



The Y Central South Island Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy



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Related Policy and Procedures

YCSI Employee Policies and procedures

YCSI Recruitment Policy

YCSI Behaviour Management Policy

YCSI Child/young person friendly policy – (NEW – to be developed)

YCSI Young People friendly policy - (NEW – to be developed)

YCSI Complaints policy



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1. Statement of commitment

We take our responsibility for keeping child/children and young people safe very seriously.

The Y Central South Island (The YCSI), including its board of directors, commits to creating and maintaining an environment that ensures all people involved in The YCSI activities, programmes or services act in the best interests of child/children/young person, and young people and take all reasonable steps to ensure their safety, welfare and wellbeing.

2. Policy Scope

This policy applies to all those who are serving and/or representing The YCSI including:

- All staff, whether they are in direct or non-direct contact with child/children and young people,
- Volunteers including the board of directors,
- Interns and student placements,
- Engaged stakeholders where applicable

This policy applies to all provisions, services and environments of The YCSI including online and ICT (Information Communication Technology) platforms, and any other aspects that fall under The YCSI's branding and remit.

3. Policy Purpose

The objective of this policy is to:

- Outline The YCSI's expectations for Safeguarding & Child Protection and child/young person protection,
- Outline how The YCSI will support staff to uphold these expectations,
- Support staff to operate in ways that protect child/children and young people from harm, abuse and neglect, including being able to recognise and respond to any Safeguarding & Child Protection and/or child/young person protection concerns.

4. Policy Principles

The principles that guide this policy are:

- The YCSI holds zero-tolerance for child/young person abuse and neglect
- Safeguarding & Child Protection is a shared responsibility,
- Consistency of practice that promotes the safety and wellbeing of all people accessing or serving the YCSI.
- Being inclusive and valuing diversity,
- Being child/young person-focused and including the voice of child/children and young-people in all we do,

- Supporting any child/young person, young person, adult at risk, or whānau facing or experiencing vulnerabilities, as much as possible,
- Our commitment to work collaboratively with statutory agencies when required,
- To be honest and transparent with others about our concerns and/or decisions, except for when doing so may increase risk to the person concerned and/or others,
- The welfare and best interests of the child/young person or young person are paramount,

At all times The YCSI will act in accordance with our values of Caring, Respect, Honesty and Responsibility.

5. Definitions

Child: A person who is under the age of 18 years of age (i.e. 0 - up to their 18th birthday), as defined by the Children's Act 2014.

Young Person: A person aged 14 years of age up to the age of 18 years of age (i.e. 14 - up to their 18th birthday), as defined by the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989.

Adult at Risk — is generally defined within Safeguarding & Child Protection policies as a person aged 18 or over who has unmet care and support needs, is experiencing (or is at risk of) abuse, neglect, or exploitation, and is unable to protect themselves from this harm because of those needs. This definition aligns with both the *Crimes Act 1961* (vulnerable adults) and modern, person-centred, wellbeing-focused approaches.

Staff: Any person serving on behalf of The YCSI or under The YCSI's name, regardless of if they are paid, voluntary or contracted.

Caring: To be sensitive to the well-being of others, to put others before yourself.

Respect: To treat others how you would like to be treated, to care about how your words and actions affect others.

Honesty: To tell the truth, to behave in ways that show you deserve trust, to make sure your choices match your values.

Responsibility: To do what is right, to make good choices, to accept the results for your actions.

Child/young person abuse: The harming (whether physically, emotionally or sexually) ill-treatment, abuse, neglect or deprivation of any child/young person or young person- Oranga Tamariki Act 1989.

Neglect: The persistent failure to meet a child/young person's basic physical or psychological needs, leading to adverse or impaired physical or emotional functioning or development.

Child/Children's worker: A person who works in, or provides, a regulated service and the person's work involve regular or overnight contact with a child/young person and takes place without a parent or guardian of the child/young person being present (Children's Act 2014).

