



MANNINGHAM YMCA

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY (Formally known as the Child Protection Policy)

As Adopted by Manningham YMCA on 15 /10 /2007

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1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

“Mankind owes to the child the best it has to give.”

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989

The YMCA's of Australia recognise that all children and young people have the right to develop and reach their potential in environments that are caring, nurturing and safe.

The YMCA's of Australia considers any form of child/young person abuse, inclusive of emotional, physical, sexual abuse or neglect, as intolerable under any circumstances

The YMCA's of Australia have a legal, moral and Mission-driven responsibility to protect children and young people from harm and to ensure that any incidents of suspected child abuse are promptly and appropriately dealt with.

2. POLICY PRINCIPLES

- a) The safety of children and young people is paramount.
- b) Children and young people need to know and believe that they have the right to be and feel safe at all times.
- c) Child abuse is abhorrent and illegal and must never be tolerated or ignored.
- d) YMCA Associations are entrusted to ensure that the people who care for children and young people act in the best interests of the child and take all reasonable steps to ensure the child's safety
- e) The YMCA Association will show a commitment to educating children and young people about self protection and promote resilience and empowerment strategies within its programming
- f) The YMCA Association is responsible for ensuring that any significant changes to relevant legislation and/or licensing regulations are promptly adhered to
- g) The Board of the YMCA Association is legally and morally responsible for ensuring that appropriate policies and practices are in place to minimise, if not eliminate, the risk of child abuse. The implemented practises in Safeguarding children and young people are to be reported on **at least** annually to the board by the CEO/Manager via a tabled board report. This is in line with the annual self reviews that are a requirement of YMCA licensing. ([APPENDIX A: Example Safeguarding Children & Young People Association Self Review](#))
- h) The Board of the YMCA Association, in conjunction with the Chief Executive Officer/Manager, is responsible for ensuring that the Association regularly reviews the Safeguarding Children & Young People (SC&YP) Policy in consultation with all relevant stakeholders. (These may include service users and their families, staff, volunteers, local/state child protection agencies, contract partners or others.) This is to occur **at least** annually and become part of the annual self review process
- i) Any incidence of suspected or known abuse or if there is reasonable grounds to suspect a child safety is at risk, will be reported immediately to the Chief Executive

Officer/Manager who will in turn ensure reporting to the Associations Board President (or authorised sub-committee) along with any relevant police or child protection authority. Reports will be made within 24 hours of notification and the association is to fully cooperate with all relevant authorities in their investigations.

Mandatory reporting exists in some states/territories

(APPENDIX B: Example Suspected/Known Child Abuse Notification Form).

(APPENDIX C: Listing of relevant State & Federal contacts)

(APPENDIX D: Legal Definition of Reasonable Grounds)

- j) Chief Executive Officer/Manager is required to ensure the implementation of the SC&YP Policy through:
- Ensuring correct staff/volunteers recruitment and selection procedures are adhered to
 - Ensuring staff are inducted and have opportunities to be regularly trained in the requirements of the YMCA's SC&Y Policy and child protection issues in general
 - Ensuring staff are aware of and implement the YMCA's SC&YP Policy as part of their work requirements as outlined in their position descriptions
 - Committing to and clarify prescribed minimum staff - child ratios for each program
 - Establishing and maintain supportive procedures for fostering and encouraging voluntary notification of suspected cases of child abuse and risk.
 - Maintaining confidentiality of all involved parties in investigations of suspected child abuse.
 - Fully cooperating with the defined relevant local/state/federal agencies in investigations of suspected child abuse.
 - Ensuring that their staff, volunteers and others who may come into contact with children in a YMCA Association facility, program or service also clearly understand what constitutes appropriate behaviour and appropriate physical contact. (Ref Code of Conduct page. 21)
 - Pro-actively look for new opportunities to improve this SC&YP Policy, related policies, relevant workplace and program/ service practices and to otherwise seek to minimise the risk of harm to children in their care
 - Commit to having available resources and local contacts that will encourage and educate children and young people in self protection and their right to say "NO"
 - Understand and recognise that some allegations can be false, vexatious or misconceived, the presumption of innocence must be extended to the person(s) against whom an allegation of child abuse has been made, and confidentiality and sensitivity maintained, whilst investigations proceed.
- k) YMCA staff and volunteers have a duty of care to ensure that all who access the Association's programs, services and facilities are provided with a safe, open and honest environment that protects children and young people and the staff and volunteers who work with them.
- l) YMCA staff and volunteers are required to be aware of and adhere to the SC&YP Policy at all times. This awareness is to give them the ability to be pro-active in identifying new opportunities to improve relevant workplace and program/service practices, to minimise the risk of abuse to children and young people in their care.
- m) Staff and Volunteers are accountable to their supervisors and the CEO/Manager for ensuring the SC&YP Policy practices are effectively implemented and monitored
In particular, staff and volunteers are required to:
- Be familiar with the contents of this SC&YP Policy and promptly seek clarification as they require

- Promote the safeguarding of children and young people(child protection)
- Be aware of the risk of child abuse and the indicators of child abuse
- Be clear about what is acceptable behaviour when dealing with children
- Immediately report any suspected incident of child abuse to the Chief Executive Officer/Manager and otherwise respond as required and expected by this policy, State requirements and by law ([Appendix D: Legal Definition of Reasonable Grounds](#))
- Maintain confidentiality in investigations of suspected child abuse.
- Fully cooperate with the defined relevant local/state/federal agencies in investigations of suspected child abuse.
- Adhere to prescribed minimum staff - child ratios
- Report annually to the Chief Executive Officer/Manager on their implementation, monitoring and review of this SC&YP Policy, related policies and relevant workplace and program/ service practices

3. DEFINITIONS

CHILD: A child/young person means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier” (Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations, Article 1))
 Relevant state legislation defines the age of a child in Australian States and Territories. Please refer to the appropriate one for your association.

