

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

RATIONALE

Busy Bodies Childcare Service is committed to the prevention of physical, emotional and sexual abuse of children. This commitment means that the interests and welfare of children are the prime considerations when any decision is made about suspected abuse.

PURPOSE:

- To provide a safe environment for all children, and educators, and visiting teachers;
- To ensure all staff are aware of the steps to take when dealing with suspected child abuse;
- To ensure all records and conversations remain confidential; and
- To ensure all involved at our Service are aware that anybody can report a suspected abuse situation.

Principles

- The interest and protection of the child is paramount at all times.
- We recognize the rights of families to participate in decisions about their child.
- We have a commitment to all visiting teachers and educators being able to recognize signs and symptoms of potential abuse and neglect and are able to take appropriate action in response.
- We will comply with relevant legislation responsibilities.
- We are committed to share information in a timely way and to discuss any concerns about an individual child with colleagues or Management.
- We are committed to promote a culture where educators and visiting teachers feel confident they can constructively challenge poor practice or raise issues of concern without fear of reprisal.
- We are committed to working with other organizations to ensure child protection is consistent and of high quality.
- We are committed to supporting educators and visiting teachers to work in accordance with this policy.

PROCEDURES

Prevention of Child Abuse

Responsibility of Management and Visiting teachers, educators

- The Manager and visiting teachers and educators will undertake to implement the requirements of **Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 56 and 57** as set out in Appendix B to ensure children are protected from ill-treatment and their health and safety is maintained.

- The Manager will undertake to implement the requirements of **The Vulnerable Children Act 2014** to ensure all employees, contractors and people undertaking paid work in Busy Bodies Childcare Service undergo a safety check process.
- The Manager and visiting teachers and educators will undertake to implement the requirements of **The Privacy Act 1993 and the Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1993** to keep children safe when abuse or suspected abuse is reported or investigated.

Staff Selection

- Busy Bodies Childcare will employ staff only after an interview and through checking on the applicant's work history. This will include completing the Children's Worker Safety Check (CWS Check) set out in Appendix C.
- All employees, including contractors, will have been passed through the Police Vet Check Process.
- All visiting teachers hold a current Education Council New Zealand (EDUCANZ) Registered Teacher Practising Certificate will have a CWS Check every three years.
- Management will ensure when selecting staff that they have the skills and attributes to ensure children's safety.
- When employing casual relieving visiting teachers, the applicant's referees will be contacted prior to employment.
- All educators, and visiting teachers will be required to read and abide by the Child Protection Policy.
- Our Service will complete the identity check and risk assessment for all children's workers.

Safety Checks

- Busy Bodies Childcare will ensure CWS Checks have been completed for all employees, contractors prior to their beginning work in the Service.
- In the event of an unexpected event, emergency or being unable to access relief staff with a current CWS Check completed by the Service, the Service will employ the person for up to five days without a full CWS check provided that person has had a full Check completed elsewhere. The Service will complete a Proof of Identity Check prior to the person beginning work. The CWS Check process will begin on the persons first day in the Service or earlier if possible.

Staff Supervision

- The care of children involves physical contact; this is normal, natural and desirable. It is natural to touch them to show affection, to comfort, to reassure them, and to give them praise, as well as taking care of some of their physical needs. However, it is not acceptable to force unwanted affection or touching on a child. Physical contact with children during changing or cleansing must be for the purpose of that task only and be no more than is necessary.
- When educators are changing nappies or toileting children, they are carrying out these duties, with treating children with dignity and respectful ways.
- A record will be kept of every child who is changed at the educator home. This will include date, time, and signature of the staff member changing the child. Whenever possible, children will be supported to change their own clothes.
- If educators take the children on daily outings, excursions, community programmes they will implement the practices in the policy.