6. Legislation

This policy is informed by International and NZ legislation including but not limited to:

- Children's Act 2014
- Oranga Tamariki Act 1989
- Privacy Act 2020
- Health and Safety at Work Act 2015
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child/young person 1989 (UNCROC)

6.1 Duty of Care

The YCSI has a primary duty of care to protect any person from unnecessary risk of harm. All care must be taken to ensure that everybody's wellbeing and safety is met, and the Y promotes best practice and acts without negligence.

Where a child/young person or young person is enrolled in a Y activity, programme or service, independent from their parent or guardian's supervision, The YCSI will assume the parental duty of care.

Where an activity requires parent or guardian supervision, the responsibility for parental care will remain with the parent or guardian.

7. Safeguarding & Child Protection Culture

The YCSI has a Safeguarding & Child Protection culture which supports our commitment to create programmes and environments that uphold the safety and well-being of child/children and young people.

Our Safeguarding & Child Protection culture includes a framework of roles and responsibilities that work together to embed the culture into the organisation.

7.1 All Staff Responsibilities

The YCSI sees Safeguarding & Child Protection as a shared responsibility. This means whether staff are in direct or non-direct child/young person facing positions, everyone across the organisation representing the YCSI, have Safeguarding & Child Protection responsibilities.

These responsibilities include:

- Recognising Safeguarding & Child Protection as a shared responsibility
- Adhering to all Safeguarding & Child Protection Policies, Procedures and Code of Conduct
- Undertaking all required Safeguarding & Child Protection training within agreed timeframes.

- Modelling a position of trust and the YCSI values of caring, respect, honesty and responsibility.
- Being alert to or recognising all indicators of vulnerability, abuse and/or neglect.

7.2 Additional Safeguarding Responsibilities

In accordance with Y CSI's safeguarding framework, the following roles hold additional child safety responsibilities:

7.2.1 Governance and Leadership: Governance provide effective oversight of the Y safeguarding culture and Leadership actively drive and embed safeguarding and child protection practices across their areas of responsibility.

7.2.2 Designated Board Member: Provides designate Board-level support for organisational safeguarding requirements (including Board child safety responsibilities) and case support for any concerns requiring Board awareness or assistance.

7.2.3 Safeguarding and Child Protection Officer: Leads strategic oversight of the Y's safeguarding systems and improvements and is the operational lead for ensuring all child safety concerns are managed appropriately.