List of applicable Legislation from each State/Territory

State/Territory	Legislation from each State/Territory	Age of Consent Laws*
Commonwealth	Family Law Act 1975	
ACT	Children and Young People Act 1999	The age of consent for Heterosexual (and gay) sex is 16. Legally, it is a defence if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You believe your partner was 16 or older or Your partner was above the age of 10 and consented, and you were not more than 2 years older than them (eg consensual sex between a 15 yo and 14yo)
Northern Territory	Community Welfare Act 1983	The age of consent for Heterosexual (and gay) sex is 16. Legally, it is a defence if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your partner was 14 or older and you believed they were 16 or older
New South Wales	Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998	The age of consent for Heterosexual (and gay) sex is 16. Legally, it is a defence if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You made an honest and reasonable mistake in believing your partner was 16 or older, however this has not been tested in court (as of Jan.06)
South Australia	Children’s Protection Act 1993	The age of consent for Heterosexual (and gay) sex is 17. Legally, it is a defence if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your partner was 16 or older and you were under 17 or believed your partner was 17 or older
Western Australia	Child Welfare Act 1947	The age of consent for Heterosexual (and gay) sex is 16. Legally, it is a defence if <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You believed your partner was 16 or older and you were not more than 3 years older than them
Victoria	Children and Young Persons Act 1989	The age of consent for Heterosexual (and gay) sex is 16. Legally, it is a defence if

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your partner was 10 or older and you believed they were 16 or older You were not more than 2 years older than them
Tasmania	Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997	<p>The age of consent for Heterosexual (and gay) sex is 17. Legally, it is a defence if</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You believed your partner was 17 or older Your partner was 15 or older and you were not more than 5 years older than them Your partner was 12 or older and you were not more than 3 years older than them
Queensland	Child Protection Act 1999	<p>The age of consent for vaginal sex is 16 with anal sex being 18 Legally, it is a defence if</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your partner was 12 years or older and you believed they were 16/18 or older

*NOTE: Concepts to consider when determining if sexual activity between adolescent peers is consensual
 Equality - are the parties equal or does one party of undue power or the other?
 Consent - is it consensual?
 threats by one party to harm themselves if the other party tries to end the relationship.
 (Ref: The National Child Protection Clearinghouse)

CHILD ABUSE: Abuse is an act by a parent, caregiver, other adult or older adolescent that endangers a child or young person's physical or emotional health or development. Abuse can be a single incident, but usually takes place over time. Abuse can happen in several different ways. Abuse can be physical, emotional and/or sexual. It can also encompass neglect and harassing behaviours like bullying.

DIFFERENT FORMS OF ABUSE: (definition taken from Childwise: Choose with Care, A handbook to build safer organisations for children 2004, ECPAT Australia)

A) Physical abuse

Physical abuse occurs when a person purposefully injures or threatens to injure a child or young person. This may take the form of slapping, punching, shaking, kicking, burning, shoving, or grabbing. The injury may take the form of bruises, cuts, burn or fractures.

Possible signs of physical abuse are

- Bruises, burns, sprains, dislocations, bites, cuts
- Showing wariness or distrust of adults
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries
- Self-destructive tendencies

- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather
- Fear of returning home or of parents being contacted
- Being aggressive towards others
- Being very passive and compliant
- Chronic running away

B) Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is a chronic attack on a child or young person's self esteem or social competence. It can take the form of name-calling, threatening, ridiculing, ignoring, intimidating or isolation the child or young person.

Possible signs of emotional abuse

- Physical, mental and emotional development is delayed
- Highly anxious
- Showing delayed speech or sudden speech disorder
- Fear of new situations
- Low self esteem
- Inappropriate emotional response to painful situations
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Drug or alcohol abuse
- Chronic running away
- Compulsive stealing

C) Neglect

Neglect is the failure of provide the child with the basic necessities of life, such as food, clothing, shelter, and supervision, to the extent that the child's health and development are placed at risk. Such acts are generally referred to as "acts of omission." Categories of neglect include physical neglect, medical neglect, abandonment or desertion, emotional neglect and educational neglect (National Child Protection Clearing house, Resource Sheet Dec,2004)

Possible signs of neglect

- Frequent hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Inappropriate clothing, e.g. summer clothes in winter
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school
- Untreated medical problems
- Low self-esteem
- Poor social relationship
- Compulsive stealing
- Drug or alcohol abuse

D) Bullying

Bullying involves the inappropriate use of *power* by one or more persons over another less powerful person or group and is generally an act that is *repeated* over time. Bullying has been described by researchers as taking many forms which are often interrelated and include:

- **Verbal** (name calling, put downs, threats)
- **Physical** (hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting)
- **Social** (ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating)

- **Psychological** (spreading rumors, stalking, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions)

(Definition www.eduweb.vic.gov.au 2006)

Bullying still occurs in child and youth oriented programs and can cause enormous distress to children. Children who are bullied have run away from home or school, become frightened, withdrawn and miserable, and attempted suicide. The notion that bullying is just one of life's challenges to be faced and conquered can be very disempowering for the victim, adding to their already great sense of isolation and vulnerability. When bullying is not addressed victims may learn to feel worthless, to feel that it is their fault for not coping with the bully, that they can never win, and to live in fear. Equally as destructive are the messages learned by the bully when their behaviour is minimised or ignored. They learn to use power over people, to control people using fear, that dealing with situations using anger and fear works, and that they have the right to attack anyone weaker than themselves.

