



Supporting our community on all sides

P O L I C Y

2 Working with the Community

*2.11 Child Protection and
Risk Management*

Manual 2 – Working with the Community

Policy 2.11 – Child Protection and Risk Management

Why we do things

Through a wide variety of programs, Community Qld works to advocate for, connect with, and inform our community, promoting fairness, diversity, and social justice. Our services reach a diverse range of people and communities, and some of our programs involve working directly with families and children. We Recognise that children are particularly vulnerable to the actions of adults, we embrace the new legal framework under the Child Safe Organisations Act 2024, which requires organisations that work with children to implement the 10 Child Safe Standards and Universal Principle to promote child safety.

In addition to this, Community is guided by the *Child Protection Act 1999* (QLD), the purpose of which is to provide for the protection of children. The underlying principle of the Act is that all children have the right to protection from harm. Community believes that all children have the right to a life that is free from 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 physical, psychological, or emotional abuse or neglect, or by sexual abuse or exploitation. Harm can result from a single act, omission, or circumstance, or a series or combination of acts, omissions, or circumstances.

This policy aims to:

- Outline Community's commitment to maintaining a child-safe culture across all services and programs.
- Protect children from all forms of harm and abuse by providing clear guidelines and risk management strategies to ensure children remain safe.
- Ensure that all employees and volunteers at Community have clear guidelines and procedures to follow when responding to suspicions or allegations of harm involving children.
Provide clear guidelines for reporting all incidents of suspected harm or child abuse, which must be referred to the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services, and the Queensland Police Service (QPS) for investigation.

All individuals associated with Community, including employees, volunteers, Board Directors, subcontractors, parent helpers, students, families who utilise the service, and any visitors to Community's facilities **must** comply with this policy.

Definitions

Child - In Queensland, a child is a person under the age of 18 years (as defined by the Child Protection Act 1999).

Child abuse is any action towards a child or young person that harms, or puts at risk, their physical, psychological, or emotional health or development. Child abuse can be a single incident or a series of incidents

that occur over time. There are different types of child abuse, including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect.

Harm includes any detrimental effect of a significant nature on a person's physical, psychological, or emotional wellbeing. It is immaterial how the harm is caused, and self-harm is included in the definition. Harm can result from physical, psychological, or emotional abuse or neglect, or from sexual abuse or exploitation. It may be caused by a single act, omission, or circumstance, or by a series or combination of acts, omissions, or circumstances.

Risk of Harm - A child or young person is considered at risk of harm if there are current concerns for their safety, welfare, or wellbeing. Harm is defined as any physical, sexual, emotional, or psychological abuse or neglect of a child or young person. "Risk of harm" refers to the likelihood that a child may suffer physical, psychological, sexual, or emotional harm as a result of the actions or inactions of another person.

Alleged harm refers to a situation where someone has reported that harm, abuse, or neglect has occurred.

Disclosure - a statement that a person makes to another person that describes or reveals abuse.

A **suspicion of harm** arises when someone has a reasonable belief that a child has suffered, is suffering, or is at an unacceptable risk of suffering significant harm. This includes circumstances relating to an unborn child who may be in need of protection after birth. A child who has experienced, or may be experiencing, abuse may show behavioural, emotional, or physical signs of stress and abuse.

A **reasonable belief** is a belief that a reasonable person would form in the same position and with the same information. Whether a reasonable belief is formed will always depend on the circumstances. For example, a reasonable belief may be formed if either:

- A child states that they have been sexually abused
- The child displays signs of sexual abuse

Mandatory reporting is the legislative requirement for certain classes of people to report suspected child abuse and neglect to government authorities. In Queensland (QLD), mandatory reporting is regulated under the *Child Protection Act 1999*.

Mandatory Reporters

In Queensland, mandatory reporters are individuals who, as part of their paid or professional work, deliver the following services wholly or partly to children:

- A doctor
- A registered nurse
- A teacher
- Certain police officers
- A child advocate under the *Public Guardian Act 2014*
- An early childhood education and care professional
- Child Safety Services staff
- Licensed care service providers

All staff have a responsibility to recognise and respond to concerns regarding the safety, welfare, and wellbeing of children and young people, and to report these concerns to management and the appropriate child safe authorities.

Who this policy applies to

- Board Directors
- Employees
- Volunteers
- Sub-contractors
- Clients
- Visitors
- Community members

Our policy

Community Qld is committed to creating and maintaining a child-safe environment across all areas of our work to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children. We have zero tolerance for child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated promptly, seriously, sensitively and confidentially, in accordance with our policies and procedures. No person will be victimised for reporting an allegation of child abuse, and the privacy of all individuals involved will be respected. In line with our moral obligations to children and young people, we contact relevant authorities when we are concerned about a child's safety.

