



Policy Directive

Child Safe Policy

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Functional Group: Corporate Governance

National Standard: Standard 1: Clinical Governance



Summary: Tresillian is committed to promoting and maintaining a culture that does not permit or tolerate child abuse, neglect or exploitation. This policy establishes Tresillian's expectations of all staff to provide a safe environment for children and sets out our approach to managing risk to children.

Replaces Document No: New

Custodian: Chief Executive Officer

Approved By: Chief Executive Officer

Applies to: All staff

Review Date: December 2022

Note: Tresillian is an Affiliated Health Organisation – non declared (Schedule 3 Hospital) delivering services supported by Sydney Local Health District (SLHD). Tresillian is a provider of child and family health services to families with young children across New South Wales.

Child Safe Policy

Contents

Child Safe Policy	3
1. Introduction	3
(i) The Risks Addressed by this Policy	3
(ii) The Aims / Expected Outcome of this Policy	3
2. Policy Statement	3
3. Principles / Guidelines	4
<i>Roles and Responsibilities</i>	4
<i>Children’s Participation</i>	5
<i>Recruitment</i>	5
<i>Complaints management and reporting</i>	6
<i>Communication</i>	6
<i>Training</i>	6
4. Performance Measures	8
5. Definitions	8
6. Consultation	9
7. References and links	9
<i>Related Tresillian policies and procedures</i>	9
<i>Relevant legislation/ standards associated with this policy</i>	10

Child Safe Policy

1. Introduction

All staff have a responsibility to support Tresillian's commitment and obligation to creating a child safe environment. The policy gives guidance on the processes and procedures that aim to ensure children's safety and wellbeing. It guides workers (paid and volunteer) on how to behave when interacting and engaging with children in our organisation. The policy focuses on how we can build and maintain a child safe environment which is inclusive, transparent and promotes children's participation.

- (i) **The Risks Addressed by this Policy**
 - Minimisation of child abuse through failure to disclose or protect the child
 - Lack of compliance with requirement to report instances of child abuse
 - Minimisation of child safety issues in the physical environment provided by Tresillian
 - Minimisation of inappropriate child safe messaging in social media postings, Tresillian publications or promotional activities.
 - Lack of information on child safe principles by staff

- (ii) **The Aims / Expected Outcome of this Policy**

Tresillian is a child safe organisation

2. Policy Statement

Tresillian is committed to child safety.

Tresillian wants children to be safe, happy and empowered. Tresillian and its staff, support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers.

Tresillian are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children, therefore Tresillian has:

- A zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistent with Tresillian policies and legislated responsibilities.
- Legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously. Tresillian staff are mandatory reporters of a child at risk.

Tresillian is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying these risks early, and working with families to remove and reduce these risks.

Tresillian has robust human resources and recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers to support the implementation of child safe principles within the workplace.

Tresillian is committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks to support staff and volunteers with their responsibilities and roles.

Tresillian supports and respects all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from a

culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

Tresillian has developed specific policies, procedures and committed to training to support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments.

3. Principles / Guidelines

Roles and Responsibilities

All **staff** will:

- Complete Child Safety training as directed.
- Comply with the Tresillian Code of Conduct, including signing the “Commitment to play your part”.
- Comply with all relevant requirements of this policy in the course of their work and any work related functions (e.g. work events where children may be present).
- Comply with all requirements or directions given to them by their manager for the implementation of risk controls.
- Comply with applicable state, territory and Commonwealth legislation.
- Appropriately report potential risk to child safety including any breaches of this policy. Staff who require a Working with Children or Vulnerable Persons Check (however described) must comply with the appropriate legislative requirements based on the jurisdiction, including reporting a change in circumstances and mandatory reporting requirements.

Managers and Supervisors will:

- Ensure staff are aware of this policy and their obligations and assist them to meet their obligations.
- Support staff to complete child safety training relevant to their role.
- Support staff to access the EAP where appropriate.
- Provide immediate feedback and take immediate action when an employee may not be meeting their obligations under this policy.
- Comply with Tresillian requirements for child safe recruitment and selection practices.
- Include child safe as an agenda item on all team meeting to encourage staff to ask questions and contribute to the continuous improvement of child safe policies, procedures and practices in the workplace.

The **Chief Executive Officer** and other **Executive** staff will:

- Provide leadership in promoting a child safe culture.
- Demonstrate understanding and commitment to this policy.
- Ensure child safety is considered when developing risk plans for any business functions that are associated with children.
- Ensure child safety in the design of program and policy that impacts upon children.
- When managing grants and procurements, take into account child safety implications if the services are for children, or for activities that will or may involve contact with

children, that is a usual part of, and more than incidental, to the services or grant activity.

- Provide immediate feedback and take immediate action when an employee may not be meeting their obligations under this policy.
- Assist staff to access the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).
- Ensure that there are processes in place to:
 - Maintain a register of Working with Children Checks.
 - Periodically review and audit the currency of Working with Children Checks.
 - Coordinate child safe training for staff and monitor compliance.
 - Assist staff to make complaints about child abuse or harm.
 - Provide referrals for staff who need additional support.
 - Identify child safe positions within the Tresillian.
 - Establish and monitor child safe recruitment practices.