E) Child sexual abuse

Sexual abuse occurs when an adult or someone bigger and/or older than the child (5 or more years older generally) uses power or authority over the child to involve the child in sexual activity. Physical force is sometimes involved. Sexual abuse involves a range of sexual activity. There are two main categories:

Contact	Non Contact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Touched and fondled in genital areas • Forced to touch another person's genital areas • Kissed or held in a sexual manner • Forced to perform oral sex • Vaginal or anal intercourse • Vaginal or anal penetration with object or finger 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obscene calls/obscene remarks on computer or in written notes • Voyeurism • Exposed to or photographed for pornography • Sexually intrusive questions or comments • Forced to self-masturbate or watch others masturbate • Indecent exposure

Possible signs of sexual abuse are broken into two areas. There are physical signs of abuse and behavioural signs of abuse :

PHYSICAL SIGNS	
Genital and anal areas	General
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bruises, scratches or other injuries not consistent with accidental injury • Itching, soreness, discharge or unexplained bleeding • Painful and frequent urination • Signs of sexually transmitted infections • Semen in the vagina, anus or external genitalia or on clothing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bruises, bite marks or other injuries to breasts, buttocks, lower abdomen • Difficulty waking or sitting • Torn, stained or bloodied underwear • Pregnancy in adolescence where the identity of the father is vague or secret • Recurrent urinary tract infections • Persistent headaches or recurrent abdominal pain • Unexplained pain in the genital area

BEHAVIOURAL SIGNS Behavioural indicators must be interpreted with regard to the individual child's level of functioning and development stage.	
Sexual	General
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over attention to adults of a particular sex • Displaying unusual interest in the genitals of others • Acting out adults sexual behaviour with adults, dolls or other children • Open displays of sexuality, for example, repeated public masturbation • Precocious knowledge of sexual matters • Promiscuity, repetitious sexually precocious behaviours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sudden changes in mood or behaviour • Difficulty sleeping and nightmares • Regressed behaviour, for example bed wetting, separation anxiety, insecurity • Change in eating patterns including preoccupation with food • Lack of trust in familiar adults, fear of strangers, fear of men • Lack of appropriate role boundaries in family – child fulfils parental role • Acting-out behaviour – aggression, lying, stealing, unexplained running away, drug or alcohol abuse, suicide attempts • Withdrawn behaviour such as passivity, excessive compliance, mood swing or depression • Learning problems at school, loss of concentration, unexplained drop in school performance • Poor peer relationships, family and /or child appear socially isolated • Excessive bathing • Inappropriate displays of attention between child and parent or caregiver (usually father, step-father or mother's partner) that appear lover-like rather than parent-like (being excessively over protective towards child, restricting child's social activities or being inquisitive of child's sexuality)

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Observations and suspicion

- All concerns should be acted upon immediately. It is not up to the organisation to decide whether abuse has taken place or not. Organisations must notify authorities when there are reasonable grounds for suspecting/reporting abuse
- The law protects a person who raises legitimate concerns through appropriate procedures under the banner of "Qualified privilege"
- Confidentiality is of the utmost importance and crucial to a fair and effective reporting process. At no time should the suspected abuse or suspicions be discussed in general discussion in the office or by conversation with other parents, members or the general community

4. REPORTING PROCEDURES

STEP 1

CEO/Manager/Supervisor is to assess report and gather correct and concise information and statements from staff. Obtain details of all people involved, including any witnesses, and to meet with the person that has made the allegation to clarify the details. A written and signed statement should be obtained from this person if possible.

STEP 2

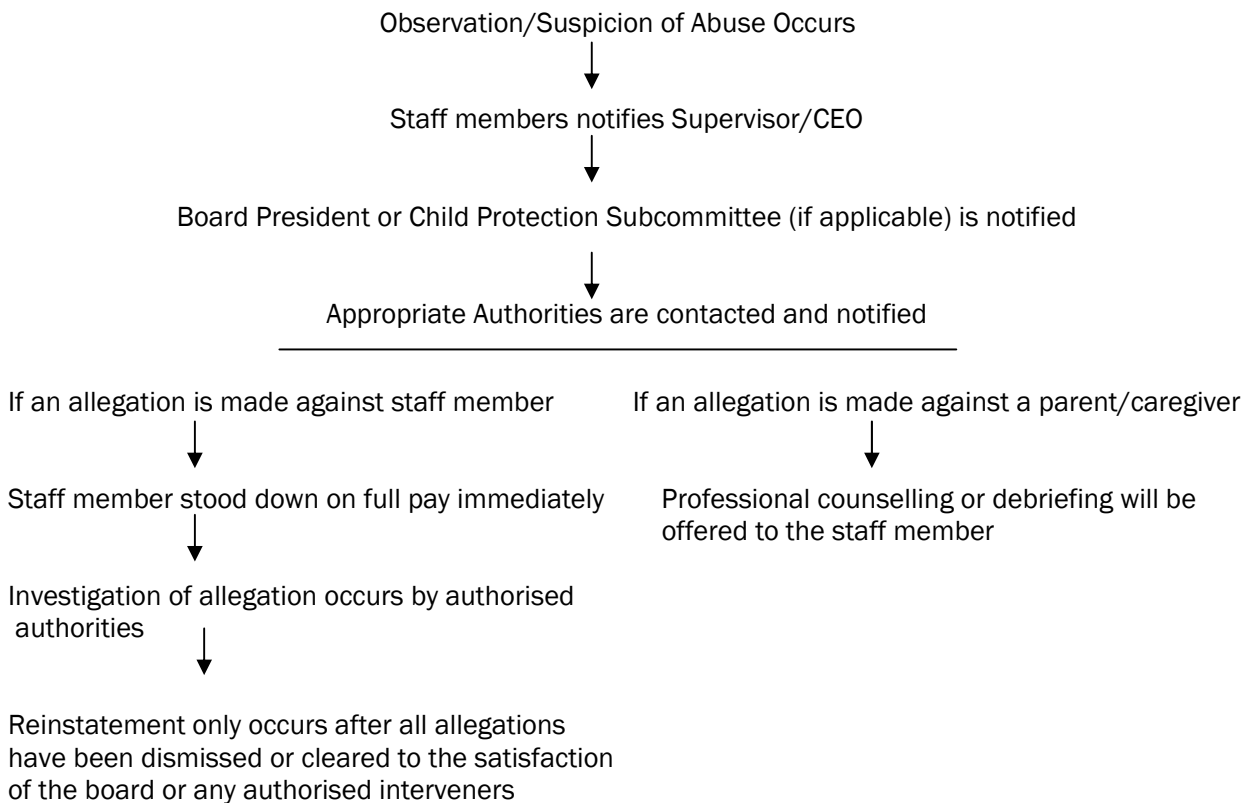
A decision to report is made and endorsed by CEO/Manager & Board. (It would be preferable to have a member/committee of the Board take on the role as contact officer in relation to safeguarding children and young people/child protection and reporting, as all directors will not be available to liaise with if the situation of abuse reporting arises)

STEP 3

Staff will be fully supported and professional counselling and debriefing arranged if required.