Community is committed to preventing child abuse, identifying risks early, and removing or reducing these risks, as outlined in our Child Protection and Risk Management, Child Safe Code of Conduct, Child Safe and Wellbeing and Cultural Safety Policies and Procedures. Our services that cater to children provide an environment that is free from any type of abuse or intentional harm. We are committed to safe recruitment procedures and to regularly training and educating staff to identify and manage child abuse risks. A summary of Community's child safe protocols and risk management strategies can be found in the **Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy** under *Appendix 1*.

We will ensure that the community and anyone involved with Community are aware of Community's commitment to child safety by displaying the Commitment Statement at sites and on the website.

Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

At Community every child has the right to be safe and feel safe. We commit to the safety and wellbeing of every child in our care.

To keep children safe, we commit to:

- Implementing the Universal Principle and Child Safe Standards
- Providing a safe and supportive environment for all children
- Making sure that children are not exposed to any form of harmful conduct or abuse
- Empowering children to participate in decisions that affect them and share any concerns they may have
- Making sure children know who to approach if they feel unsafe or have any child safety concerns

As a child safe organisation, we commit to:

- Educating staff and volunteers in our organisation about what it means to be a child safe organisation, so that we can prevent, detect and effectively respond to child abuse
- Making sure staff and volunteers in our organisation understand how to appropriately respond to complaints, allegations, disclosures and breaches of our Child Safe Code of Conduct.
- Welcoming feedback to continuously improve our child safe policies, procedures and practices
- Making sure that when family and community members interact with our organisation, they are aware that child safety is everyone's responsibility, and their behaviour aligns with our child safe practices
- Providing a culturally safe environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and a safe and accessible environment for children with a disability.

How we do things

Indicators of Abuse

There are common physical and behavioural signs that may indicate abuse or neglect. The presence of one of these signs does not necessarily mean that abuse or neglect has occurred. Behavioural or physical signs that assist in recognising harm to children are known as *indicators*.

The following is intended as a guide only. One indicator on its own may not imply abuse or neglect; however, a single indicator can be as important as the presence of several indicators. Each indicator should be considered in the context of other signs and the child's circumstances.

A child's behaviour is likely to be affected if they are under stress. There are many possible causes of stress, and it is important to determine the specific cause. Abuse and neglect can be one-off incidents or ongoing and may be either intentional or unintentional.

General indicators of abuse and neglect may include:

- A marked delay between injury and seeking medical assistance
- A history of injury
- The child gives some indication that the injury did not occur as stated
- The child tells you that someone has hurt them
- The child tells you about someone they know who has been hurt
- Someone (such as a relative, friend, acquaintance, or sibling) tells you that the child may have been abused

The Queensland Government identifies the following signs of child abuse and provides definitions and physical indicators:

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse occurs when a child suffers physical trauma or injury that is not accidental. It does not always leave visible marks or injuries. Physical abuse can include hitting, shaking, throwing, burning, biting, poisoning or other physical harm.

Indicators of Physical Abuse

- Broken bones or unexplained bruising or burns in different stages of healing
- Inability to explain an injury, or providing inconsistent, vague, or unlikely explanations
- Unusual or unexplained internal injuries
- History of family violence
- Delay between injury and seeking medical assistance
- Repeated visits to the doctor with injuries, poisoning, or minor complaints
- Being unusually frightened of a parent or carer
- Wearing inappropriate clothing in warm weather (to hide bruises, cuts, or marks)
- Avoiding physical contact
- Becoming scared when other children cry or shout
- Being excessively friendly to strangers
- Starting fires or being fascinated with fire
- Destroying property
- Hurting animals

Sexual Abuse

Child sexual abuse occurs when an adult, older child, or teenager uses their power or authority to involve a child in sexual activity. The abuse does not always involve physical contact; it can also include non-contact behaviours such as flashing, exposure to sexually explicit material, or inappropriate sexual conversations.

