

CCW Policy 6

Child Safeguarding Training and Development

Controlled Document

Approval
rating
3

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Document Owner:	Executive Manager, Children and Youth		Approved by:	Chief Executive Officer	
Reviewed by and consulted with:	Quality & Risk Child Safeguarding Committee		CELT QSC		

Audience

This policy applies to all employees working on a permanent, temporary, and casual basis. This also includes authorised carers and contractors.

Specific programs within CatholicCare will have additional requirements due to contractual agreements (refer to Practice Manuals).

Implementation responsibility

Implementation responsibility for this policy lies with all CatholicCare employees.

Objective and Purpose

CatholicCare Wollongong (We/Our/CatholicCare) recognise that to achieve our vision of advocating with and on behalf of children and young people and intervening to protect them from all forms of abuse, violence, injury, neglect, and exploitation, it is the intention of CatholicCare Wollongong that children and young people are empowered, valued, listened to and wherever possible, participate in decision making.

This policy sets out our commitment to being a Child Safe Organisation with a child safe culture embedded in all levels of our Agency. We have a zero tolerance towards the harm of children and young people. In doing this we will uphold the rights of all children to participate to their full capacity, regardless of their gender, race, ability, or cultural background,

Our induction processes for all employees and authorised carers are designed to ensure awareness of potential issues that may arise when working with children and young people. These processes establish a baseline understanding and shared knowledge concerning child safety and protection.

We regularly review our training programs to incorporate emerging best practices and feedback from stakeholders. We prioritise the availability of necessary resources for both internal and external stakeholders as per their requirements. Ongoing training endeavours to enhance the skills, abilities, and confidence of our employees in identifying and responding to unsafe individuals and environments.

This policy does not include any identified additional training required for specific programs that are child or young person facing, as these will be dealt with in the standards and guidelines of the specific service delivery.

Our objectives in regard to training and development is obtained through ensuring:

- Training and resources are offered on a continuous basis
- Employees can identify and respond to all forms of child abuse
- CatholicCare Wollongong will champion a culture of continual learning

Child safe training is accessible to all employees, authorised carers and individuals that have contact with children or young people at CatholicCare Wollongong

- The training delivered is regularly reviewed in response to emerging best practice and is supported by resources which are available to all employees, as well as authorised carers and individuals that have contact with children or young people at CatholicCare Wollongong.
- Child safe training is designed to ensure all necessary individuals are child safe aware, that they understand CatholicCare Wollongong child safe policies and procedures. This includes the Code of Conduct, which articulates CatholicCare Wollongong expectations about behaviour towards children and young people and interactions with children and young people.
- Child safe training is designed to ensure employees have the skills, ability, and confidence to keep children and young people safe, by imparting the know-how on how to respond to children and young people at risk.
- Training is provided so employees can identify inappropriate conduct and respond effectively to all forms of child abuse.
- A culture of continuous improvement can help employee's knowledge and practice stay up to date.

What is Child Safeguarding Training and Development

Child safeguarding training and development refers to initiatives designed to equip individuals with the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to protect children from harm, abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

This training typically covers a range of topics, including identifying signs of abuse, understanding legal and ethical obligations, implementing safeguarding policies and procedures, responding appropriately to disclosures, and promoting a culture of safety and accountability within the agency or the community. Development in this context involves ongoing efforts to enhance and refine these skills and practices to ensure the continuous improvement of safeguarding measures and the well-being of children and young people.

The Children's Guardian may provide training on matters related to the implementation of the Child Safe Standards, and other matters reasonably related to child safety and the functions of the Children's Guardian.

Consequences of Policy Violations:

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or contract or carer authorisation cancellation. The severity of the consequences will depend on the nature and impact of the violation, as determined by CatholicCare Wollongong.

Our Child Safeguarding Training and Development Principles

These Principles set out the standards and values that is expected as an outcome of training and development in child safeguarding:

For everyone

- Encouraging collaboration and communication among different stakeholders, including professionals, volunteers, parents, and children themselves, to create a coordinated approach to safeguarding.
- Prioritising the best interests and well-being of the child in all decisions and actions related to safeguarding, ensuring their voices are heard and their rights are respected.
- Understanding that safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility, regardless of the role or position within CatholicCare or the community.

Mutually beneficial

- Foster a culture of mutual support within the team, where employees feel comfortable seeking advice, sharing experiences, and offering assistance to one another in safeguarding children. This not only strengthens individual capacities but also cultivates a positive and resilient team dynamic that is mutually beneficial for all involved.

About the team

- Ensuring all employees, contractors, suppliers, and authorised carers have a basic understanding of child safeguarding issues, including recognising signs of abuse, and knowing how to respond appropriately.
- Foster a unified approach to child safeguarding within the team, emphasising the importance of consistent practices and communication to effectively address concerns and protect children.
- Encourage reflective practice within the team, providing opportunities for members to evaluate their experiences, learn from challenges, and continuously improve their safeguarding practices.

Leader Led

- Holding individuals accountable for their actions and behaviours concerning child safeguarding, including reporting concerns and following established procedures.