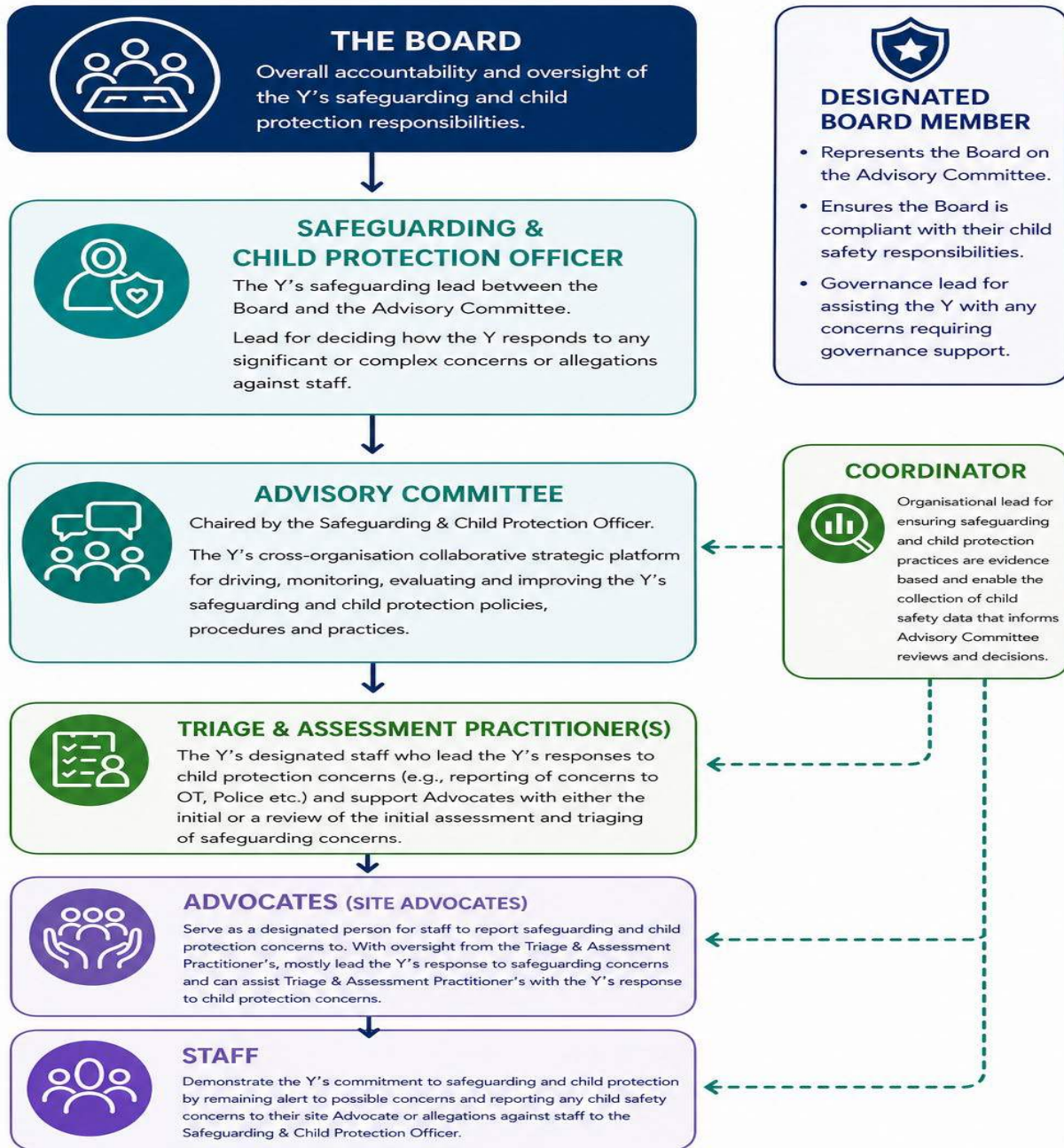
7.2.4 Safeguarding and Child Protection Committee Members: Collectively drive, monitor and evaluate the Y's organisational safeguarding priorities, trends and risks, ensuring the Y's safeguarding practices and culture are embedded and continuously improve.

7.2.5 Safeguarding and Child Protection Coordinator: Is the Y's lead for ensuring all child safety practices are evidenced based and child safety data is reviewed, monitored and informs leadership decisions, focus points and organisational improvements.

7.2.6 Safeguarding and Child Protection Triage and Assessment Practitioner(s): Provide expert assessment and decision-making for all child safety concerns coming to the Y's attention, in accordance with the Y's policies, procedures and safeguarding culture.

7.2.7 Safeguarding and Child Protection Advocates: Provide accessible designated safeguarding support to staff by offering advice, guidance, and assistance to ensure compliance with the Y's safeguarding requirements, and to help staff navigate identifying and reporting any child safety well-being or safety concerns.

7.3 Safeguarding Framework



Contact information for Y Safeguarding Staff can be found on our website and in Appendix 1 of YCSI's Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures.

8. Recruitment and Safety Checking

The single most effective time at which an organisation can minimise the possibility of abuse to child/children in its care, is during the appointment of new staff.

Before making any appointment, the YCSI will complete a robust safety checking process to ascertain the suitability and safety of an employee, volunteer or contractor, to work with child/children and young people.

8.1 Children's Act 2014 Safety Checks: In accordance with the Child/Children's Act 2014, the YCSI undertakes safety checks for any staff employed as child/ Children's workers. When defining a child/ Children's worker as someone who has regular contact with a child/young person, the Y includes contact online and via ICT resources. This safety check process includes risk assessment and police vetting processes.