Sexual abuse includes:

- Exposing a child to the sexual behaviours of others
- Coercing a child to engage in sexual behaviour with other children or adults
- Making verbal threats of sexual abuse
- Exposing a child to pornography

Indicators of Sexual Abuse

- Knowledge of sexual activities beyond what is age-appropriate
- Engaging in sexualised play
- Excessive masturbation for their age and developmental stage
- Refusing to undress for activities or frequently wearing layers of clothing
- Bruising, bleeding, swelling, tears, or cuts on the genitals or anus
- Unusual vaginal odour or discharge
- Itching or pain in the genital area; difficulty going to the toilet, walking, or sitting
- Presence of a sexually transmitted infection, especially in a young child
- Torn, stained, or bloody clothing, particularly underwear
- Fear of being alone with a specific person
- Frequent depression, suicidal thoughts, or suicide attempts
- Creating stories, poems, or artwork that reference abuse

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse occurs when a child's social, emotional, or intellectual development is damaged or threatened. It can include constant rejection, teasing, bullying, yelling, criticism, and exposure to domestic and family violence.

Examples of emotional abuse include:

- Constant or excessive criticism, condescension, teasing, or ignoring the child
- Withholding admiration and affection
- Excessive or unreasonable demands
- Persistent hostility, severe verbal abuse, and rejection
- Belief that a specific child is bad or 'evil'
- Using inappropriate physical or social isolation as punishment
- Exposure to domestic violence
- Intimidating or threatening behaviour

Indicators of Emotional Abuse

- Extreme behaviours, ranging from aggression to submission
- Delayed emotional development
- Compulsive lying or stealing
- High levels of anxiety
- Lack of trust in others
- Persistent bedwetting, urinating, or soiling clothes
- Regressive behaviour (e.g. baby talk or thumb sucking)
- Feelings of worthlessness about life and themselves
- Overeating or very restricted eating
- Self-harming

Neglect

Neglect occurs when a child's health and development are affected because their basic needs are not met. These needs include food, housing, health care, adequate clothing, personal hygiene, hygienic living conditions, medical treatment, and appropriate supervision.

Examples of neglect include:

- Inability to respond emotionally to the child
- Child abandonment
- Depriving or withholding physical contact
- Failure to provide psychological nurturing
- Treating one child differently to the others

Indicators of Neglect in Children

- Starving, begging, stealing, or hoarding food
- Poor hygiene, matted hair, dirty skin, or body odour
- Frequent illness, infections, or sores
- Talking about no one being at home to provide care
- Frequently late or absent from school
- Wearing inadequate clothing, especially in winter
- Being left unsupervised for extended periods
- Alcohol or drug abuse present in the home
- Delayed physical, emotional, or intellectual development

Compliance, Monitoring and Breaches of this Policy

All employees, volunteers, and students with access to children at Community services receive a copy of this policy upon orientation. All employees are required to sign a declaration stating that they have read and understood the policy. Further training or assistance is available upon request. This policy is available on 'Communicate' and Community's website, and hard copies can be provided upon request to clients, families, volunteers, or other relevant stakeholder.

All staff working with children have a duty of care to support and protect them. A duty of care is breached if a person:

- Does something that a reasonable person in that position would not do in a particular situation,
- Fails to do something that a reasonable person in that position would do in the circumstances, or
- Acts or fails to act in a way that causes harm to someone to whom they owe a duty of care.

Management will investigate breaches in a fair, unbiased, and supportive manner by:

- Discussing the breach with all people concerned and advising all parties of the process
- Giving the educator/staff member the opportunity to provide their version of events
- Documenting the details of the breach, including all versions provided
- Recording the outcome clearly and without bias
- Ensuring matters relating to the breach are kept confidential
- Reaching a decision based on discussion and consideration of all evidence

Depending on the nature of the breach, outcomes may include:

- Emphasising the relevant element of the child protection policy and procedure
- Providing closer supervision
- Further education and training
- Providing mediation between those involved in the incident (where appropriate)
- Implementing disciplinary procedures, if required
- Reviewing current policies and procedures, and developing new ones if necessary

How to Determine if There is Significant Harm

Section 13C of the *Child Protection Act 1999* provides guidance when forming a reasonable suspicion about whether a child has suffered significant harm, is suffering significant harm, or is at an unacceptable risk of suffering significant harm.

The matters that a person may consider include:

- Whether there are detrimental effects on the child's body or the child's psychological or emotional state:
 - That are evident to the person, or
 - That the person considers are likely to become evident in the future
- In relation to any detrimental effects to the child, the reporter may consider:
 - Their nature and severity, and
 - The likelihood that they will continue

- The child's age

The person's consideration may be informed by an observation of the child, other knowledge about the child, or any other relevant knowledge, training, or experience that the person may have. Expert advice can be obtained by telephoning the *Department of Families, Senior, Disability Services and Child Safety*.

Internal Escalation and Reporting Requirement

Employees are required to report suspicions of harm and child abuse directly to the Team Leader/Coordinator/Manager, and Senior Manager. In their absence, the report must be made to the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate. The delegated employee is responsible for contacting the appropriate agencies such as the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety and/or the Queensland Police Services. For ongoing communication with the relevant agency/department, it is recommended that only one representative of the organisation, usually the person who made the initial call report, acts as the contact point.