Parent Involvement

- Busy Bodies Childcare has an open door policy where parents/ whānau are welcome to visit at any time the children are in care and to be involved as much as possible within our Service.
- Parents and visitors are not permitted to undertake any caregiving routines with other people's children or be left alone with them.
- If any educator is concerned that a parent or adult collecting a child may be under the influence of alcohol or any substance that has a detrimental effect on their functioning or behaviour the educator will seek support from visiting teacher and:
 - Ask the parent or adult if anyone can be contacted to take them home.
 - In the case of parents/ or adults where the above is not satisfactory and the safety of children and educator is at risk, the Police will be informed.
- Children cannot leave our service without written permission from parents, except in an emergency. If a non-custodial parent/guardian wishes to collect a child from the educator home the custodial parent will be informed before the child leaves the educator home, Busy Bodies Childcare Service.

Professionalism

- Management will encourage educators and visiting teachers to keep their personal and professional lives separate. Confidentiality is to be maintained at all times.
- At least once each year, the Child Protection Policy will be discussed at a staff meeting to ensure visiting teachers are familiar with the policy and are continually reminded of their responsibilities.
- The visiting teaching, management team is committed to ensuring educators are familiar with this policy, and is aware of how to prevent, recognise and respond to abuse. All new educators will familiarise themselves with this policy during their induction process.
- If parents have concerns about the treatment of a child by our educator's, they are encouraged to make this known to the visiting teachers and manager, who will ensure that the matter is investigated and acted on immediately as per the Complaints Procedure.

Preventative Education

- All visiting teachers and educators follow the Behaviour Management Policy, Promoting Social Competence Policy, which promotes positive guidance of children's behaviour.
- Visiting teachers and educators work as a team to ensure they can support each other in managing children's challenging behaviours. If an educator is feeling stressed by the behaviour of a child they should immediately communicate this to the visiting teacher team.
- Information is provided on the prevention and recognition of child abuse as set in Children's Action Plan Guidelines.
- Education of children and parents/whānau is important in the prevention of child abuse. We encourage parents to make use of education programmes organised by agencies in the community.

Using Professional Agencies

- Management and visiting teachers will be aware of the professional agencies to contact in the case of suspected child abuse. Our Service could contact the Community Public Health Nurse, or Parent line for support, or contact the Care and Protection division of the Child, Youth and Family. In a serious case, we may have contact with the Police.

- Educators and visiting teachers should not assume responsibility beyond their level of expertise, and management should contact a professional agency for support where necessary.

Protection from Exposure to Inappropriate Material

- Inappropriate material is anything of an explicitly sexual or violent nature
- All educators and visiting teachers will be made aware of cyber safety practices when using ICT with children.
- Any magazines and other materials provided for children to use will be checked by the educator for inappropriate images.

RESPONDING TO SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

Any Person in Busy Bodies Childcare Service is able to Report Suspected Child Abuse

- Always believe what children tell you, and what you see.
- Always take action in the short term to ensure the immediate safety of the child. This will mean contacting Child, Youth and Family Service or the Police if you think there is an immediate risk of the child being abused again.
- Record your concerns or communication with the child which cause concern. Record observations and keep any relevant art work from the child if this could help. All records will be stored confidentially in the Services children's filing system and made available only to people directly dealing with the abuse.
- Do not make decisions alone. Consult with someone experienced. If there is no short-term risk, take time to consult thoroughly in order to make a well-informed decision. If you are certain that the suspected child abuse has occurred outside the family or by a person not closely known to the family, speak to the parents before you report the suspected abuse. Be sure you have the skills, help and support to present the information to the parents.
- If you suspect that the abuse may have been perpetrated by a family member or someone close to the family, do not contact them. Obtain support from an appropriate person who will inform them at an appropriate time.
- If you suspect that child abuse has been perpetuated by a staff member at the Service, you should report the matter promptly to management, who will then report the matter to statutory authorities. This procedure does not preclude the right of any staff member to report instances of child abuse directly to Child, Youth and Family or the New Zealand Police.
- Act on your concerns. Don't leave it to someone else or hope it won't happen again. If you have told the person you believe is responsible for taking action and they do not act, take further action yourself.
- The situation can be stressful. Seek support for yourself by informing management. Management will obtain support from agencies and organizations that specialise in abuse situations.
- Outside organizations which offer support are Child Youth and Family, Police, Community Public Health Nurse, Child and Family Counseling Services, Awhina Wahine, Community Mental Health. (CYF - 0508 326 459).

