

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

1. Rationale

Community Networking Trust (CNT) is committed to the prevention and early detection abuse and/or neglect of children and young people.

The purpose of this policy is to provide staff guidelines by which to identify and respond appropriately to concerns of child abuse either; physical, emotional, sexual or neglect and to understand their role in keeping children safe.

All services delivered by CNT reflect the principle that the welfare and interest of the child and young person are the first and paramount consideration.

This policy covers all staff who have direct or indirect contact with children. For the purposes of this policy "staff" is defined as anyone working for this organisation whether paid, voluntary, contracted or on placement.

2. Guidelines

- At all times a child or young persons safety and welfare are paramount to the CNT.
- At no time will staff use methods of discipline or control that involve physical or emotional punishment.
- In accordance with Vulnerable Children's Act 2014, all necessary safety checks will be undertaken on new and existing staff.
- Staff members working directly with children and young people will be aware of and familiar with the following resources:
 - *Breaking the Cycle - an interagency protocols for abuse management – CYF*
 - *Working Together to keep children & young people safe – CYF*
 - *How can I tell? - Child matters*
- CNT will ensure that all employees who work directly with young people receive appropriate training in the recognition of abuse indicators, understand their obligations to act in the interests of the child or young person and be informed of the policy and procedures for dealing with suspected abuse.

- Volunteers will be well supervised and visible to staff when interacting with children.
- The Community Networking Trust will ensure that the Ministry for Vulnerable Children Oranga Tamariki (MVCOT) be advised immediately where there are concerns a child or young person is at risk from abuse or serious danger.
- Where any investigation relating to allegations of abuse by a staff member has been initiated, and the person concerned resigns, the investigation will be continued.

3. Procedures for child protection

- All suspected child abuse will be responded to in a manner which ensures the child's immediate and future safety.
- If abuse is suspected or alleged, all details will be documented and reported to the CNT Manager who, in consultation with the staff member concerned will make the notification to MVCOT/Police or support the staff member to do so.
- Appropriate supervision / support will be provided to the staff member(s) involved.
- Staff members are expected to follow the CNT reporting processes but have the individual right to make a report direct to MVCOT/Police if it is believed that the child's immediate safety is threatened.
- A register of all notifications or reports of concern will be kept. This will be updated as appropriate to include any responses received or follow up made by MVCOT.

If a child or young person is in immediate danger call POLICE ON 111

**Making a notification or report of concern to the Ministry for Vulnerable Children –
Oranga Tamariki**

All referrals go through the **Ministry for Vulnerable Children Contact Centre.**

Phone: 0508 FAMILY or 0508 326 459

Email: contact@mvcot.govt.nz

The National Call Centre operates 24 hours seven days per week.

After 5pm and on weekends social workers are only available for emergency situations, but we still urge you to call so we can assess your needs.

When contacted, a social worker will ask questions about what's happening and assess what should happen next. This includes considering the urgency of the concern, and deciding whether MVCOT need to be involved, or if there are people in the community who are better placed to help. Depending on the level of our concern, and the needs and strengths of the child and their whānau, there are different ways MCVOT might work:

Partnered response - a less formal way of working with families, whānau and their tamariki. After an assessment has been completed families and whānau are assisted to find and use services that the community already provides. If the caregiver agrees, a referral will be made to a community service provider. MVCOT will work with the provider to make sure the child or young person and their family is getting the help they need, and consider any other services or support that might be required.

Family group conferences – Sometimes a social worker will work alongside the family. The social worker will bring together the wider whānau and other community support, so the family gets the help it needs to get back on track. This might involve a family group conference or FGC, which ensures that the whole whānau is supported to make decisions about the best way to ensure safe, stable and loving care for the child or young person. This is a formal meeting where the whānau comes together with professionals to talk about the concerns for a child or young person, and come up with a plan to ensure the child's needs are front and centre.

Relevant Legislation:

- *Children, Young Persons and their families Act, 1989*
- *Domestic Violence Act, 1995*
- *Privacy Act, 1993*
- *Vulnerable Children's Act, 2014*
- *Care of Children Act, 2004*
- *Victim's Rights Act, 2002*
- *The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC)*

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