Harm/Risk of Harm as a result of misconduct by a Community employee or volunteer

In the event that child abuse and/or neglect is suspected within a Community service the above escalation process will be followed. Where the employee or volunteer is suspected of misconduct the matter must be escalated to the CEO and the Manager of People and Learning. The suspected person will be asked to leave the centre premises immediately (on full pay, if applicable) while the investigation is ongoing. The safety of the child will always take priority.

Mandatory External Reporting Obligations

External reporting of a disclosure or suspicion of harm to a child involves a three-step-process:

1. Consider whether the disclosure or suspicion needs to be reported to the Queensland Police Service.

Reports must be made to police when:

- A child is at imminent risk of harm, or
- A child has been the victim of a criminal offence

e.g. If the organisation believes a child is in immediate danger or a life-threatening situation, the Queensland Police Service must be contacted immediately by the delegated employee by dialling **000**.

2. Consider whether the disclosure or reasonable suspicion of harm needs to be reported to Child Safety.

Professionals who encounter concerns related to possible abuse or neglect should use the *online Child Protection Guide (CPG)* to assist in decision-making about where to report or refer concerns. The CPG is designed to guide professionals when a child who appears:

- To have experienced, or is likely to experience, significant harm; and
- May not have a parent willing and able to protect them from that harm

Note: In some cases, such as child sexual abuse, mandatory reporting may be required both to the Queensland Police Service and to the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety. If you are unsure, contact Child Safety for expert advice.

3. Consider whether a consenting referral is required to other support services, including Family and Child Connect (FaCC).

If concerns for a child do not amount to a reasonable suspicion of harm, employees must consider what support services could be offered to the family.

Family and Child Connect (FaCC) can provide information and advice on available services and the circumstances in which a referral can or must be made.

Under the *Child Protection Act 1999*, only **prescribed entities (Section 159M)** are authorised to make referrals to FaCC, *Intensive Family Support (IFS)* services, or other relevant support services **without the family's consent** to help prevent a child from becoming in need of protection.

Reporting To Queensland Police Services

Community has a mandatory obligation to report certain matters directly to the Queensland Police Service. An example of this includes cases of child sexual abuse. If the organisation reasonably believes (or should reasonably believe) that a child is being, or has been, the victim of sexual abuse by another adult, it must be reported to police – unless there is a reasonable excuse not to.

A reasonable excuse may for not reporting include if the organisation:

- Has already reported the offence to the police, or knows another person has or will report it
- Receives information that the victim, who is now an adult, does not want the offence reported
- Believes reporting the offence would endanger an employee or another person (other than the alleged offender)

To report an offence, contact PoliceLink on 131 444, or if it is an emergency, call Triple Zero (000).

Reporting to Child Safety

It is Community's policy that all suspicions of harm and child abuse must be reported to the *Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety*.

Reports should be made immediately by contacting the:

- *Brisbane and Moreton Bay Regional Intake Service* on **1300 682 254** (available Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm) or
- *Child Safety After Hours Service Centre (CSAHSC)* on **1800 177 135** or **(07) 3235 9999** (outside business hours).
- Alternatively, written reports can be submitted via the Department's website:
<https://secure.communities.qld.gov.au/cbir/ChildSafety>.

If Community has reported, to the Department, two or more child safety concerns about the same child or family and there are ongoing concerns that the child may be at further risk of harm, then the CEO must be notified.

Current Reporting to Queensland Family and Child Commission

Community will notify the Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC) when allegations or convictions involve the conduct of an employee, volunteer or contractor of the organisation that constitute reportable conduct.

Where we become aware of alleged conduct that is, or may be, criminal, we will promptly report the matter to:

- Queensland Police
- NDIS Commission (where relevant)
- QFCC

In this circumstance, we will:

- Liaise with the Queensland Police, QFCC, and where relevant the NDIS Commission to determine how to proceed.
- Take steps to mitigate risks to children's safety and wellbeing.
- Put interim risk treatments in place pending the outcome of the police investigation (where appropriate and advised by police to avoid prejudicing the police investigation).

Provide updates and reports to the Queensland Police and QFCC as required, and where relevant the NDIS Commission.

From 1st July 2026 - Queensland Reportable Conduct Scheme

As part of Community's mandatory external reporting obligations, the Queensland Child-related Reportable Conduct Scheme (effective 1 July 2026) applies to all staff and volunteers working with children and young people.