Guidelines for Educators, Visiting teachers to follow when a Child Discloses Abuse

Educators and Visiting teachers must:

- **LISTEN** to the child.
- Believe what they say.
- Say that you are glad they told you.
- Say "Sorry it happened".
- Let them know you will help.
- Record and date the disclosure.

Most importantly you are there to support the child.

Allegations or Concerns about Busy Bodies Childcare Staff

If an allegation of abuse is made about a staff member the service will:

- If a staff member is aware that an allegation of abuse of a child has been made against them they are strongly advised to follow this procedure:
 - Contact a lawyer specialising in allegations of abuse of children or, if a member, NZEI Te Riu Roa.
 - Busy Bodies Childcare will follow the procedures set out in Appendix A.
 - Should allegations of abuse against an educator be proven this will be treated as serious misconduct.

**PROCEDURES WHERE
Child Abuse is Suspected / Discovered**

ABUSE SUSPECTED / DISCOVERED
Advise the Manager / Visiting Teachers

*If in immediate danger (i.e. child cannot return home)
act with urgency. Contact Child Youth and Family*

All staff have the right to take any concerns for the safety and well-being of a child directly to Child Youth & Family and/or the Police.

FACTS RECORDED

CONSULT WITH OUTSIDE AGENCIES (HEALTH NURSE, C.Y.P.F.S)

Concerns Confirmed

1. Report to CYPFS / Police.
Await further contact before taking any action.
2. Seek support for yourself.
3. Advise Manager

Concerns not Confirmed

Continue to closely monitor the situation in consultation with others.

NOTE: The Service Staff or Manager have the right to ask for confidentiality when reporting a suspected case abuse to CYPFS / Police. This must be stated clearly in the first contact with CYPFS / Police.

Appendix A

If a Busy Bodies Childcare Staff Member is accused of Abusing a Child, the Procedures below will be followed.

The Manager and Visiting teachers will:

- Make sure that the child is safe and protected in the In-home Childcare Service environments.
- Inform the contractors/employee of their right to support from a person/s of their own choosing, such as a legal representative, union counselor, family member or friend.
- Keep documented records of any formal discussions regarding the matter.
- Contact the child's parents/caregivers when appropriate.
- Contact insurer and/or legal advice.

The Manager in consultation with Visiting teachers will:

- Grant the contractors/employee discretionary leave.
- Conduct the initial investigation.
- Inform Child, Youth and Family and the Police if necessary. The decision to follow up on any allegations should be made in consultation with these agencies.
- Invoke disciplinary procedures as per the Busy Bodies Childcare staff member's Employment Contract.
- Busy Bodies Childcare Service will treat contractors/employees accused of child abuse fairly and according to their contract.

Appendix B

Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008

56 Ill-treatment of Children

(1) In order to ensure that the standards set out in this Part are complied with, the service provider of a licensed service and any educator who provides education and care for a licensed home-based education and care service must comply with sub clause (2) if the service provider or educator has reasonable grounds to believe that a person employed or engaged in the service, or any other person:

- (a) has physically ill-treated or abused a child or committed a crime against children; or
- (b) in guiding or controlling a child, has subjected the child to solitary confinement, immobilisation, or deprivation of food, drink, warmth, shelter, or protection.

(2) The service provider and the educator must ensure that:

- (a) the person is excluded from coming into contact with the children participating in the service or, as the case requires, the children being educated by the educator; and
- (b) if satisfied that it is necessary to do so to ensure that no child is ill-treated, ensure that the person is excluded from the service and does not enter or remain in any premises where the service is provided while it is being provided, or as the case requires, is excluded from the home and does not enter it or remain in it while the educator is providing education and care.