Children's Participation

Tresillian supports the active participation of children in the programs, activities and services we offer. We provide a range of way to allow children and their families to provide feedback or raise concerns. We listen to their views, respect what they say and involve them when we make decisions, especially about matters that will directly affect them. Tresillian does this by:

- Provision of support and resources for parents to inform them on who to have age appropriate conversations with children and how to listen to the views of their child
- Respecting what they say
- Involving them when we make decisions that directly affect them
- Creating an environment and supporting skill development to facilitate children's meaningful participation.

Recruitment

Tresillian takes all reasonable steps to employ skilled people to work with children. Tresillian will develop selection criteria and advertisements which clearly demonstrate our commitment to child safety and an awareness of our social and legislative responsibilities. Tresillian understands that when recruiting staff and volunteers we have ethical as well as legislative obligations.

Tresillian actively encourage applications from Aboriginal peoples, people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with a disability.

All people engaged in child-related work, including volunteers, are required to hold a Working with Children Check and to provide evidence of this Check.

Tresillian will carry out reference checks and police record checks to ensure that we are recruiting the right people. Police record checks are used only for the purposes of recruitment. We do retain our own records if an applicant's criminal history affected our decision making process. If during the recruitment process a person's records indicate a criminal history then the person will be given the opportunity to provide further information and context.

Complaints management and reporting

Tresillian takes all allegations seriously and has practices in place to investigate thoroughly and quickly. Tresillian staff and volunteers will be trained to deal appropriately with allegations.

Tresillian work to ensure all children, families, staff and volunteers know what to do and who to tell if they observe abuse or are a victim, and if they notice inappropriate behaviour.

Tresillian staff have a responsibility to report an allegation of abuse if they have a reasonable belief that an incident took place (see information about failure to disclose above).

Information on how to make a complaint is available to all families accessing a Tresillian service. In addition, families can provide feedback at point of care through the completion of an online feedback form accessible through a unique web link, QR code or Client Experience Tracker – this feedback is anonymous, but contact details can be included by the client in the no limit text field.

Communication

Tresillian will provide regular feedback, commencing at orientation, to staff on child safe practices and will ensure that there is access to relevant information for families provided through pamphlets and brochures, information on complaint management, their rights and responsibilities and access to specialist child safe resources.

We respect the privacy rights of children, their parents and our staff.

Tresillian will take reasonable care not to allow the identification of any child as part of its social media activity and will limit the time it stores any images of children used in any publication or promotional activity – specification on how long the image will be retained will be included on media consent forms associated with the activity.

We have safeguards regarding the collection, use and disclosure of personal information. These protective security measures include:

- Only collecting personal information that is necessary for us to provide our service.
- Storing personal information securely
- Personal information only being accessed by authorised persons
- Only advising those people who need to be aware of a child protection matter.

There are safeguards for mandatory reporters under the law and a reporter's identity must be kept confidential unless the person who made the report has given consent for their identity to be disclosed. Tresillian **will inform** the parents/guardians that a report has been made, should this occur. Refer to the Privacy Policy for information relating to privacy and information exchange with other professionals, agencies and services.

Training

Training and education is important to ensure that everyone in our organisation understands that child safety is everyone's responsibility. Our organisational culture aims for all staff and volunteers (in addition to parents/carers and children) to feel confident and comfortable in

discussing any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns. Tresillian will train our staff and volunteers to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse.

Tresillian also support our staff and volunteers through ongoing supervision to: develop their skills to protect children from abuse; and promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability.

New employees and volunteers will be supervised regularly to ensure they understand Tresillian's commitment to child safety and that everyone has a role to play in protecting children from abuse, as well as checking that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate. Any inappropriate behaviour will be reported through appropriate channels.

Building a child-safe culture requires informed and supported individuals who understand their role in ensuring a safe environment for children. We provide initial and ongoing training for staff to ensure they understand the requirement of a child safe environment.

We utilise training developed by the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian to provide this training. <http://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/become-a-child-safeorganisation/child-safe-training>

How to access the eLearning modules: Register at <http://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/child-safe-elearning>

Training requirement have been determines based on your position within Tresillian. This is once only education (unless information or legislation changes – updated requirements will be issued if this occurs).