8.2 Risk Assessment

Our risk assessment process is undertaken to ascertain the suitability of an applicant to have contact with or be in environments accessed by children or young people. These processes include:

- All job advertisements reflecting our safeguarding commitment statement.
- All positions description contains Safeguarding & Child Protection responsibilities.
- Confirmation of work history-CV and/or application form
- Identity and right to work verification.
- Interview processes incorporate safeguarding and child protection questions.
- Verification of qualifications or registrations (where applicable, e.g. teaching, social work, etc.).
- Satisfactory police vet or OT screening upon employment or engagement and renewed every 2 years.
- Obtaining at least two references, which incorporate child safety related questions.

8.3 Questioning Results

In accordance with the Criminal Records (Clean Slate) Act 2004, a criminal record does not automatically determine a person as unsuitable for a role. However, any police vet identifies an offence(s) listed under [Schedule 2 Specified Offences of the Children's Act 2014](#) must hold a Ministry of Social Development exemption to be considered by YCSI.

Any police vets returning relevant information that does not meet Schedule 2 requirements but does question a person's suitability are assessed and considered by YCSI via our recruitment risk assessment procedures.

If a staff member has an unsatisfactory police vet renewal, and they have failed to declare relevant information or have provided fraudulent information, their employment could be terminated immediately.

Section 8 of YCSI's Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures outlines our recruitment processes, including requirements for periodic police vetting.

9. Training

The YCSI recognises the importance of induction and training to help staff to develop the necessary knowledge and skills to uphold a Safeguarding & Child Protection culture.

- All new staff undertake a mandatory induction programme that incorporates child safety.
- All staff in direct and non-direct child/young person facing roles undertake mandatory Safeguarding & Child Protection training.
 - Staff with additional child safety responsibilities are required to undertake any additional child safety training applicable to their role and responsibilities.
- All staff must refresh their Safeguarding & Child Protection training every two years.

Section 9 of YCSI's Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures provides an overview of our Safeguarding and Child Protection Training Strategy.

10. Safe Practice

It is important to the YCSI that child/children and young people get to enjoy the Y safely. In addition, it is important that those people who are supporting child/children and young people, do so in a way that promotes safe practice and ensures their safety and wellbeing. To ensure that staff conduct is consistent and safe for all, our Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures provide additional guidance on the following key practice considerations:

10.1 Position of Trust: All YCSI staff are considered as being in a position of trust and must act professionally, safely and respectfully at all times. This includes never misusing any actual or perspective power or authority over children and young people and maintaining role modelling positive behaviours and safe boundaries.

10.2 Imagery: Any imagery of children and young people used by the Y must be for organisational purposes only, and to help reduce risks to children and young people the Y has strict consent requirements and safeguarding practices in place.

Section 10 of YCSI's Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures details processes on:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive role models • Communication with child/young person • Social interaction with child/young person • Reward, gift giving and favouritism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infatuations • One on one situations • Young people in distress • Physical contact • Intimate care
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11. Safeguarding & Child Protection Risk Assessment for activities

Safeguarding & Child Protection is an active component of YCSI's organisational, programme and service risk assessment processes.

YCSI is working hard to ensure the development of all safeguarding and child protection risk assessment processes and resources are finalised and implemented in practice across all programmes and services.

Section 11 of YCSI's Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures provides further guidance on our Safeguarding & Child Protection Risk Assessment processes and timeframes.

12. Recognising Safeguarding & Child Protection Concerns

Section 2 of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, child abuse is defined as *“the harming (whether physically, emotionally, or sexually) ill-treatment, abuse, neglect, or deprivation of any child or young person.”*

Threats and risks of harm, exploitation, abuse and neglect can take a variety of forms. Some types of harm recognised by YCSI include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Sexual Exploitation
- Family Violence
- Bullying and/or Cyber-bullying
- Suicidal ideation
- Non-suicidal self-injury

When responding to concerns, most forms of harm are generally recognised as falling within one or more of the following four categories of abuse as identified by child protection services. The following defines each of these four categories of abuse and **Section 12 of our Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures** details these definitions along with possible physical, behavioural and/or environmental indicators.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical, emotional, developmental, or medical needs, where there is a reasonable ability to do so. Likely to result in significant immediate or longer-term harm to the child's health or development. It may also occur during pregnancy, for example due to lack of prenatal care or substance exposure.