Under this scheme, reportable conduct includes a single act or omission, or a series of acts or omissions involving:

- a child sexual offence
- sexual misconduct committed in relation to, or in the presence of a child
- ill-treatment of a child
- significant neglect of a child
- physical violence committed in relation to, or in the presence of a child, or
- behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child

Under the Reportable Conduct Scheme these roles and responsibilities apply:

The **Chief Information Officer** is responsible for:

- Ensuring systems are in place for preventing reportable conduct, reporting, investigating and responding to reportable allegations against and convictions of their workers.
- Notifying the Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC) of reportable allegations or convictions involving employees.
- Arrange for an investigation of the reportable allegation or conviction and provide a final report to the QFCC.
- Provide timely information and updates as requested by the QFCC.

All staff, volunteer and contractors are responsible to:

- Adhere to the *Child Protection and Risk Management, Child Safe Code of Conduct, and Child Safe and Wellbeing Policies and Procedures*.
- Follow procedures and practices that reduce risks to children’s safety and well-being.
- Immediately inform their manager / team leader / coordinator if they have a reasonable suspicion of reportable conduct.
- Cooperate fully and truly with any investigations of reportable conduct.

Handling Disclosure or Reasonable Suspicion of Harm

Receiving and responding to Disclosure or Reasonable Suspicion of Harm:

When receiving a disclosure of harm, employees must:

- Give the child their full attention
- Remain calm and move to a private place to talk
- Not make promises that cannot be kept (for example, never promise that you will not tell anyone else)
- Honestly explain to the child what you plan to do next
- Reassure the child/young person that they have done the right thing in revealing the information, and that they’ll need to tell someone who can help keep the child safe
- Only ask enough questions to confirm the need to report the matter, as probing questions could cause distress, confusion, or interfere with any later enquiries
- Allow the child to take their time
- Let the child use their own words
- Not attempt to conduct their own investigation or mediate an outcome between the parties involved. (Employees must only collect only enough information to substantiate concerns and then pass the matter on to Child Safety Services or the appropriate authority)
- Not inform and/or confront the alleged perpetrator

Documentation of Disclosure or Reasonable Suspicion of Harm:

Employees must document details of any concerns. Observations must be detailed, dated, and objective. Attention should be paid to body cues, ideas, feelings, and words the child uses. Records of abuse or suspected abuse must be kept in line with Communitify’s Record Retention and Privacy Policies.

- Document the disclosure as soon as possible so the details are accurately captured, including:
 - The time, date, and place of the disclosure
 - ‘Word for word’ what was said and what happened, including anything the staff member said and any actions that were taken
 - The date of the report and the staff member’s signature

Employees must prepare accurate and objective records, documenting exactly what happened, the conversations that took place, and what was observed, to assist the relevant authorities with any investigation.

Reporting a Disclosure or Reasonable Suspicion of Harm

For details on who to report the matter to, refer to the ‘Internal Escalation and Reporting Pathway’ and ‘Mandatory External Reporting Obligations’ within this document.

It is important that any notification remains confidential, as no confirmation of any allegation can be made until the matter is properly investigated. Community must **not** inform the suspected perpetrator (if known). An authorised officer or Queensland Police Service officer will provide those details, in accordance with sections 15 and 17 of the *Child Protection Act 1999*. This approach ensures the matter can be investigated without contamination of evidence or pre-rehearsed statements. It also minimises the risk of retaliation against the child for disclosing.

Remember: Employees do not have to prove the abuse to report it.

When a report is made, the employee will provide the following information:

- The name, age, and address of the child or young person
- The reasons you suspect the child or young person may have experienced, or is at risk of experiencing, harm
- The immediate risk to the child or young person
- Your contact details, you may remain anonymous; however, it is preferable to provide these details so the officer can call you if further information is needed

Confidentiality and Protection for Reporters

Once a report has been made to the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety, the information and the source of the report are kept confidential.

All reporters are protected against retribution for making, or proposing to make, a report under amendments to the *Child Protection Act 1999*. The identity of the reporter is protected by law from being disclosed, except in certain exceptional circumstances. Provided the report is made in good faith:

- The report will not breach standards of professional conduct
- The report cannot lead to defamation, or civil and criminal liability
- The report is not admissible in any proceedings as evidence against the person who made the report
- A person cannot be compelled by a court to provide the report or disclose its contents
- The identity of the person making the report is protected.
- A report is also an exempt document under the *Freedom of Information Act 1989*

Supervision, Monitoring, Employee Interactions and Workload

While management supervises and observes employee and volunteer interactions with children, all employees also share the responsibility of monitoring each other's behaviour.