Leaders will provide ongoing support through:

- Being across the latest information and practices in regard to child safety
- Leading by example and encouraging reporting
- Confirming employees are aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect

- Providing employee training in child safe practices, including children and young people with additional vulnerabilities
- Empowering individuals to speak up and take action if they suspect or witness any form of abuse or neglect, and providing them with the necessary support and resources to do so.
- Ensuring short term, casual, and contract employees are properly inducted and know the expectations of CatholicCare Wollongong

Context matters

- Understanding the legal and regulatory requirements related to child safeguarding in the specific jurisdiction or context is essential. This includes knowledge of relevant laws, policies, and guidelines governing child protection, as well as any mandatory reporting obligations for safeguarding concerns.
- Identifying and understanding the risk factors and vulnerabilities that children may face in a particular context is essential for effective safeguarding. This includes considering factors such as poverty, inequality, violence, exploitation, displacement, and discrimination that may increase children's susceptibility to harm.
- In an increasingly digital world, considering the risks and challenges associated with technology and online environments is crucial. Training on issues such as cyberbullying, online grooming, and digital privacy helps equip individuals with the knowledge and skills to protect children from online harm.

When to use Training and Development

Child safeguarding training is included as part of onboarding process, regardless of program or level of management. This ensures that employees and volunteers understand their roles and responsibilities in protecting children from harm and are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to identify, prevent, and respond to safeguarding concerns.

Training and development should be utilised in various contexts and situations where employees (and their delegates) interact with children and have a responsibility for their safety and well-being.

Ongoing professional development opportunities are essential for individuals working with children to stay updated on best practices, legal requirements, and emerging issues related to child safeguarding. Regular training sessions, workshops, seminars, and online courses can help enhance knowledge, skills, and confidence in safeguarding children effectively, whether these are provided by CatholicCare or external providers including Training and Professional Development Office of Professional Standards and Safeguarding, within the Office of the Bishop, Diocese of Wollongong.

Certain roles and settings may require specialised child safeguarding training tailored to the specific risks and challenges they present.

Review of Child Safeguarding Training and Development

Systematically reviewing child safeguarding training and development initiatives, ensures accuracy, currency, and relevance to participants' roles and responsibilities. Additionally, CatholicCare's communication and content of material remains responsive, relevant, and effective in protecting children from harm and promoting their well-being.

Furthermore, ensure that the training is accessible, inclusive, and culturally sensitive to effectively engage all participants. Assess whether the training has led to positive changes in attitudes, behaviours, and practices among participants and whether these changes have resulted in improved outcomes for children.

Definitions

Term	Definition
CatholicCare Executive Leadership Team (CELT)	The CELT considers and provides advice to the Chief Executive Officer on high level strategic issues and significant policy and operational matters impacting on CatholicCare Wollongong. It comprises of Executive Managers of CatholicCare Wollongong.
Quality Systems Committee (QSC)	A diverse team that oversees & contributes to the promotion, development, and implementation of systems to ensure continuous improvement in the provision of high-quality client-centric services that achieve positive outcomes for clients
Employees	A person employed by CatholicCare Wollongong, or a person who volunteers for CatholicCare Wollongong, but excludes authorised carers
Contractors	Individuals or companies who are engaged to perform a specific service or task for a client or CatholicCare Wollongong, usually for a fee or other agreed compensation.
Authorised carer	An individual that has been authorised by a NSW designated agency to provide statutory or supported out of home care in NSW.
Training and Professional Development Office of Professional Standards and Safeguarding	Mandated leadership training for the leadership team at CatholicCare Wollongong as a Diocese (DoW) approach to build and strengthen the understanding and knowledge of all employees within the DoW.

Induction and ongoing training

- Upon commencing employment with CatholicCare, employees will undergo an induction process that includes training on the principles and guidelines outlined in this policy. Furthermore, ongoing training and educational resources will be made available to ensure that employees maintain a thorough understanding of these principles and guidelines throughout their tenure with CatholicCare.
- Regular updates and reminders may also be provided to keep employees informed about changes in best practice.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. Any necessary updates or modifications to ensure compliance with legislative and standard requirements will be communicated to all employees, contractors, and representatives of CatholicCare Wollongong.

Other situations may include:

- Following an incident, to identify gaps and strengthen data protection measures.
- adoption of new tools or systems.
- mergers, restructuring, or shifts in services that impact on current processes.
- As part of routine evaluations to ensure policies remain effective and aligned with best practices.
- If client/s provide feedback or complaints, prompting a review for improvement.
- When inefficiencies or errors are identified.

The agency will formally review this Policy every three years as part of the policy's known life cycle period.

References

Legislation

- Child and young persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998
- Child and young persons (Care and Protection) Regulation 2012
- Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998

Standards

- Child Wellbeing and Child Protection – NSW Interagency Guidelines
- Child Safe Standards NSW
- National Principles for Child Safe Organisation
- NSW Child Safe Standards for Permanent Care

Agency Policies

- CCW 1 Child Safeguarding
- CCW 2 Child Safeguarding Risk Management
- CCW 3 Child Safeguarding Equity & Inclusion
- CCW 4 Child Safeguarding Complaints Management
- CCW 5 Child Safeguarding Disciplinary and Misconduct (Reportable Conduct)
- CCW 7 Child Safeguarding Reporting of Harm, Abuse & Neglect of a child (MRG)

Forms, Record Keeping and Other Documents

Approval Rating	Type of Policy
<p style="text-align: center;">Approval rating 1</p>	<p>New agency policy/adjustments that are legislated or are a Diocesan directive. Minimal collaboration required.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Approval rating 2</p>	<p>High level agency policies that are developed at executive management level (such as employee entitlements) go to CELT for final review before COO recommendation for approval by the CEO.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Approval rating 3</p>	<p>Operational agency policies are endorsed by the QSC to ensure policy is applicable across all program areas. Then go to CELT for final review before COO recommendation for approval by the CEO.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Approval rating 4</p>	<p>Program specific where it is only the individual program that need to ensure that the policy meets practice requirements. No QSC, CELT or CEO. However, if it is a new policy, courtesy email outlining what they are should go to the CEO, COO and EM Quality & Risk (EM Q&R) for information only.</p>