57 Health and Safety of Children

(1) In order to ensure that the standards set out in this Part are complied with, the service provider of a licensed service and any educator who provides education and care for a licensed home-based education and care service must comply with sub clause (2) if the service provider or educator has reasonable grounds to believe that a person employed or engaged in the service, or any other person:

- (a) is in a state of physical or mental health that presents any risk of danger to children; or
- (b) has an infectious or contagious disease or condition.

(2) The service provider and the educator must ensure that:

- (a) the person is excluded from coming into contact with the children participating in the service or, as the case requires, the children being educated by the educator; and
- (b) if satisfied that it is necessary to do so to ensure that no child becomes ill, ensure that the person is excluded from the service and does not enter or remain in any premises where the service is provided while it is being provided or, as the case requires, is excluded from the home and does not enter it or remain in it while the educator is providing education and care.

Appendix C

Safety Checklist

Checks Required for Children's Educators, Visiting Teachers.

The following checks must have been completed for all contractors, employees, working for Busy Bodies Childcare Service and seeking to employ or engage as a children's educator's, and visiting teachers [from 1 July 2015 for core children's workforce roles], and from 1 July 2016 for non-core children's workforce roles.

1. Identity confirmation, either by:
 - A. Use of an **electronic identity credential** (e.g., the Real Me identity verification service), and a search of personnel records to check that the identity has not been claimed by someone else.
 - B. Following the regulatory process to provide confidence that:
 - The identity exists (i.e. that it is not fictitious) by **checking an original primary identity document**.
 - The identity is a 'living' identity and the potential children's worker uses that identity in the community by **checking an original secondary identity document**.
 - The potential children's worker links to the identity either by checking an identity document that contains a **photo**, or by using an **identity referee**.
 - Searching **personnel records** to check that the identity has not been claimed by someone.
2. An **interview** of the potential children's educator. The interview may be conducted via telephone or other communications technology.
3. Obtaining and considering a **work history**, covering the preceding five years, provided by the potential children's educator.
4. Obtaining and considering information from at least one **referee**, not related to the potential children's educator or part of their extended family.
5. **Seeking information** relevant organisation, Education Council, including (but not limited to) confirmation that the potential visiting teachers holds a current Registered Teacher Practising Certificate or is currently a member of the relevant organisation.
6. Obtaining and considering information from a **New Zealand Police vet**, unless at least three-yearly New Zealand Police vetting; aligned with the "Vulnerable Children's Act 2014".
7. Evaluation of the above information to **assess the risk** the potential children's educators, and the visiting teachers role would pose to the safety of children if employed or engaged, taking into account whether the role is a core children's worker or non-core children's worker role.

Checks Required for Periodic Rechecking

Every three years following their checks at the required standard, the following checks must be complete for Busy Bodies Childcare Services to continue to employ or engage as either a core or non-core children's worker.

1. Confirmation that the children's educator has not changed their name from the name on the documents produced during the initial identity confirmation (i.e., the presented primary or secondary document). If there has been a change to the person's name since he or she was last safety checked, the person must reconfirm his or her identity by producing a supporting name change document relating to his or her name change.
2. Seeking information from relevant professional organisation, licensing authority, or registration authority, including (but not limited to) confirmation that the person is currently a member of the organisation, or currently licensed or registered by the authority.
3. Obtaining and considering information from a **New Zealand Police vet**, unless the worker holds a Current Registered Teacher Practicing Certificate and Education Council has confirmed that the registration is current.
4. Evaluation of the above information to **assess the risk** the children's educator, and the visiting teacher's role, would pose to the safety of children if employed or engaged, taking into account whether the role is a core children's workforce or non-care children's worker role.

Ref: Children's worker safety checking under the Vulnerable Children Act 2014 RC v 1.00 May 2015

Links: <http://childrensactionplan.govt.nz/whats-new/childrens-workforce-guidelines-available/>

Licensing Criteria HS28-34