In the event that allegations are made against a YMCA Association staff member or volunteer, the CEO/Manager or Supervisor is required to immediately suspend that person (on full pay) from all activities involving the direct supervision of, and/ or direct contact with, children.

Reinstatement of a staff person or volunteer may only occur after any and all allegations against that person have been dismissed or cleared to the satisfaction of the Board of the YMCA Association and any authorised interveners involved in investigations



List of Mandatory reporting Requirements

Jurisdiction	Who is mandated to notify	What is to be notified
ACT	Doctors, dentists, nurses, teachers, police, school councillors, child-care providers, public servants providing services relating to the health or well being of children, young people or families, the community advocate, or the official visitor	A reasonable suspicion that a child or young person has suffered or is suffering sexual abuse or non-accidental physical injury
NSW	Persons who deliver health care, welfare, education, children's services, residential services or law enforcement to children	Current concerns that a child aged under 16 is at risk of harm
NT	Police; all other people with reasonable grounds	Reasonable ground to believe that a child has suffered or is suffering maltreatment
QLD	Doctors, nurses Officers employed to implement the Act 1999; all staff of residential care services Educational staff (teaching & non-teaching staff in government and non-government schools)	Aware of or reasonably suspects a child has, is, or is likely to suffer harm Reasonable suspicion of abuse or neglect to a child in residential care Aware of or reasonably suspects sexual abuse of a child under 18 by an employee of the school
SA	Doctors, pharmacists, nurses, dentists, psychologists, police, community corrections officers, social workers, teachers, family day care providers, employees/volunteers in a Government department, agency or instrumentality, or a local government or non-government agency that provides health, welfare, education, child care or residential service wholly or partly for children	Reasonable ground that a child has been or is being abused or neglected
TAS	Professionals working with children and employees or volunteers working with	Suspicion or knowledge of abuse or neglect

	government or government-funded organisations Any Adult	Reasonable ground to believe or suspect that a child is suffering, has suffered or is likely to suffer abuse or neglect. Current reforms include exposure to domestic violence
VIC	Police, doctors, nurses and teachers	Reasonable grounds that physical or sexual abuse is occurring
WA	Court personnel, councillors and mediators	Allegations or suspicions of child abuse in Family Court cases
	Licensed providers of child care or outside school hours care services	Allegations or suspicions of child abuse in a childcare service

(Referenced from National Child Protection Clearinghouse Resource Sheet no.3 Sept 2005)

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Board of Directors

- a) The Board is legally and morally responsible for ensuring that appropriate policies and practices are in place to minimise, if not eliminate, the risk of child abuse, and to appropriately respond to any allegations that arise.
- b) The Board, in conjunction with the Chief Executive Officer/Manager, is responsible for ensuring the Association's SC&YP Policy is regularly reviewed. The implemented practices in safeguarding children and young people are to be reported on **at least** annually to the board by the CEO/Manager via a tabled board report. This is in line with the annual self reviews that are a requirement of YMCA licensing. (APPENDIX A: [Example Safeguarding Children & Young People Association Self Review](#))
- c) The Board of the YMCA Association, in conjunction with the Chief Executive Officer/Manager, is responsible for ensuring that the Association regularly reviews the SC&YP Policy in consultation with all relevant stakeholders. (These may include service users and their families, staff, volunteers, local/state child protection agencies, contract partners or others.) This is to occur **at least** annually and become part of the annual self review process
- d) It is the responsibility of the Board as a whole, and of individual Directors, to promote child protection and promptly respond to any advice received from the Chief Executive Officer/Manager or other sources concerning significant changes to relevant legislation and regulations.
- e) Individual Directors are accountable to themselves, the Board as a whole, and the Association's Voting Members for their behaviour and communications and are expected to always act in ways that do not call into question their commitment to SC&YP and child protection generally or to this Policy.
- f) No individual is to be appointed, elected or re-elected to the Board unless a recent (not older than 12 months) police check has been provided or obtained, and the contents have been judged satisfactory by the Board Executive and/ or any Child Protection Committee appointed by the Board, and the Chief Executive Officer. Police checks for new and existing Directors will be placed on file.
- g) Each Board member will undergo at least three reference checks via phone and will need to provide at least 3 referees.
- h) Each Board member will need to provide at least three forms of identification
- i) As volunteers in a Mission-driven organisation that aims to 'provide opportunities for all people to grow in body, mind and spirit', and one that specifically provides health, welfare, education, childcare, residential and other programs/ services for

children, individual Directors are expected to commit to the practice of notification and to thus familiarise themselves with current notification guidelines regarding the management of abuse suspicions and allegations.

- j) In circumstances where Directors are advised, or otherwise learn of, specific details of any incident of suspected child abuse, they are required to maintain confidentiality and respect the privacy of all parties concerned in order to allow due process and ensure natural justice is served.
- k) The President or her/ his Board nominee, in conjunction with the Chief Executive Officer/Manager wherever practicable, is responsible for informing YMCA Australia of media inquiries or inquiries from members of the public that pertain to suspected child abuse within the Association. YMCA Australia will handle all comment in this area.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES CONT.