Neglect includes failing to respond to a child's:

- Basic Care Needs (e.g., food, clothing, shelter).
- Emotional Needs (e.g., lack of affection, engagement, or responsiveness).
- Medical Care (e.g., physical and mental health needs, including dental care).

- Supervisory Needs (e.g., inadequate, unsafe or no supervision).
- Educational Needs (e.g., truancy, no schooling)
- Protection Needs (e.g., failure to protect the child from harm or unsafe environments).

Although a single serious omission may still result in significant harm. Neglect is often best understood through recognising patterns and is strongly associated with cumulative harm.

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Physical Abuse

Physical abuse involves any act or omission that results in, or places a child at risk of, serious physical harm or injury.

This includes actions such as hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm.

Harm may be deliberate or result from a deliberate act. In Aotearoa New Zealand, the use of physical force for the purpose of punishment or discipline is not considered appropriate practice and may be unlawful.

Physical abuse also includes Medical Child Abuse (also known as Factitious Disorder Imposed on Another (FDIA) or Fabricated or Induced Illness), where a child's illness is deliberately falsified, exaggerated, or induced.

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Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse involves a pattern of behaviour that causes significant harm or has a damaging impact on a child's psychological, social, intellectual, emotional functioning or developmental well-being. It may include:

- Conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved, or inadequate.
- Silencing, ignoring, or preventing the child from expressing their views.
- Persistent criticism, humiliation, rejection, or hostility.
- Exposure to family violence, coercive control, or seeing and/or hearing harm to or the abuse of others.
- Bullying (including cyberbullying).
- Exploitation or corruption of the child.
- Imposing developmentally inappropriate expectations.

Emotional abuse is typically characterised by systematic and persistent negative treatment, although exposure to a singular or severe event may also cause significant harm.

Emotional abuse is present in all other forms of abuse but may also occur on its own.

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Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing, coercing, or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities or be used for a sexual purpose, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. It may include:

- Contact abuse (e.g., sexual touching or assault).
- Non-contact abuse (e.g., exposure to sexual activity, situations, content or comments).
- Grooming (in-person or online), including building trust, secrecy, and desensitisation to sexual content, boundary violations, etc.
- Online and/or technology-facilitated abuse, including:
 - Encouraging or displaying sexually inappropriate behaviour.
 - Sextortion (threats to share sexual images or information (e.g., sexual identity)).
 - Coercion to create, share or view sexual content.
 - Distribute or possession of Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM).
 - Live-streamed abuse.

Sexual abuse can be perpetrated by adults or other children/young people and often involves an abuse of trust, and real or perceived authority or power.

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13. Responding to Safeguarding & Child Protection Concerns

Any issues of suspected child/young person abuse must be taken seriously and handled in an appropriate manner that ensures the child/young person's safety.

13.1 Disclosures of abuse and/or neglect

A disclosure is when someone talks about something related to vulnerability, abuse and/or neglect. There are 3 types of disclosure:

Direct Disclosure:

A direct disclosure is when a person tells you directly, they are being abused or neglected or indicate their safety or wellbeing is impacted negatively.

Indirect Disclosure:

An indirect disclosure is when a person doesn't tell you directly, but they may communicate or indicate their safety or wellbeing is impacted negatively and/or exhibit indicators of harm consciously or subconsciously.

Any indicators of harm or wellbeing concerns require careful consideration and consultation with the Safeguarding & Child Protection & Child

Protection Triage & Assessment Practitioner(s) and or the relevant Team Leader.
Third-party Disclosure:
A third-party disclosure is when someone shares a concern about another person. This may come from a parent, friend, sibling, another professional or another adult. Sometimes third-party disclosures can turn out to be an indirect disclosure.

