abuse issue will not be the same person that is managing the employment issue. If there is a need to pursue an allegation as an employer, we will consult with Oranga Tamariki or the Police before advising the person concerned.

We will follow all employment matters and work through the situation in good faith but with child safety as the paramount consideration. Following a full investigation and outcome, any mandatory reports will be made to the appropriate professional agencies if this is a legal requirement.

11. CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

We will seek advice from Oranga Tamariki and/or the Police before identifying information about an allegation that is shared with anyone, other than the necessary staff at NFC for support and guidance. Staff should be aware that:

- Under sections 15 and 16 of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 any person who believes that a child has been or is likely to be, harmed physically, emotionally, or sexually or ill-treated, abused, neglected or deprived may report the matter to Oranga Tamariki or the Police and provided the report is made in good faith, no civil, criminal or disciplinary proceedings may be brought against them.
- When collecting personal information about individuals, it is important to be aware of the requirements of the privacy principles – i.e., the need to collect the information directly from the individual concerned and when doing so to be transparent about: the purposes for collecting the information and how it will be used; who can see the information; where it is held; what is compulsory/voluntary information; and that people have a right to request access to and correction of their information.
- Staff may, however, disclose information under the Privacy Act/Health Information Privacy Code where there is good reason to do so – such as where there is a serious risk to individual health and safety (see privacy principle 11/Code rule 11). Disclosure about ill-treatment or neglect of a child/young person may also be made to the Police or Oranga Tamariki under sections 15 and 16 of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989

The Protected Disclosures Act 2000 encourages staff to disclose and report information about serious wrongdoing in the workplace. This Act provides protection for staff from criminal and legal retribution and outlines the procedure to be followed when investigating the matter.

12. CHILD SAFE PRACTICE GUIDELINES

To avoid situations where staff may be alone with children, all staff should examine the opportunities or possible situations where staff may be alone with children if consent has not been provided as per the Client Consent Policy e.g., 1:1 counselling session. Wherever possible an open-door policy for all spaces should be used (excludes toilets). Staff should be aware of where all children are, at all times.

Visitors should always be monitored, by staff and volunteers and outside instructors should be monitored by staff.

If activities require one to one physical contact parents and caregivers should be advised.

Where a child or young person requires assistance, e.g., if they are intellectually or physically disabled, if possible, involve the parents/caregivers and outside agencies (in education such as the Ministry of Education's Special Education group) to assist. If this assistance is not available, ensure that the staff members are aware of the appropriate procedures when giving assistance.

Staff should avoid being alone when transporting a child or young person, unless an emergency requires it. Except in an emergency, children and young people are not to be taken from our organisation's premises, or from the programme we provide, without written parental consent.

13. RECOGNISING ABUSE

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is any act or acts that result in inflicted injury to a Child or Young Person. The injuries may be deliberately inflicted, or unintentional. Injuries caused by physical abuse may include:

- Abdominal or head injuries
- Cuts and abrasions
- Fractures and sprains
- Internal injuries
- Burns and scalds
- Poisoning

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse is any act or acts that results in the exploitation of a Child or Young Person, whether consensual or not, for the sexual gratification of a parent or other person. These acts may be performed by adults, or other children, or young people. Sexual abuse may include, but is not restricted to:

- Non-contact abuse; (exhibitionism, voyeurism, suggestive behaviour or comments, exposure to pornographic material)
- Contact abuse: (fondling, masturbation, oral sex, finger or object penetration, encouraging child to perform sexual acts, rape, molestation, sodomy, incest)
- Involvement in activities for pornography or prostitution

Psychological maltreatment or emotional abuse

Rejection

Children or Young People may be rejected by adults for a number of reasons. Significant behavioural problems may make it difficult for adults to accept and love them, to the extent that the rejection leads to neglect of the need for nurture. This type of rejection is more than the safe, emotional distance an adult may keep from a Child or Young Person.

Children or Young People who are different in some way (commonly but not exclusively those with disabilities) may be rejected consciously or unconsciously at any age. Again, neglect is a common consequence, but emotional and even physical abuse is also common.

Isolation

Cutting Children off from normal life, from their family/whānau and community, or from other Children and Young People in the home, leads to slow development and affects self-esteem and social relationships. It is harmful to stop a Child or Young Person from participating in activities outside the home, or to lock them up as punishment.

Terrorizing

Creating an atmosphere of fear by verbal and non-verbal methods is another form of abuse, e.g. yelling and cursing Children and Young People; insisting they comply with authority in order to gain 'privileges' which are actually their rights; threatening; constantly punishing; enforcing strict rules by using public ridicule and shaming; constantly criticising and name calling.

Ignoring

Psychological unavailability is a type of maltreatment e.g., being emotionally detached, seldom talking, playing, disregarding the Child's or Young Person's interests and wishes.

Corrupting

Allowing and instigating anti-social behaviour of Children or Young People. This may occur either directly or by not making efforts to socialise them. Examples are exploiting Children, behaving in questionable moral and legal ways, encouraging Children or Young Persons to break the law, or violate norms.

Causing developmentally harmful conditions, some examples include:

- Administering non-prescribed medication or over-medicating a Child or Young Person in order to control them
- Overfeeding a Child or Young Person to a serious and harmful degree
- Promoting conformity and failing to recognise the individuality and uniqueness of each Child or Young Person

Neglect

- Failure to provide adequate food or clothing
- Lack of supervision
- Failure to get medical attention

The use of corporal or emotional punishment to discipline Children and Young People is strictly forbidden and could represent serious misconduct as it is harmful, unnecessary and illegal - Section 59 of the Crimes Act 1961 prohibits the use of force for the purposes of correction of children in New Zealand.

14. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Children's Act 2014
- Oranga Tamariki Act 1989
- Domestic Violence Act 1995.
- Protected Disclosure Act 2000.
- NFC Privacy Policy.
- NFC Complaints Process
- Child Matters Website - <https://www.childmatters.org.nz/>

15. VERSION UPDATES

December 2024: Updates to Definitions and change of reference OF Service Division Managers to Service Division Leads

Appendix A

Record of Disclosure, Observation or Other Child Safety Concerns

Use this form to record in detail the reason for your concern, include all information. If applicable you may need to use the body map form as well in Appendix C.

Remember if the child is in immediate danger, call 111.

Child's Name:		Child DOB:
NFC Staff Member:	Date:	Time:
Other persons present:		
Notes <i>Here you need to record what happened. In detail, word for word if possible, including anything the child said</i>		
Action Here you need to record what action you took, what did you do?		
Date and time _____		
Staff Signature: _____		
Date _____		
Next steps being undertaken by the Visiting Teacher include:		

Appendix C

Body Map Form

Body Maps should be used to record any visible signs of harm or abuse.

If you notice an injury on a child and you are concerned, record what you see on the Body Map. Indicate areas of swelling, bruising, cuts, wounds, scalds, and burns. Record as much as you can on the map.

Do not remove the child's clothing to access the injury unless it needs treatment, or the injury can be freely accessed. Ensure any first aid is provided and the child's wellbeing and emotional needs are being met first before completing these forms.

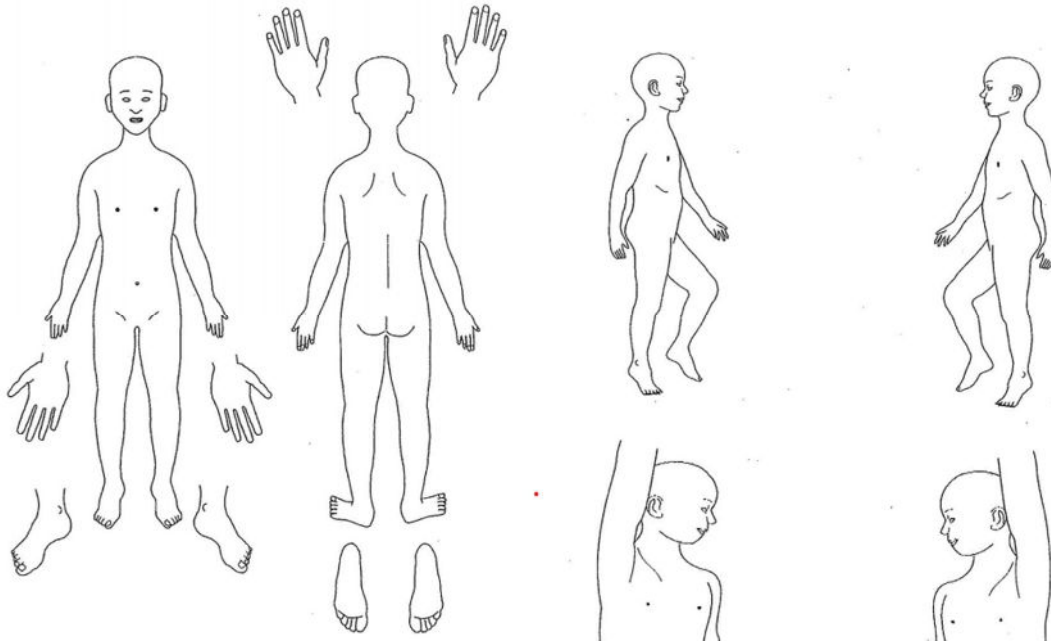
Never take any photographic evidence unless requested by the police or Oranga Tamariki.

Record all information using a blue or black pen. =

What you need to record on the body map:

- Record the exact area of the injury
- Indicate the size of the injury
- Indicate the colour of the injury i.e. If there is bruise, what colour is it?
- Is there any blistering, bleeding or has a scab formed?
- Is the child in pain around the area of the injury and is the area hot?
- Is the child's mobility restricted?
- Is the area of the injury clean?
- Is the skin broken?
- What is the approximate shape of the injury?
- Record all other injuries that are on the child at the time; no matter how insignificant you think they are.
- Note if you feel the child is holding themselves differently for example favouring one leg.
- Bruises which have dots of blood under the skin around them are linked more commonly to abuse so pay attention to these.
- Complete the Body Map recording form.

If you think a child is in immediate danger, contact the police immediately by dialling 111



This form is to be completed alongside the recordings on the Body Map Form and should be completed at the same time as the observation.

Name of Child:

Date of Birth of Child:

Name of person recording:

Position of person recording:

Date and time of observation:

Children/adults present:

If able to ascertain the information, what was the explanation of the injury by the parent/caregiver? (Record the response accurately, including all details)

What did the child say happened to them? (Record exactly what they said, word for word if possible)

Have you noticed any change in behaviour? Comment if they seem distressed, withdrawn quiet, anxious or have they just been different? Refer to any notes from your previous notes.

Add a written description of the injury including the colour, shape, condition, the healing process.