Chief Executive Officer/Manager

- a) The Chief Executive Officer/Manager is accountable to the Board of Directors for ensuring that the SC&YP Policy, and any related policies, as well as any decisions the Board may take in relation to child protection from time to time, are implemented, monitored, reported on and evaluated in a timely and diligent fashion.
- b) The Chief Executive Officer/Manager is responsible for ensuring that significant changes to relevant legislation and regulations are promptly brought to the attention of the Board.
- c) The Chief Executive Officer/Manager is responsible for ensuring that more serious incidents of suspected child abuse (generally sexual or physical abuse) are promptly reported to the Executive of the Board and/ or any Child Protection Committee established by the Board. The Chief Executive Officer/ Manager is also required to fully cooperate with all relevant state/Federal government departments in their investigations of suspected child abuse.
- d) The Chief Executive Officer is required to actively promote child safety and protection within the Association and is accountable for ensuring all YMCA of Association staff and volunteers are employed and carry out their work in accordance with both the content and spirit of this SC&YP Policy and the code of conduct.
- e) The Chief Executive Officer/ Manager is responsible for ensuring that access to training and development in mandatory/ voluntary notification, child protection, protective behaviours and related matters is provided at regular intervals. Skilled counsellors are to be made available to work with staff and volunteers in delivery of some areas of the training and for those who experience distress in dealing with suspected incidents of child abuse.
- f) The Chief Executive Office/ Manager is responsible for ensuring that all long term rental/hiring groups have provided the YMCA with proof of their commitment to ensuring children and young people are safe within their programs and services. Eg they have supplied the YMCA with a copy of their own Child protection policy or they are happy to work within the codes of conduct contained within the YMCA's policy

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES CONT.

Staff/Volunteers

- a) All staff/volunteers, with direct responsibility for child care and/ or other children's programs/ services in the YMCA Association must be familiar with the code of conduct and follow its operational responsibilities at all times
- b) In order to protect YMCA staff, volunteers and program participants and their families, the YMCA's of Australia have developed a **code of conduct** (ref: [Section 8 of this policy](#)) which seeks to provide clarity to acceptable behaviour in order to minimise the risk of abuse for a child/young person. The YMCA understands the great benefit of the positive relationships that can form between YMCA staff members and volunteers with the children and young people and during the child's/young persons participation, the YMCA endeavours to make this as safe as possible for all concerned
- c) All staff/volunteers will be required to attend the appropriate training and updates regarding child protection in accordance with the YMCA Associations training schedule. Training will be held at least once annually.
- d) All staff/volunteers will endeavour to provide the children/young people they care for with strategies to enhance resilience and explore help-seeking behaviour. It is important that staff/volunteers have a good rapport with the children/young people so that they feel comfortable, feel as though they can trust that person and have been encouraged to communicate openly with the YMCA staff member/volunteer.

6. RECRUITMENT & SELECTION PROCEDURES

Through the staff/volunteer recruitment and selection process we can put in place various steps that minimise the risk of attracting or hiring an inappropriate staff/member within our children/youth programs or within our association to ensure the provision of a safe environment for all.

- Step 1 All Job advertisements refer to the YMCA as being committed to safeguarding children and young people and/or reference this associated policy.
- Step 2 All position descriptions refer to the staff member being aware and working under the guidelines of the YMCA's Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy along with the code of conduct.
- Step 3 All applicants (staff and volunteer) who are short-listed for interview are to be asked whether they have ever been a subject of an employer investigation or been charged with a criminal offence involving children, violence, drug dealing or dishonesty.
- Step 4 The current employer or most recent employer of all applicants short-listed for interview will be contacted for suitability and screening purposes. This is to be made clear to the applicant on short listing so they are aware that this is a prerequisite of YMCA employment.
- Step 5 A minimum of three (3) reference checks are to be conducted for all applicants (staff and volunteers) short-listed for interview. These should not be written references. They should be direct contact via phone. The results of these are to be documented, diligently evaluated and placed on file prior to any offer of employment (paid or voluntary) being made. ([Appendix E: Reference check sample questions](#)).
- Step 6 All preferred applicants (staff and volunteer) are required to provide 3 types of evidence of personal identification prior to any offer of employment (paid or voluntary) being made. Acceptable identification includes a current passport, birth certificate, driver's licence, Medicare/Healthcare/Pension card, student card or notice of tax assessment.
- Step 7 A current police check (not older than 6 months) along with the state legislated working with children screening requirements, will either be supplied by the applicant or conducted by the employer. ([Ref: Appendix H: State Contacts for Police Records Checks](#)) The candidates permission will always be given before the check is requested with signature of applicant required on check requests. These will be documented and recorded prior to employment by the YMCA of ALL staff/volunteers who have access to children or young people. These are issued by the relevant state/territory police. Exclusion from employment findings on a police check may include criminal histories of
- Child abuse
 - Child/adult sexual abuse
 - Violence
 - Child pornography/internet offences involving children
 - An undeclared criminal record of any sort

- Misleading or dishonest information

Other areas of concern may be

- Substance abuse
- Major dishonesty/deception

NOTE: “An applicant should not be automatically excluded from a position on the basis of having a criminal record. They may include any charges for criminal activities that do not necessarily pose a risk to children, eg. Shoplifting. Important factors to take into account include:

- The nature of the offence in relation to the nature of the position being offered
- The length of time since the offence took place as well as the age at which it was committed
- Whether there is evidence of an extended criminal history
- Severity of punishment imposed i.e. whether the person was convicted, found guilty or placed on a bond. “ (taken from *Childwise: Choose with Care*, A handbook to build safer organisations for children 2004, ECPAT Australia)

A person should have the opportunity to present a case as to their suitability regarding the above.

7. INDUCTION & TRAINING PROCEDURES

All new program/ service staff and volunteers are to participate in a formal induction program within 30 days of their appointment and are to be provided with access to appropriate written and web-based documentation outlining the YMCA's policies, operating procedures and legislative/ regulatory environments as they relate to children's programs/ services.