Management works proactively to maintain employee morale and job satisfaction. Employees who are feeling unwell or stressed are expected to inform the Coordinator/Manager so that the appropriate measures can be taken. During this time, workloads and roster systems may also be reviewed.

Support is provided to employees who have been involved in making a report. This includes access to a debriefing process, and, where appropriate, referrals to external agencies and support services.

Ongoing Training and Support

- All employees, volunteers, and students will be provided with a copy of the *Child Protection and Risk Management Policy and the Child Safe Code of Conduct* as part of the induction process, to ensure they understand that child safety is everyone's business.
- Employees that work directly with children and young people receive training relevant to the service that they work with, and their role and responsibilities.
- Employees working with children and young people are provided with training and ongoing supervision to ensure they adhere to the Universal Principle and Child Safe Standards and Communitify's child safe policies and procedures.
- Performance in line with Communitify's Child Safe Code of Conduct will be reviewed for all employees annually, and as required.
- The *Child Protection and Risk Management, Child Safe Code of Conduct, Child Safe and Wellbeing and Cultural Safety Policies and Procedures* available on 'Communicate' and the Communitify website.
- The *Child Protection Guide* is available at: <https://secure.communities.qld.gov.au/cpguide/engine.aspx>

External Agencies / Support Services

If you are unsure who to call, or need assistance locating your nearest Child Safety Service Centre, contact the **Child Safety Services Enquiries Unit** on:

Phone: 1800 811 810 or (07) 3224 8045

Child Safety Service Centres have professionally trained child protection staff who are skilled in handling information related to harm or risk of harm to children.

Additional Support Services:

- **Act for Kids:** (07) 3850 3200
- **National Association of Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN):** (07) 3287 3533
- **Family and Child Connect (FaCC):** 133264

How policy change happens

This policy will be reviewed annually. Information that may inform this review includes:

- Changes to legislation or updates from the Department of Families, Seniors and Disability Services and Child Safety.
- Employee feedback following the use of the policy and procedures.

Our obligations

- Human Services Quality Standards
- National Safety and Quality Digital Mental Health Services
- National Safety and Quality Mental Health Standards for Community Managed Organisations
- NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Standards
- *Child Protection Act 1999 (QLD)*
- *Civil Liability Act 2003 (QLD)*
- Failing to Report Sexual Offences Against Children Law July 2021
- National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
- *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (the Act)*
- Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2020

- *Education and Care Services Act 2013 (QLD)*
- *Childcare Act 2002*
- Universal Principle and Child Safe Standards
- Queensland Reportable Conduct Scheme

Relevant forms and/or documents

- Child Safe Code of Conduct Agreement Form
- Folio Incident Report Forms
- Folio Activity, Event and Program Risk Assessment
- Folio Risk Management Register
- Media Consent Form
- Service Specific Employee Induction Checklists

Related policies and procedures

- 2.00 Privacy Policy
- 2.00.1 Internal Privacy Policy
- 2.00.2 Record Retention
- 2.00.4 Data Requests
- 3.17 Child Safe and Wellbeing
- 5.01 Employee Recruitment and Selection
- 5.03 Workforce Screening
- 5.06 Employee Induction and Orientation
- 5.07 Employee Training and Development
- 5.08 Employee Performance Reviews
- 5.00 Code of Conduct
- 5.00.2 Child Safe Code of Conduct
- 5.22.1 Social Media
- 6.02 Workplace Incidents (including Critical Incidents), Injuries and Accidents

Approval date	March 2008
Date last amended/reviewed	March 2016, March 2017, December 2017, March 2019, March 2021, February 2022, March 2023, March 2024, August 2024, August 2025
Date to be reviewed	August 2027

Appendix 1 - Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy

Community Qld will comply with the legislative framework outlined in the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* and the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulations 2011* to ensure the safety of children and young people.

To meet the requirements of this framework, Community's Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy will include the following eight minimum requirements:

