

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

### PURPOSE

To protect the safety and well-being of children and young people.

### SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- All staff within SYOSS
- All volunteers within SYOSS
- All Trust Board members

### DEFINITIONS

- A child is any person under the age of 17 years and is not married or in a civil union.
- Child abuse is the harming, ill-treatment, abuse, neglect, or deprivation of any child or young person.

### PRINCIPLES

- Recognising and responding to child abuse and neglect is everyone's responsibility. Staff actively safeguard children by being alert to and preventing, minimising, and/or eliminating harm.
- Child abuse and neglect can take many forms. While there are different definitions and categories of abuse, the important thing for staff to consider is the overall well-being and risk of harm to the child.
- SYOSS is a mandatory reporting organisation.
- SYOSS staff should feel enabled to act on suspected abuse and/or neglect when the patterns of symptoms are present.


### POLICY

- All staff receive care and protection training so that they recognise, respond and report appropriately when suspected or known cases of abuse and neglect occur.
- One staff member is designated the Child Protection Lead with responsibilities at both a strategic level within the organisation and on a day-to-day basis.

- All staff have a responsibility to report and discuss any child protection or well-being concerns with their manager.
- Managers have a responsibility to respond to all care and protection concerns and ensure authorities (Police, Oranga Tamariki) are notified when a staff member informs them that a child has been or is likely to or is suspected of being abused or neglected. This extends to ensuring all known information about the child, young person and their siblings and family/whanau is shared with that authority to determine the response.
- Managers make decisions relating to information sharing requests to and from Oranga Tamariki, Police or any other social service agency and where providing, sharing or disclosure of information is assessed as necessary in the safe guarding of children and under the Children’s Act and the Family Violence Act.
- Where a third party has advised a staff member of the abuse, the person or agency making the disclosure is encouraged to report the information to the authorities. The staff member advised will document and report the disclosure to a manager and followup with the person to make sure they have reported it to the authorities. A manager will notify Police and Oranga Tamariki of the information received by the third party where necessary.
- Where the allegation of abuse involves a staff member SYOSS has a dual responsibility i.e., to the employee and to the child. SYOSS will follow its human resources policies and procedures with respect to the staff member and consult with the Police to ensure that any action taken does not undermine any investigation being conducted by the Police.
- If a staff member is under investigation and resigns, the investigation will continue to its completion.

**REFERENCE POLICIES/LEGISLATION**

- Family violence policy
- Family Violence Act 2018
- Oranga Tamariki Act 1989/Children’s and Young People’s Well-being Act 1989
- Privacy Act 2020
- Children’s Act 2014

Chairperson:  Date: 1 June 2021

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