All new program/ service staff and volunteers are to be provided with either personal copies of the SC&YP Policy and code of conduct or access online and need to sign a confirmation of acceptance form prior to commencing employment. This form acknowledges that the policies have been received, read and understood. This form will also record any updated training that is undertaken throughout the term of employment and is up to the staff member to keep updated. ([Appendix F: Staff Confirmation/Acceptance form](#))

All new staff and volunteers, during their induction, are also made aware of the risk of child abuse, indicators of child abuse and mandatory notification obligations and responsibilities.

All new staff will receive training in an overview of the *developmental assets* program in the area of empowering and educating children on their rights to be safe and to feel safe.

8. GENERAL CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ALL STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

The YMCA is committed to the safety and well-being of all children and young people accessing its programs and services. We support the rights of the child and will strive to deliver a child safe environment at all times. We also support the rights and well-being of our staff and volunteers and encourage their active participation in building and maintaining a safe environment for children.

Program/ service staff and volunteers must remain alert to the risk indicators of child abuse and promptly report suspected incidents to their Manager/ Supervisor and, where required by law, to the relevant departments.

Program/ service staff and volunteers engaged in the direct delivery of children's programs and services are required to regularly access training in child protection and related matters and will be supported by the YMCA Association to do so.

Program/ service staff and volunteers are to avoid placing themselves in potentially compromising situations with children and ensure that, in all circumstances, government and YMCA prescribed staff:child ratios are adhered to.

Program/ service staff and volunteers are to ensure they are never alone with a child where they cannot be observed by other YMCA staff member, volunteers or other adults. (Exception: [Appendix G Ref: recommendations on counselling situation](#))

When preparing rosters for children's programs, an appropriate mix of male and female staff/ volunteers is to be achieved wherever possible.

Young children under the age of eight (8) in YMCA programs/ services must be appropriately supervised in bathrooms, showers and locker rooms or be required to accompany one another in pairs at such times. Preschool children need to be supervised and accompanied by an adult at all times while in a YMCA centre or program. Parents may need to be available to take children to the toilet in this instance.

Program/ service staff and volunteers are to ensure that parent/ guardian permission is obtained in writing prior to any child being taken on a YMCA excursion or camp or in relation to any photos of children being taken.

Parents/ guardians are to be informed of travel and sleeping arrangements prior to the commencement of any excursion or camp.

Program/ service staff and volunteers are not to travel, or be accommodated, alone with a child participant before, during or after a YMCA program, excursion or camp.

Program/ service staff and volunteers are not to discipline children through the use of physical punishment or the withdrawal of the necessities of care (incl. food, shelter and emotional warmth).

Program/ service staff and volunteers are not to verbally or emotionally abuse or punish children in their care.

Program/ service staff and volunteers are not, under any circumstances, to release a child from a YMCA program or service to anyone other than the authorised parent(s), guardian(s), or to an individual authorised by parent(s)/ guardian(s) in writing, including relatives of children.

Sign-in and sign-out logs, showing arrival and departure times, along with parent(s)/guardian(s) signatures are to be maintained on a daily basis and kept on file at program/ service sites. Program/ service staff and volunteers are required to be vigilant in witnessing the departure of individual children.

General staff/ volunteers employed in licensed or otherwise regulated Child Care and Children's Services are specifically required to have knowledge of and at all times to adhere to all Regulations.

Program/ service staff and volunteers providing direct care to children must be identified by a YMCA name badge and, where practicable, a branded uniform that is familiar to the children and is the same as that of their co-workers.

Program/ service staff and volunteers who have developed friendships with families and/ or children who participate in YMCA programs prior to their being employed by the YMCA must so advise their Manager or Supervisor.

It is not encouraged that program/ service staff and volunteers engage children who participate in YMCA programs in non-YMCA activities such as baby-sitting and weekend trips. All staff/volunteers are obliged to immediately report knowledge of such activities to their Manager or Supervisor.

Under no circumstances can personal work be solicited by a YMCA staff/volunteer while at the YMCA or can a YMCA uniform be worn to this personal work.

Staff/Volunteers are to

- Conduct yourself in a manner consistent with your position as a positive role model to children, and as a representative of the YMCA.
- Read, understand and conform with the YMCA policies and guidelines around the safety of children as outlined in the YMCA's SC&YP Policy, a copy of which was given to you during induction.
- Raise all concerns, issues, and problems with your supervisor as soon as possible.
- Follow all other procedures relating to children's safety as stipulated in your operations manual

CONDUCT CONSIDERED UNACCEPTABLE

- Engage in rough physical games
- Cuddle, kiss, hug or touch children in an inappropriate and/or culturally insensitive manner

- Make negative, violent or sexually suggestive comments to a child, even as a joke
- Undertake a task of a personal nature that a child can do for itself, for example changing clothes, grooming, feeding, and toileting.
- Take a child to your home, or encourage meetings outside the program activity
- Discipline children by the use of; emotional abuse, favouritism, physical abuse, verbal abuse, reference to cultural/ ethnic differences, swearing.
- Transporting of an individual child or a group of children to or from YMCA programs in private vehicles without the written consent of the YMCA CEO/Manager. This is only an option when all other avenues of transport have been excluded. A code of conduct for travelling in cars needs to be adhered to at all times
- Sharing accommodation with a child without other staff members or children present
- Texting or emailing information directly to a child or young persons mobile or email address. All communication made should be directed to the parents/guardians.

