

11. CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Maintaining the well-being and safety of tamariki is a paramount goal of Everyone Out. This includes the prevention of child abuse. All tamariki, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, socio- economic status, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from all forms of harm and abuse. As an organisation we respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of tamariki. We are committed to protect children and comply with the Vulnerable Children's Act, 2014 as well as section 6 of the Children, Young Persons and their Families Act, 1989.

DEFINITION OF CHILD ABUSE

"Any act by which an individual, institution or society as a whole, interferes with the well-being of a child or young person and deprives that child or young person of his or her rights".

There are five types of child abuse:

- Sexual abuse occurs when someone uses his or her power over the child, or takes advantage of the child's trust and respect, to involve the child in sexual activity.
- Physical abuse is non-accidental injury by somebody and also includes abusive administration of drugs or alcohol to a child.
- Emotional abuse is when a child's self-esteem is attacked by somebody to coerce the child into doing what the abuser wants them to do.
- Neglect is a denial of the basic needs/ rights of nurturing, food and shelter, so that the child fails to thrive.
- Family violence may be witnessed or experienced by tamariki and involve physical, sexual and emotional abuse.

PROCEDURES

11.1. EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

- As part of our duty of care, we will ensure that suitable and appropriate employees are engaged to work with tamariki.
- New staff will under go required safety checks that comply with the Vulnerable Children's Act Oranga Tamariki, 2014 and the Staff and Management Policy will be adhered to.
- Safety checks will include a police vet, identity verification, references and an interview.
- As part of their induction, new kaiako will be made aware of the programme policy on child abuse.

The Programme Kaiwhakahaere will manage child protection issues.

- Ensuring that child protection procedures are understood and adhered to by all kaiako and volunteers in contact with tamariki
- Establishing and maintaining the complaints procedure
- Acting as the main contact for child protection matters
- Keeping up-to-date with developments in child protection legislation
- Liaising with local child protection agencies

- Maintaining confidential records of reported cases and any action taken
- Regularly monitoring and reviewing existing policies and procedures

11.2. SUPERVISION GUIDELINES

Following good practice and establishing boundaries helps to minimise the risk of actual or alleged abuse in the programme. Inline with this document and layout within Programme Delivery and Operations policy, Programme Supervision Policy and Behaviour Management Policy.

11.3. RESPONDING TO CHILD ABUSE

- Everyone Out will act on recommendations made by statutory agencies concerning the official reporting of suspected abuse and on consulting with families.
- Kaiako will respond to suspected child abuse or any concerning behaviour by writing down observations, impressions and communications in a confidential register.
- This will be kept separate from programme diaries, sign-in sheets, and enrolment information etc.
- Information volunteered by a child should be fully and accurately recorded on a suspected child abuse form.
- No child should be interviewed or in any way questioned about the suspected abuse, particularly sexual abuse.
- No staff member will act alone about suspected child abuse but will consult with the Programme Kaiwhakahaere.
- Where kaiako and Programme Kaiwhakahaere suspect child abuse has occurred and a child is unsafe, Programme Kaiwhakahaere is committed to promptly reporting the matter to the Police or Oranga Tamariki- the Ministry for Tamariki
- If there are any allegations of abuse by a staff member, the authorities will be informed immediately and the employee will be suspended while the matter is investigated.
- Staff involved in cases of suspected child abuse are entitled to have support.
- Any situation deemed to be involving the risk of a child or community member will be reported to any and all appropriate authorities.
- If a staff member, volunteer, or any adult suspects abuse, the following action should be taken:

11.3.1. RESPOND – REPORT – RECORD

Respond:

- Ensure the child is safe from immediate harm
- Listen carefully to the young person and accept what has been said.
- Reassure the young person and alleviate guilt if the child refers to it, "it's not your fault".
- Do not question about the detail of the allegation or criticise the alleged person
- Say that you will do your best to support him/her.
- Explain to the young person that you cannot deal with this alone and you have to get help.
- Tell the young person that you have to get advice on what the best thing to do is.
- Avoid questioning the child beyond what has already been disclosed
- Do not question or counsel the alleged offender

Report:

- Consult immediately with the Programme Kaiwhakahaere

- Notify Oranga Tamariki- the Ministry for Tamariki or the Police and follow their instructions.
- The parents or guardians of the child involved should be notified immediately unless it is suspected they may be responsible for the abuse.

Record:

- As soon as possible, record accurately and appropriately the information received on Incident Report Forms
- Records should be factual (not opinion or hearsay) and concise and include: i. The nature of the allegation ii. Who noticed/disclosed the abuse and their relationship to the child iii. Details of any witnesses iv. Signs and symptoms noted (including behavioural change) v. Any particular incidents with dates, times and places (if possible) vi. Any Action taken vii. Record any information about times, dates, locations and names of any potential witness. Sketch or describe signs of physical injury.
- Consider whether any other tamariki are likely to be or have been at risk in the light of the allegation.
- Do not investigate/presume expertise.

11.4. CUSTODY ARRANGEMENTS

Mātua MUST advise Everyone Out of any informal and formal custody arrangements which exclude one or other parents, family members or caregivers having access or limited access to tamariki.

Changes to custody arrangements must be notified to the Programme Kaiwhakahaere as soon as they become active. The Programme Kaiwhakahaere will pass this information to staff.