Requirement	Action/s	Reference	Who is Responsible	Evidence
Statement of Commitment	<p>Community is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people who use its services and is dedicated to protecting them from harm. The organisation therefore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that all employees and volunteers treat children and young people with respect and understanding at all times • Ensures that all staff and volunteers undergo the <i>Working with Children Check</i> and hold a valid Blue Card (where exemptions do not apply) • Prohibits all forms of abuse against children • Ensures the organisation's Code of Conduct and Child Safe Code of Conduct is promoted, enforced, and reviewed • Provides clear procedures for raising concerns or complaints, including providing information to children and young people • Provides education and/or information on child abuse and child protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Child Protection and Risk Management Policy</i> 	Chief Executive Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy last reviewed: August 2025 • <i>Statement of Commitment to Child Safety</i> is available on Community's website and physically at Community sites.
Code of Conduct	<p>Employees and volunteers are required to sign a Code of Conduct and Child Safe Code of Conduct as part of the induction process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Code of Conduct Policy</i> • <i>Child Safe Code of Conduct</i> • Employees working in the Brisbane North Intensive Family Support Service adhere to the <i>Act for Kids IFS Practice Procedures</i> 	Manager, People and Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signed <i>Code of Conduct</i> forms and Child Safe Code of Conduct forms are kept on each employee's file • Agreement of the <i>Code of Conduct and Child Safe Code of Conduct</i> policy is electronically documented and stored in each volunteer's file • <i>Volunteer Handbook</i>

Requirement	Action/s	Reference	Who is Responsible	Evidence
Requirement, Selection, Training, and Management	<p>Human Resources Management Processes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Position descriptions - Selection criteria - Advertising the position - Interview questions - Referee checks • Engagement & Appointment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contract - Letter of employment - Probation • Induction & Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All new employees and volunteers will undertake an induction within the first week - Staff will receive on-going training in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Organisational policies and procedures ▪ Compulsory training required by industry or legislation <p>Training may include:</p> <p><i>Formal training</i> such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training offered by external organisations • Training developed and delivered internally • On the job training <p><i>Informal training</i> such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal mentoring or coaching • Inviting professionals to speak at meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Child Safe and Wellbeing Policy</i> • <i>Employee Recruitment and Selection Policy</i> • <i>Workforce Screening Policy</i> • <i>Position Descriptions and Employment Contracts Policy</i> • <i>Probation Policy</i> • <i>Employee Induction and Orientation Policy</i> • <i>Employee Training and Development Policy</i> • <i>Employee Performance</i> • <i>Reviews Policy</i> • <i>Employee Supervision and Support Policy</i> • <i>Managing Employee Work Performance Policy</i> • <i>Privacy And Confidentiality Employees and Volunteers Policy</i> 	Manager, People and Learning, in conjunction with Senior Managers, Managers, Team Leaders and Coordinators of services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment contract • Position descriptions • Induction checklist • Interview questions • Referee checks • Probationary periods • Annual Performance Reviews • Blue card screening • Training records
Compliance with the Requirement of the Blue Card System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community will comply with Blue Card legislation by ensuring that all relevant employees, students, and volunteers undergo the <i>Working with Children Check</i> and obtain a valid Blue Card (where exemptions do not apply). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Workforce Screening Policy</i> • <i>Child Protection and Risk Management Policy</i> • <i>Child Safe and Wellbeing Policy</i> • Blue Card application forms 	Manager, People and Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blue Card Register - Renewal dates are monitored for compliance • Staff files • ConnX • Better Impact

Requirement	Action/s	Reference	Who is Responsible	Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community respects the confidentiality of information related to Blue Card applications maintains secure systems to protect the privacy of applicants. • All employees, Board Directors, volunteers, students, must hold a valid Blue Card issued by the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian. • All subcontractors who have direct contact with children must hold a valid Blue Card issued by the <i>Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian</i>. <p>To manage Blue Card compliance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community uses the <i>Blue Card Services Organisation Portal</i> for Blue Cards management • Blue Card details for employees are recorded in their personnel files in ConnX. • Better Impact is used to record and manage Blue Card information for volunteers and sub-contractors. <p>Community maintains a <i>Blue Card Register</i> for employees, which includes expiry dates and is monitored for compliance. Blue Card information for volunteers and subcontractors is managed in Better Impact, where expiry dates are also tracked and monitored for compliance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blue Card register • ConnX Workflow process that triggers renewal dates for expiring Blue Cards. • Better Impact workflow process that triggers renewal dates for expiring Blue Cards. 		
Handling Disclosures or Suspicions of Harm, Including Reporting Guidelines	Receiving a Disclosure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When employees are confronted with a disclosure of harm or suspected harm to a child or young person, they will respond professionally and act in the best interests of the child or young person involved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Child Protection and Risk Management Policy</i> • <i>Child Safe and Wellbeing Policy</i> • <i>Client and Community Complaints Policy</i> 	Chief Executive Officer, along with Senior Managers, Managers, Team Leaders and Coordinators of Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Employee Induction and Training Records</i> • Folio - Incident Reporting System