The Office of the Children's Guardian. Child Safe: My eLearning Modules						
Module	All staff	Consumer Representatives and Volunteers	Clinical staff (includes child care workers)	Managers and Supervisors	Human Resources	Executive
SAFESpace – Introduction (15 min) Provides initial overview + understanding of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Risk Management (30 min) Provides overview of the requirement for organisations to have a comprehensive risk management plan + for risk assessments to be conducted across settings and programs conducted				✓		✓
Situational Prevention (30 min) Focuses on children and service-related considerations			✓	✓		✓
Policies and Procedures (30 min) Overview of the necessity for comprehensive policies and procedures to support Child Safe initiatives and focus			✓	✓		✓

The Office of the Children's Guardian. Child Safe: My eLearning Modules						
Module	All staff	Consumer Representatives and Volunteers	Clinical staff (includes child care workers)	Managers and Supervisors	Human Resources	Executive
Organisational Culture (30 min) Overview of how culture impacts a ChildSafe organisation + positive culture to support a Child Safe organisation	✓		✓	✓		✓
Reporting allegations and incidents (30 min) Overview of how to report allegations of professional misconduct + lodge a report regarding a child deemed at Risk of Significant Harm			✓	✓		✓
Recruitment Process (30 min) Overview of all aspects of recruitment				✓	✓	✓
The Working with Children Check (30 min) Overview of Who, What, When, Where and Why				✓	✓	✓

How to obtain proof of module completion:

- When you have completed a module print a copy of your certificate or take a screen print of your verification and send a copy to the Education, Professional Practice and Innovation Centre Secretary TFCC_Education@health.nsw.gov.au
- Your Progress within a module can be saved at any time. Your successful completion of each module will be evident on your My Progress page.

4. Performance Measures

- Number of mandatory reports per month (consistency with reports of domestic violence)
- Random audit of media consents to determine compliance with image storage practices
- Audit of Working with Children's Check register for currency
- Percentage of staff completing commitment to child safety statement

5. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the definition of **child-related work** is being engaged in:

a) work activities where contact (physical, face-to-face, oral, written or electronic contact) between a staff member and a child would reasonably be expected as a normal part of the work and such contact is not occasional and incidental to the work, or

b) work that requires a Working with Children Check (WWCC) in the state or territory jurisdiction in which the work is being undertaken.

For the purposes of this definition, **occasional** means infrequently or irregularly; and **incidental** means occurring by chance.

Abuse and **neglect** includes but is not limited to:

- Physical abuse

- Neglect
- Sexual Abuse (*includes Grooming)
- Psychological Harm
- Child/ Young Person is a Danger to Self / and or Others
- Relinquishing Care
- Carer Concern (*includes Domestic Violence)

Allegation: A claim or assertion, without definite proof, that a wrongdoing (abuse of a child or grooming behaviour) has happened or is likely to happen.

Child protection: The term used to describe the whole-of-community approach to the prevention of harm to children

Mandatory reporter: A mandatory reporter is an individual required by legislation to report to the Child Protection Helpline when he/she has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child, or a class of children, is at Risk Of Significant Harm from abuse or neglect, and those grounds arise during the course of or from the person's work. Mandatory reporters include those who as part of their work deliver health care, welfare, education, children's services, residential services or law enforcement to children or young persons. The legislation also mandates any person who manages an employee or volunteer from the above services to report suspected risk of significant harm.

6. Consultation

CEO and Executive Staff

7. References and links

<https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/training-and-resources/child-safe-resources/child-safe-policy>

<https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/child-safe-policy-interacting-with-children>

<https://www.csiro.au/en/About/Policies-guidelines/Our-core-policies/Child-Safe-Policy/Child-Safe-Cont>

<https://nswfdc.org.au/fdc-services/nsw-child-safe-resource-kit-coming/child-safe-policy/>

<https://www.dese.gov.au/about-us/resources/dese-child-safe-policy-0>

<https://www.learninglinkspreschool.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/QI-Keeping-Children-Safe-Policy-and-Procedure.pdf>

Related Tresillian policies and procedures

- Code of Conduct
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Child Protection and Wellbeing
- Complaint management
- Social Media Policy

- Child related allegations
- Working with Children Checks and other Police Checks
- Managing a complaint or concern about a clinician
- Managing Misconduct
- WWCC Organisational compliance monitoring check
- Contractor Management

Relevant legislation/ standards associated with this policy

Jurisdiction	Name of legislation/standard
Australia	Crimes Act 1914 Criminal Code Act 1995 Div 273B (Protection of children) Privacy Act 1988 Public Service Act 1999 National Principles for Child Safe Organisations Commonwealth Child Safe Framework
ACT	Working With Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011 Working With Vulnerable (Background Checking) Amendment Act 2019
NSW	Child Protection (Working With Children) Act 2012
VIC	Working With Children Act 2005
International	The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child

There are various agencies and contacts in Australia and NSW and ACT that work to protect children and young people from abuse and neglect. These include:

- NSW Government Department of Communities and Justice
<https://www.dcj.nsw.gov.au/>
- Child Protection Helpline (Established to report suspected child abuse or neglect)
Phone: 132 111 (24 hours/7 days)
- Keep Them Safe: www.keepthemsafe.nsw.gov.au
- The Office of the Children's Guardian <http://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/>
- NSW Ombudsman www.ombo.nsw.gov.au
- Community Child Care Co-operative <http://cccnsw.org.au/>
- ACT Children and Youth Protection
<https://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/ocyfs/children/child-and-youth-protection-services/report-child-abuse-and-neglect>