



Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

1. Introduction

Windana is committed to protecting the safety of the children in its care and builds child safety into everyday thinking and practice. We are committed to valuing and respecting Aboriginal children and all children, regardless of their gender, race, religious beliefs, age, disability, sexual orientation, or family or social background, have equal rights to protection from abuse. Windana aims to create a child-friendly environment where children feel safe, respected and valued where the process of improving the safety of children is continuous and ongoing.

2. Scope

All Windana Board members, staff and volunteers are responsible for the care and protection of children and for reporting suspected child abuse and suspected reportable conduct regarding staff, volunteers, visitors and contractors. This policy relates to the safety of children and young people who access Windana services or who accompany an adult to a Windana site.

3. Policy

Windana is committed to child safety. We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the participation and empowerment of all children. We have zero tolerance for child abuse and all allegations of child abuse and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our robust policies and procedures. We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety which we follow rigorously. All staff and volunteers are responsible for the care and protection of children within our care and reporting information about suspected child abuse and reportable conduct. We commit to providing cultural safety training to our workforce. Windana will take appropriate action when it is aware of any allegation of reportable conduct by a worker, regardless of whether this conduct occurs before or during their involvement with the organisation.

4. Policy Provisions

4.1 Employment of new staff

Windana has robust human resources and recruitment practices to reduce the risk of child abuse and identify risks early and remove and reduce these risks

Windana undertakes a comprehensive recruitment and screening process for all staff and volunteers that aims to:

- Promote and protect the safety of all children in our care by new and existing Board members, staff and volunteers

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- Identify the safest and most suitable people who share our values and commitment to protect children
- Prevent a person from working at Windana if they pose a risk to children.

4.2 Risk Management

Windana will ensure that child safety is part of our overall risk management approach, and child safety risk assessment forms part of regular internal auditing processes. Windana has a Child Safety Officer who is responsible for responding to any child safety complaints made by staff, volunteers, parents or children.

Windana is committed to training and education our Board members, staff and volunteers on child abuse risks

4.3 Reporting

Incidences of suspected child abuse or reportable conduct must be reported as per PRO 152.1 Mandatory and Voluntary Reporting. Staff/volunteers are trained in these processes, and contractors are informed of their obligations during orientation.

4.4 Investigating

If child protection services or the Commission for Children and Young People deem it appropriate to conduct an investigation, all staff/volunteers/contractors must cooperate fully with the investigation. The CEO will consult with the authorities to determine whether an internal investigation is appropriate. Such an investigation will be conducted according to the rules of natural justice, including confidentiality. Where there is a reasonable suspicion of child abuse or reportable conduct by a Windana worker the CEO will be informed, and a decision made regarding whether an internal or external investigation is most appropriate. Disciplinary action including dismissal may occur.

4.5 Privacy

All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved unless there is a risk to someone's safety, or a court order, or the client consents for release of information.

5. Key Responsibilities

The Board has ultimate responsibility for the detection and prevention of child abuse and is responsible for ensuring that appropriate and effective internal control systems are in place.

The CEO is responsible for:

- Responding to and ensuring that reports of child abuse or reportable conduct are investigated.
- The CEO must ensure mandatory reporting occurs as required.
- Ensuring that all staff, contractors and volunteers are aware of the relevant laws and internal policies and procedures.
- Ensuring that contract facilities and services from third parties have procurement policies that ensure the safety of children and young people
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers are aware of their obligation to report suspected sexual abuse of a child in accordance with internal policies and procedures.

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- vi. Ensuring that all staff, contractors and volunteers are aware of their obligation to observe Windana policy Code of Ethics and Practice.
- vii. Ensuring that all staff and volunteers acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal culture, understanding its importance to the wellbeing of Aboriginal children, and that there is a relationship between cultural safety and the prevention of child abuse and harm for Aboriginal children
- viii. Providing support for staff, contractors and volunteers in undertaking their child protection responsibilities.
- ix. Ensuring all staff and volunteers receive training and information on how to build culturally safe environments for children and young people.
- x. Ensure a complaints handling police which is accessible and child-focused
- xi. Pays particular attention to the needs of Aboriginal children and young people and promotes a culturally safe environment from them
- xii. Ensures risk management strategies focus on preventing, identifying and mitigating risks to children and young people

All managers must ensure that they:

- xiii. Promote child safety at all times.
- xiv. Assess the risk of child abuse within their area of control and eradicate/minimise the risk to the extent possible.
- xv. Educate staff and volunteers about the prevention and detection of child abuse.
- xvi. Facilitate reporting of any inappropriate behaviour or suspected abusive activities.
- xvii. Children are informed about all their rights, including to safety, information and participation
- xviii. Children are offered access to sexual abuse prevention programs where relevant

All staff/volunteers/contractors share in the responsibility for the prevention and detection of child abuse, and must:

- xix. Familiarise themselves with the relevant laws and internal policies and procedures relating to child safety and protection.
- xx. Report any reasonable belief that a child's safety is at risk to their supervisor and fulfil their obligations as mandatory reporters (refer PRO 152.1 Mandatory and Voluntary Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse).
- xxi. Report any suspicion that a child's safety may be at risk to their team leader/manager.
- xxii. Provide an environment that is supportive of all children's emotional and physical safety.
- xxiii. Encourage and support children to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights

6. Definitions

Child	An individual under the age of 18 years unless otherwise stated under the law applicable to the child.
Child protection	Any responsibility, measure or activity undertaken to safeguard children from harm.
Child abuse	All forms of physical abuse, emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse and exploitation, neglect or negligent treatment, commercial (e.g. for financial gain) or other exploitation of a child and includes any actions that results in actual or potential harm to a child.

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Child sexual assault Any act that exposes a child to, or involves a child in, sexual processes beyond his or her understanding or contrary to accepted community standards. It includes child grooming, which refers to actions deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child to lower the child's inhibitions in preparation for sexual activity with the child.

Reportable Conduct Any allegation of conduct alleged to have been undertaken by a worker, either during their employment or any time before their employment, that relates to sexual abuse, sexual misconduct, physical abuse, significant psychological or emotional harm and significant neglect. The worker may be alleged to have undertaken these acts during or outside work time or have been present when these acts took place.

7. Related Windana Documents

- PRO 152.1 Mandatory and Voluntary Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse
- PRO 135.1 Recruitment and Early Employment
- POL 39 Volunteers
- POL 42 Privacy and Confidentiality
- POL 146 Whistleblower
- POL 153 Child Safety Code of Conduct
- POL 154 Diversity and Inclusion
- POL 38 Client Rights

8. Other Related Documents

- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005
- [Commission for Children and Young People: A Guide for Creating a Child Safe Organisation](#)

Approved at September 2022 QSR meeting and 28 November 2022 Board meeting



Jenny Gillam, Board Chair

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