13.2 Handling a disclosure

Disclosures of abuse must be taken very seriously. It is important that any disclosure is dealt with appropriately, both for the wellbeing of the child/young person and to ensure that your actions do not jeopardise any legal action against the alleged offender

DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stay calm, listen and hear ✓ Allow time for the person to say what they want at their pace. ✓ Reassure the person, including that they were right to say something. ✓ Believe the person and take what they say seriously. ✓ Give an age-appropriate explanation of what the person can expect to happen next. ✓ Consult with the Safeguarding & Child Protection Triage & Assessment Practitioner(s) or the relevant Team Leader to determine next steps ✓ Record what was said (word for word) and any immediate actions taken. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Do not say anything critical, e.g. 'You should have....' ✗ Do not jump to conclusions, especially about the abuser. It may be someone still trusted, liked or loved by the person. ✗ Do not investigate or ask leading questions, e.g. <i>did this happen at home?</i> ✗ Do not make promises or tell them you will keep anything a secret or confidential. ✗ Do not make them repeat their story unnecessarily. ✗ Do not let anyone who may be involved in the abuse know the person has said anything. If the abuser is unknown, we are to assume this may involve the child's parents or caregivers.

14. Reporting a Safeguarding & Child Protection Concern

14.1 Mandatory Reporting

Y CSI operates a mandatory reporting process, that requires all staff and where applicable stakeholders who identify or receive a safeguarding or child protection concern to report that concern.

As a general principle the Y's safeguarding and child protection reporting framework supports the following. However, as highlighted, any safeguarding and child protection concern can be reported to the staff member's site Advocate.

Advocates will provide support, and if required, escalate the concern as needed.

Allegations Against Staff	Child Protection Concerns	Safeguarding Concerns	Uncertain
Being reported to the Safeguarding Officer.	Being reported to the Triage and Assessment Practitioner(s).	Being reported to a site Advocate.	Being reported to the site Advocate who will respond or escalate as required.

14.2 Children/Young People, Families and Others Reporting Concerns

YCSI encourages any parents/guardians or other adults to report any wellbeing or safety concerns they have for their child or other child/children or young people at the Y. Child/children and young people are also encouraged to report any wellbeing or safety concerns.

Reports can be made to any YCSI staff member or to any of our safeguarding staff, whose contact details are available via our website.

14.3 Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is a term used to describe the reporting of concerns within an organisation, outside of mainstream reporting frameworks.

At any time, if an employee feels their concerns are not being taken seriously by their immediate manager, the employee may then approach the Safeguarding & Child Protection Officer and/or CEO and/or the Chairperson of the YCSI Board.

14.4 Confidentiality and Information sharing

- When responding to Safeguarding & Child Protection concerns, information is to be treated in confidence.
- Where appropriate and safe to do so, children, young people, and their whānau will be informed of concerns, and consent will be sought before sharing information with other services for support for the child or family.
- The YCSI recognises that all staff must act within legislative requirements, including but not limited to the Privacy Act 2020 and the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989.
- All these Acts, including Principle 11 of the Privacy Act 2020 support sharing information without consent where it is necessary to help protect a person or prevent harm.

- Stay Calm.
- Ensure the child's and any other person's immediate safety.
- Listen to, believe, and reassure the person that they did the right thing by telling someone.
- If appropriate, explain that, to help them, you need to talk to another staff member.

Person Reporting

NO IMMEDIATE RISK:

- If the concern relates to a staff member's conduct, report directly to the Safeguarding and Child Protection Officer.
- Report all other concerns to a Safeguarding and Child Protection Advocate or Triage and Assessment Practitioner.
- In the absence of either party inform a member of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Advisory Team.
- Keep information confidential to only the person to whom you are reporting.
- ASAP record the incident and any actions taken on the Concerns of Safety and/or Well-being Child/Young Person or Adult at Risk Form.
- Forward this to the person you reported the concern to ASAP.

