

Safeguarding Children and Young People Statement

Parents', Carers' and Guardians' Version

CatholicCare NT (CCNT) is a not-for-profit organisation based in Darwin with offices throughout the Northern Territory. We provide a range of services to people of all ages including children and young people between the ages of 0 – 18 years. The services listed have a focus on children and their families:

- Children and Parenting Support
- Children's Contact Services
- Youth Mental Health
- Crime Victims Counselling Service
- Drug and Alcohol Intensive Support for Youth (DAISY)
- Family and Relationship Counselling
- Family Support Service
- Remote School Attendance Strategy
- Safe Houses
- School Counselling
- Specialised Family Violence (NO MORE)
- Supporting Children After Separation Program (SCASP)
- Youth Outreach Program

Children become involved in our services for many different reasons and we take our responsibility for keeping children and young people SAFE very seriously.

Our staff have policies and procedures that must be adhered to, with the purpose of keeping children and young people who are involved in our services SAFE. Some examples of what is expected from staff are noted below.

1. Staff Roles and Responsibilities

- 1.1 All staff have clear roles and responsibilities regarding the safeguarding of children and young people.
- 1.2 A Code of Conduct is provided to staff. It guides staff behaviour in relation to children and young people.
- 1.3 The Code of Conduct states: "Staff are required to demonstrate the utmost respect for children and not to do anything that would directly or indirectly harm children".
- 1.4 CCNT staff and volunteers are required to have a "Working with Children" clearance (also known as the Ochre Card), and a Police Clearance check.

Organisation Guideline: Safeguarding Children & Young People Statement – Parents', Carers' and Guardians' Version	Date of Issue: August 2014	CatholicCare NT
ORG/SP/G003 V6.0	Date Reviewed: August 2023	Page 1 of 3

2. Transport

- 2.1 Children may be transported by staff but only when connected with the work role. CCNT has strict criteria to guide staff when transporting children as follows:
- 2.2 Children under 12 years old can be transported when required for the purpose of the service being provided and must be transported only in the company of a parent/guardian/carer or other authorised person, otherwise written permission for transportation of the child by the staff must be given by the parent, carer or other authorised person.
- 2.3 Authorisation to transport a young person between the ages of 12 - 18 may not be required if they are estranged, living independently or assessed as a mature minor (has capacity of giving informed consent and has sufficient understanding and intelligence to understand what is proposed). In these instances, the staff is expected to undertake a risk assessment and, where possible, be accompanied by a second staff.
- 2.4 Staff are not authorised to give children or young people casual lifts in either a work or their personal vehicle.

3. Physical Contact with Children and Young People

Any physical contact with children and young people must be appropriate to the delivery of the services and based on the needs of the child or young person (such as to assist or comfort a distressed young person).

4. Positive Guidance

- 4.1 CCNT encourages children and young people to become aware of the acceptable limits of their behaviour. There are times when staff may be required to use appropriate behaviour management strategies to ensure:
 - an effective and positive environment
 - the safety and/or wellbeing of children, young people or staff involved in our services
- 4.2 Any behaviour management strategy used must be:
 - fair
 - respectful
 - appropriate to the developmental stage of the children or young people involved
- 4.3 The child or young person is to be provided with clear directions and given an opportunity to redirect their misbehaviour in a positive way.
- 4.4 Under no circumstances are our staff to take disciplinary action involving physical punishment or any form of treatment that could reasonably be considered as degrading, cruel, frightening or humiliating.

5. Maintain Role Boundaries

Our staff are not to act outside of the boundaries of their duties, as specified in their role description, when helping to deliver our services. For example, CCNT duties would not include a staff member taking a child to their home for a meal or activity.

Organisation Guideline: Safeguarding Children & Young People Statement – Parents', Carers' and Guardians' Version	Date of Issue: August 2014	CatholicCare NT
ORG/SP/G003 V6.0	Date Reviewed: August 2023	Page 2 of 3

6. Photographs of Children and Young People

Photography or other recordings of children by staff is only permitted when there is a clear work-related purpose for obtaining the imagery and:

- parental/guardian/carer authorisation is obtained by completing the Consent Form – Evaluation and Audio-Visual (ORG/EVS/F003). An example of where photographs of children may be permitted include at community events organised by CCNT.
- children are to be appropriately dressed and include parents or other staff in the photographs.
- images are to be maintained securely, i.e. loaded onto a database and password protected.

7. Use of Electronic Communication

- 7.1 Wherever possible and appropriate, email and text messages sent to a child or young person are to be copied to their parent, carer or guardian.
- 7.2 Any communication is to be restricted to issues directly associated with service delivery, such as advising that a scheduled event is cancelled. Staff are not permitted to be friends with children or young people on Facebook or other social media.
- 7.3 The use of social networking sites for CCNT staff in their professional capacity is restricted. Permission must be requested and approved by a Manager for staff to use any social networking site and it must be for work related purposes.

8. Responding to Child Abuse Reports and Allegations

- 8.1 The reporting of child abuse is mandatory in the Northern Territory under the *Care and Protection of Children Act 2007*. CCNT has a comprehensive policy and procedure that includes mandatory reporting and associated processes. Please refer to Mandatory Reporting of Child Harm and Exploitation (ORG/SP/P007) for further information.
- 8.2 All staff have a responsibility to protect children and young people who may be at risk of harm due to any form of abuse or neglect. We are required to identify, report and respond to any concerns about, or incidents of, abuse or neglect towards children or young people to whom we provide services.
- 8.3 Staff are required to report suspected abuse to their line supervisor and to Territory Families. Only authorised staff in these organisations are able to seek access to documentation regarding a report.

Organisation Guideline: Safeguarding Children & Young People Statement – Parents', Carers' and Guardians' Version	Date of Issue: August 2014	CatholicCare NT
ORG/SP/G003 V6.0	Date Reviewed: August 2023	Page 3 of 3