



Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Purpose

This policy is part of ATSiCHS Brisbane's ongoing commitment to protecting the children in our organisation from harm and abuse. It outlines the child safe practices our organisation has put in place to minimise the risks to child safety and sets out what is required from staff, including volunteers and others who interact with our organisation, so they know what is expected from them to keep children safe.

Scope

This policy provides a framework to guide all actions for the ATSiCHS Board members, Senior Management Team (SMT), staff, clients, students, volunteers, contractors and visitors.

This policy applies to all activities in the organisation which involve, result in or relate to contact with children.

Policy

ATSiCHS Brisbane is dedicated to meeting the objectives of each of the Standards for Child Safe Organisations to meet compliance to the Child Safe Organisations Act.

Policy Statement

At ATSiCHS Brisbane we are committed to promoting and protecting the safety and wellbeing of children, including children with disabilities, from cultural and language diverse backgrounds and children that are gender diverse.

Across our work, we endeavour to create environments where all children can feel, and be, safe and welcomed, and where their participation is valued.

We have zero tolerance for any form of child abuse and will embed and enact processes to respond to incidents.

We demonstrate this commitment by the following actions:

- This Policy is distributed to all new and existing employees and volunteers who are required to act in accordance with it
- Employees and volunteers are equipped with appropriate induction and training on children's rights, child safety and wellbeing
- Employees and volunteers must report any child harm or abuse concerns
- Complaints under this policy will be investigated quickly and thoroughly
- All employees and volunteers are required to have a valid BlueCard
- Where reasonably possible, we involve children when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them
- We proactively manage the risk of harm to children
- This Policy is freely available and accessible to the public on our website



Compliance and reporting

Employees and volunteers must report any child harm or abuse concerns to governance@atsichsbrisbane.org.au or their manager.

Members of the public are also encouraged to report any child harm or abuse concerns involving ATSIChS Brisbane, its employees or volunteers, to governance@atsichsbrisbane.org.au

All reports will be:

- ☐ Treated seriously.
- ☐ Investigated thoroughly and quickly in a culturally safe, child-focused manner
- ☐ Conducted in line with reporting, privacy and employment law obligations
- ☐ Escalated to the CEO as necessary
- ☐ Employees and volunteers must keep confidential and cooperate fully with any investigation.

ATSIChS Brisbane will keep information about complaints confidential, except where it is necessary to share information to respond properly to a complaint or to prioritise child safety.

Non-compliance

Depending on the circumstances, non-compliance with this Policy may constitute a breach of employment or contractual obligations. Those who fail to comply with this Policy may face disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or volunteer status.

Reporting- sexual offences

All adults in Queensland who have a reasonable belief that an adult has committed a sexual offence against a child under 16 have an obligation to report that information to Queensland Police unless they have a reasonable excuse. Failure to do so is a criminal offence.

Factors contributing to reasonable belief may include:

- ☐ the child tells you they have been sexually abused
- ☐ the child tells you they know someone who has been sexually abused (which may be a way of talking about themselves)
- ☐ someone who knows the child tells you the child has been sexually abused

- ☐ you observe signs of sexual abuse in the child
- ☐ you are a qualified professional who observes the child's behaviour or development, which leads you to believe the child has been sexually abused

Reporting- Reportable Conduct Scheme

The Reportable Conduct Scheme requires organisations to report and investigate allegations or convictions of child abuse or child-related misconduct (reportable conduct) made about their workers and volunteers.

Reportable conduct includes:

- ☐ a child sexual offence
- ☐ sexual misconduct committed in relation to, or in the presence of a child
- ☐ ill-treatment of a child
- ☐ significant neglect of a child
- ☐ physical violence committed in relation to, or in the presence of a child, or
- ☐ behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child.

Reportable conduct may occur once or repeatedly. Conduct may be reportable if it occurs outside the workplace. The Reportable Conduct Scheme applies even when the conduct does not result in criminal charges. The Queensland Family and Child Commission must be notified within three business days whether there is proof of the allegations. Failure to do so may result in fines.

Employees and volunteers must report any concerns to governance@atsichsbrisbane.org.au or their manager.

Members of the public are also encouraged to report concerns involving ATSICHS Brisbane, its employees or volunteers, to governance@atsichsbrisbane.org.au

Roles, responsibilities and delegations

Role	Responsibilities and delegate
Employees, volunteers and contractors	☐ Adhere to the Code of Conduct, Child Safe Organisations ☐ To understand and ensure compliance with the policy ☐ To promote the safety and wellbeing of children ☐ Undertake the Child Safety and Wellbeing training ☐ Report any child harm or abuse concerns
Managers	☐ Ensure all employees are supported in their responsibilities, discuss improvement opportunities and compliance with employees at meetings etc.
Executive	☐ Ensure all employees and volunteers are aware of relevant laws and organisational policies and procedures ☐ Provide support for employees and volunteers in undertaking their child safety responsibilities ☐ To receive and investigate complaints or incidents under this policy and to escalate as required

Definitions

Blue Card: Queensland Working with Children Clearance

Child: A person below the age of 18 years

Contact with a child: In this Policy, contact means physical contact, face-to-face contact, written communication, oral communication, or electronic communication.

Child harm or abuse: Refers to any behaviour or treatment that results in the actual and/or likelihood of causing physical or emotional harm to a child or young person.

Governance References

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
- Queensland Family and Child Commission Act 2014
- Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld)
- Child Protection Regulation 2011 (Qld)
- Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld)
- Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000
- Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2011
- Disability Services Act 2006 (Qld)
- National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (NDIS Act)

Related Forms & Documentation

- Code of Conduct- Child Safe Organisations Policy [doc_3497](#)
- Position Requirements Policy [doc_2276](#)
- Incident Management Framework [doc_3496](#)