Requirement	Action/s	Reference	Who is Responsible	Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees will encourage the person to speak in their own words, ask only open-ended questions necessary to act protectively, and avoid leading questions that may suggest an answer. • Employees will advise the person making the disclosure that the information cannot remain a secret and that it must be shared with the appropriate people in order to get help. • Complaints and disclosure will be dealt with promptly, seriously, sensitively and confidentially. • Complaint processes will be child focused. <p>Dealing with a Disclosure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following a disclosure of harm from a child or young person, the organisation will determine whether the allegation should be reported to the Queensland Police Service and/or the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety. • If the incident is serious or criminal in nature, the organisation’s response will be immediate. All other actions will be taken as soon as possible, preferably within 24 hours. • For allegations of a serious or criminal nature, the organisation will follow these guidelines: • If the allegation involves a child at risk of harm, the incident will be reported immediately to the Police and/or the Department of Families, Seniors,-Disability Services and Child Safety. • The organisation will contact the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety for advice if there is uncertainty about whether the complaint should be reported. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2011</i> • <i>Workplace Incidents (including Critical Incidents), Injuries and Accidents Policy</i> 		

Requirement	Action/s	Reference	Who is Responsible	Evidence
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the child’s parent/s or guardian are suspected of committing the abuse, the organisation will report the allegation to the Police or Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety immediately • If the organisation reasonably believes (or should reasonably believe) that a child is being, or has been, the victim of sexual abuse by another adult, it must be reported to the Police – unless there is a reasonable excuse not to do so. • Strict confidentiality, impartiality, fairness, and due process must be maintained at all times. • Under no circumstances will the organisation conduct its own investigation into any serious allegation or allegation of a criminal nature or attempt to mediate an outcome. • Reports made to the Police, or the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety will be recorded as an incident. 			
Managing Breaches of Your Risk Management Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communitify has policies in place to manage any action or inaction by a person that fails to comply with the policies and procedures forming part of our Risk Management Strategy. • The organisation will review all allegations of breaches of the <i>Child Protection Risk Management Strategy</i> and take appropriate steps to minimise the risk of further breaches. • Non-compliance with the <i>Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000 (Qld)</i> may result in penalties imposed under the Act. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Code of Conduct • Child Safe Code of Conduct • Managing Employee Work Performance • Child Protection and Risk Management Policy • Folio - Incident Reporting System • Blue Card Register • ConnX and Better Impact Workflow processes that trigger renewal dates for expiring Blue Cards 	Chief Executive Officer; Manager, People and Learning; and Senior Managers, Managers, Team Leaders and Coordinators of Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signed <i>Code of Conduct and Child Safe Code of Conduct</i> • <i>Folio Incident Reports</i> • Blue Card Register - Renewal dates are monitored • ConnX and Better Impact

Requirement	Action/s	Reference	Who is Responsible	Evidence
Risk Management Plans for the Physical Environment, High-Risk Activities and Special Events	<p>Community ensures that appropriate control measures are in place and implemented to manage identified risks.</p> <p>Community will consider risks posed by organisational settings, activities, and the physical and online environment.</p> <p>Written permission, via completion of the <i>Media Consent Form</i>, is sought from parents for each instance of photographing or videoing their child for educational or advertising purposes. This document is kept on file. Photographs or videos must not be taken of a child or young person without parental consent. Employees must ensure that children are appropriately clothed, that all images are suitable for the child's age, and that the potential for photographs to be copied or redistributed is limited where possible. Where official photographers are engaged, they will be informed of the relevant processes and guidelines that apply.</p> <p>Community sites will have a Visitors Register, where all persons who are not regular employees at the site, or are Contractors /external providers must register upon entry.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Risk Management Policy</i> • <i>Child Safe and Wellbeing Policy</i> • <i>Use of Public Computers Policy</i> • <i>Social Media Policy</i> • Activity, Event and Program Risk Assessment • Client Risk Assessment Form <p>Risk Management Registers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community maintains an <i>Organisational and Operational Risk Management Register</i> that includes strategies to minimise risks to children during service delivery. The strategies aim to achieve an appropriate balance between maintaining privacy for children and young people (where required) and ensuring their safety. 	Corporate and Leadership Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client risk assessments are maintained and stored in the relevant databases. • Folio Risk Management Register • Folio Activity Event and Program Risk Assessment • Social Media Consent Forms
Communication and Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Child Protection and Risk Management Policy</i> is available on 'Communicate'. • <i>Our Commitment to Child Safety</i> is publicly available on the Community website. 	<p><i>Child Protection and Risk Management Policy</i></p> <p><i>Child Safe and Wellbeing Policy</i></p> <p><i>Child Safe Code of Conduct Policy</i></p>	Corporate and Leadership Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Communicate' • Website