APPENDIX A

Safeguarding Children & Young People Association Self Review

To be completed annually by each Association

1. Details of YMCA	<p>Legal Entity:</p> <p>Address:</p> <p>Phone:</p> <p>Manager/Executive Officer:</p>
2. Copy of Policy	<p><i>Attach a copy of the Policy (with amendments/extra information your Associations requires) and any attachments or supporting materials used by your YMCA</i></p>
3. Copy of Consultation Review Outcomes	<p><i>Attach a copy of the relevant consultation outcomes that came from the review process of stakeholders, parents, families, contract partners etc.</i></p>
3. Copy of Procedures	<p><i>Attach a copy of any procedures used or implemented at site in relation to this policy.</i></p>
4. Copy of Endorsement from External Child Protection Agency (If not using the YMCA Australia policy)	<p><i>Attach a copy of the endorsement letter/certificate and full contacts of the external child protection agency used for this endorsement (if not using YMCA Australia Policy)</i></p>
4. Evidence of Training- Dates, times, attach rolls etc.	<p><i>Include a copy of Training provided to staff in relation to Child Protection; this should include a complete listing of all staff inducted into the YMCA as this policy is a mandatory component to the induction training.</i></p>
5. Details of changes to Policy & Procedures.	
6. Notification of Incidents.	<p><i>List any incidents that have occur or been reported in the last 12 months, outline procedures implemented.</i></p>

APPENDIX B

YMCA ASSOCIATION

.....
**SIGNIFICANT INCIDENT FORM
SUSPECTED/KNOWN CHILD ABUSE NOTIFICATION FORM (INTERNAL)**

Name of Child: _____ DOB: _____

Address of Child: _____

First Language: _____

Parent/Caregivers Contact Details:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Language: _____

Phone No's: Work _____ Home _____

DETAILS OF PERSON REPORTING THE HARM

Name of the Person reporting the harm: _____

Position in YMCA: _____

Contact Number: _____

Date and Time of Allegation: _____

The reporter's involvement with the family: _____

Description of the harm/injury to the child.

What occurred that prompted the allegation? Observations that may be relevant. What did you see/hear. (E.g. injuries, behaviour changes, parent/caregiver interactions).

Please give dates if possible.

What _____

How _____

When _____

Where _____

Other background information: _____

Are other people or agencies involved? _____

YMCA'S of Australia Policy for Safeguarding Children and Young People

Are there any concerns about Police or Departmental Officers visiting the family? _____

Best time to find parents home: _____

ACTION

Date and Time of Notification to Family Services: _____

Name of the Child Protection Officer Contacted: _____
At _____ Regional Office.

Date and Time of Notification to the CEO: _____

Does the family know a report is being made? _____

Signature of the CEO/Manager: _____

Signature of the Staff Member reporting the harm: _____

A copy of this form is to be handed to the investigating officer.

APPENDIX C

LISTING OF RELEVANT STATE & FEDERAL CONTACTS

Contact details for each State and Territory are as follows:

Australia Capital Territory

Department of Education, Youth & Family Services

186 Reed St, Greenway ACT 2900

Phone (all areas): 6207 5111

6207 1466 (Southside)

6207 1069 (Northside)

URL: www.decs.act.gov.au

After Hours Services: 6207 0720

Centralised intake service

Mandated reporters: 1300 556 728

General Public: 1300 556 729

Crisis Service: 1300 556 729

Northern Territory

Department of Health and Community Services

PO Box 40596, Casuarina NT 0811

Phone: (08) 8922 7111

URL: www.health.nt.gov.au

Reports should be made to the nearest Family and Children's Services office by using the freephone number 1800 700 250

New South Wales

Department of Community Services

4-6 Cavill Ave, Ashfield NSW

Phone: (02) 9716 2222

URL: www.community.nsw.gov.au

DoCS Helpline – to report child abuse and neglect

24 hours: 132 111

Western Australia

Department for Community Development

189 Royal St, East Perth WA 6004

Phone: (08) 9222 2555

TTY: (08) 9325 1232

After hours: (08) 9223-1111

Freecall STD: 1800 622 258

Crisis Care Unit: (08) 9223 1111

1800 199 008 (24 hours)

URL: www.fcs.wa.gov.au

Victoria

Department of Human Services

Child Protection and Care

Community Care Division

20/55 Collins St, Melbourne VIC 3000

Phone: (03) 9616 7777

URL: www.dhs.vic.gov.au

After Hours Child Protection Crisis Line: 131 278 (24 hours)

Tasmania

Department of Health and Human Services Children and Families Division

Level 4, 34 Davey St, Hobart TAS 7000

Phone: (03) 6230 7833

Freecall, 24 hours

Child Protection Advise and Referral Service:

1300 737 639

Child Abuse Prevention service: 1800 001 219

URL: www.dhhs.tas.gov.au

South Australia

Department of Human Services

- Family and Youth Services

PO Box 39, Rundle Mall PO Adelaide SA 5000

Phone: (08) 8226 6815

URL: www.dhs.sa.gov.au/fays

Child Abuse Report Line: 131 478 (business hours)
131 611 (24 hours)

Queensland

Department of Families

Level 7, 111 George Street, Brisbane QLD 4001

Phone: (07) 3224 8045

Freecall 1800 811 810

URL: www.families.qld.gov.au

Crisis care: (07) 3235 9999 freecall for rural areas:

1800 177 135

APPENDIX D

LEGAL DEFINITIONS OF REASONABLE GROUNDS

The relevant section of legislation from each State or Territory is as follows:

Australian Capital Territory

In the ACT the Children and Young People Act 1999 section 158 states that;

A person who believes or suspects that a child or young person is in need of care and protection may report the circumstances on which the belief or suspicion is based to the chief executive.

Section 156(1) of the Act state that a child or young person is in need of care and protection if –

he or she has been, is being or is likely to be, abused or neglected; and

no-one with parental responsibility for the child or young person is willing and able to protect him or her from suffering the abuse or neglect.

Section 156(2) of the Act states that without limiting s.156(1), a child or young person is in need of care and protection in the following circumstances:

If a person with whom the child or young person lives or is likely to live –

has threatened to kill or injure the child or young person and there is a real possibility of the treat being carried out; or

has killed, abused or neglected a child or young person and there is a real possibility of the person killing, abusing or neglecting the relevant child or young person; and no-one with parental responsibility for the child or young person is willing and able to protect the child or young person;

no-one with parental responsibility for the child or young person (other than the chief executive) is willing and able to provide him with adequate care and protection;

if there is a serious or persistent conflict between the child or young person and the people with parental responsibility for him or her (other than the chief executive) to such an extent that the care and protection of the child or young person is, or is likely to be, seriously disrupted;

the people with parental responsibility for the child or young people (other than the chief executive) are-

dead, have abandoned him or her or cannot be found after reasonable inquiry; or

unwilling or unable to keep him or her from engaging in self-damaging behaviour; or

sexually or financially exploiting the child or young person or unwilling or unable to keep him or her from being sexually or financially exploited;

the child or young person is the subject of a child protection order in a State that is not being complied with.