IMMEDIATE DANGER:

- Call the Police (**111**) and follow police advice.
- As soon as it is safe to do so, inform a Safeguarding and Child Protection Advocate or Triage and Assessment Practitioner.
- In their absence or if the concern relates to them, inform the next most senior person.
- Keep information confidential to only the person to whom you are reporting.
- ASAP record the incident and any actions taken on the Concerns of Safety and/or Well-being Child/Young Person or Adult at Risk Form.
- Forward this to the person you reported the concern to ASAP.

Person Responding

Safeguarding & Child Protection Staff: The Safeguarding & Child Protection Advocate will work together with staff member, and the Safeguarding & Child Protection Triage Assessment Practitioner(s):

- To consider actions required to enhance safety & well-being.
- Identify if concerns meet child protection needs and the actions required.
- With the Safeguarding & Child Protection Triage & Assessment Practitioner(s), determine responsibility relating to when and who will inform child/young person's parent(s) / care giver(s).
- Retain action taken notes with the **Concerns of Safety and/or Well-being of a Child/Children and/or Young Person or Adult to Risk** form in a secure confidential location.
- Monitor and review the case.

If shared with Oranga Tamariki, the Safeguarding & Child Protection Triage & Assessment Practitioner will follow up:

- If concerns remain, or additional concerns present; and/or
- No response has been received within advised timescales.

15. Recording Concerns

All Safeguarding & Child Protection concerns are to be recorded on a **Concerns of Safety and/or Well-being of Child/children and/or Young Person or Adult at Risk** form as soon as possible.

Section 15 and Appendix 4 of YCSI's Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures provides further information on recording and an example of a Safeguarding & Child Protection Concerns form.

16. Responding to Concerns

Where a concern is identified, the Advocate will work in conjunction with the Triage & Assessment Practitioner, Safeguarding & Child Protection staff and other relevant parties to determine the level of response. Depending on the significance of the concern, a response may also be escalated to the Safeguarding & Child Protection Officer.

Responses are guided by the level of need and risks, consent requirements, information sharing obligations, available referral pathways, and may involve consultation with relevant child protection services. Depending on the nature of the concern, the Y may respond through one or more of the following approaches:

Early Help: With appropriate consent, staff may provide information, signposting, or referrals to relevant Y or community services to help increase supports and reduce vulnerabilities.

Online Safety Concerns: Where concerns relate to online safety, specialist services such as Netsafe (0508 NETSAFE (0508 638 723)) may be contacted for advice and support.

Community Support: Sometimes support from more than one service may be needed, and the Y will work with consent of the family, to access multi-agency support as needed.

Child Protection Concerns: Any concerns that indicate known or suspected abuse and/or neglect will be reported to statutory services.

- Oranga Tamariki: 0508 326 459 (24/7) | contact@ot.govt.nz | www.orangatamariki.govt.nz
- New Zealand Police: 111 (emergency) or 105 (non-emergency)

16.1 Responding to Allegations Against Staff

When responding to allegations against staff, all Safeguarding & Child Protection actions taken are done so in the interests of protecting all of those involved and in the interests of maintaining a fair and impartial investigation. Immediate safeguards may include:

- Additional supervision of staff member.
- Redeployment to non-child/young person facing duties.
- A suspension from duty.

No action should be interpreted as indicating any assumption of guilt. All actions are precautionary Safeguarding & Child Protection measures while the matter is under investigation.

Where a staff member is the subject of a concern or allegation, YCSI's investigation procedures ensure that all parties, including the staff member concerned, are kept appropriately informed of the investigation's progress where possible.

17. Support for People Involved

When responding to child safety concerns, YCSI seeks to ensure all people affected are provided with appropriate internal and external support where feasible. This includes children and young people and families involved, any staff members involved and any others who may have been impacted by the matter.

18. Policy Review

The Advisory Group, CEO and Safeguarding & Child Protection Officer assume responsibility for ensuring this policy is reviewed annually. However, earlier reviews may also occur under certain circumstances, including but not limited to:

- Changes to legislation
- Organisational changes

- Incident review and learnings

Policy review may also utilise feedback from staff, child/children, young people and families, stakeholders as well as case learnings, and training data.