Northern Territory

In the Northern Territory section 14(1) of the Community Welfare Act 1983 states that:

A person, not being a member of the police force, who believes, on reasonable grounds, that a child has suffered or is suffering maltreatment shall, as soon as practicable after obtaining the knowledge that constitutes the reasonable grounds for his or her so believing, report the fact, and all material facts on which that knowledge is based, to the Minister or a member of the police force.

Section 4(2) of the Acts states that a child is in need of care and protection where –

the parents, guardians or the person having the custody of the child have abandoned him or her and cannot, after reasonable inquiry, be found;

the parents, guardians or the person having the custody of the child are or is unwilling or unable to maintain the child;

he or she has suffered maltreatment;

he or she is not subject to effective control and is engaging in conduct which constitutes a serious danger to his or her health or safety; or

being excused from criminal responsibility under section 38 of the Criminal code he or she has persistently engaged in conduct which is so harmful or potentially harmful to the general welfare of the community measured by commonly accepted community standards as to warrant appropriate action under this Act for the maintenance of those standards.

Section 4(3) of the Acts states that for the purposes of the Act, a child shall be taken to have suffered maltreatment where –

he or she has suffered a physical injury causing temporary or permanent disfigurement or serious pain or has suffered impairment of a bodily function or the normal reserve of flexibility of a bodily function, inflicted or allowed to be inflicted by a parent, guardian or person having the custody of him or her where there is a substantial risk of his suffering such an injury or impairment;

he or she has suffered serious emotional or intellectual impairment evidenced by severe psychological or social malfunctioning measured by the commonly accepted standards of the community to which he or she belongs, because of his or her physical surroundings, nutritional or other deprivation, or the emotional or social environment in which he or she is living or where there is a substantial risk that such surroundings, deprivation of environment will cause such emotional or intellectual impairment;

he or she has suffered serious physical impairment evidenced by severe bodily malfunctioning, because of his or her physical surroundings, nutritional or other deprivation, or the emotional or social environment in which he or she is living or where there is substantial risk that such surroundings, deprivation or environment will cause such impairment;

he or she has been sexually abused or exploited, or where there is substantial risk of such abuse or exploitation occurring, and his or her parents, guardian or persons having the custody of him or her are unable or unwilling to protect him or her from such abuse or exploitation; or

being a female, she –

has been subjected, or there is substantial risk that she will be subjected, to female genital mutilation as defined in section 186A of the Criminal Code; or

has been taken, or there is a substantial risk that she will be taken, from the Territory with the intention of having female genital mutilation performed on her.

New South Wales

In NSW section 24 of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 states:

A person who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child or young person is, or that a class of children or young persons are, at risk of harm may make a report to the Director -General.

Section 23 of the Act states that for the purposes of the Act, a child or young person is at risk of harm if current concerns exist for the safety, welfare or well-being of the child or young person because of the presence of any one or more of the following circumstances:

the child's or young person's basic physical or psychological needs are not being met or are at risk of not being met,

the parents or other caregivers have not arranged and are unable or unwilling to arrange for the child or young person to receive necessary medical care,

the child or young person has been, or is at risk of being, physically or sexually abused or ill-treated,

the child or young person is living in a household where there have been incidents of domestic violence and, as a consequence, the child or young person is at risk of serious physical or psychological harm,

a parent or caregiver has behaved in such a way towards the child or young person that the child or young person has suffered or is at risk of suffering serious psychological harm.

Note. Physical or sexual abuse may include an assault and can exist despite the fact that consent has been given.

South Australia

In South Australia the Children's Protection Act 1993 sections 11 and 12 state that a person whether voluntarily or mandated must notify the Department if he or she suspects on reasonable grounds that a child has been or is being abused or neglected.

Section 6(1) of the Act defines "abuse and neglect" in relation to a child as meaning –

sexual abuse of the child; or

physical or emotional abuse of the child, or neglect of the child, to the extent that –

the child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, physical or psychological injury detrimental to the child's wellbeing; or

the child's physical or psychological development is in jeopardy,

and "abused" or "neglected" has a corresponding meaning.

Section 6(2) of the Act states that for the purpose of the Act, a child is at risk if –

the child has been, or is being abused or neglected; or

a person with whom the child resides (whether a guardian of the child or not) –

has threatened to kill or injure the child and there is a reasonable likelihood of the threat being carried out; or

has killed, abused or neglected some other child or children and there is reasonable likelihood of the child in question being killed, abused or neglected by that person; or

the guardian(s) of the child –

are unable to maintain the child, or are unable to exercise adequate supervision and control over the child; or

are unwilling to maintain the child, or are unwilling to exercise adequate supervision and control over the child; or

are dead, have abandoned the child, or cannot, after reasonable inquiry, be found; or

the child is of compulsory school age but has been persistently absent from school without satisfactory explanation of the absence; or

the child is under 15 years of age and is of no fixed address.

Western Australia

In Western Australia the Child Welfare Act 1947 states any person on reasonable grounds and acting in good faith can notify the Department of a child in need of care and protection.

Section 4(1) of the Act states that a “child in need of care and protection” means a child who –

(a) has no sufficient means of subsistence apparent to the court and whose near relatives are, in the opinion of the court, in indigent circumstances or are otherwise unable or unwilling to support the child, or are dead, or unknown, or cannot be found, or are out of the jurisdiction, or in the custody of the law;

(b) has been placed in a subsidized facility and whose near relatives have not contributed regularly towards the maintenance of the child;

associates or dwells with any person who has been convicted of vagrancy, or is known to the police as of bad repute, or has been or is reputed to be a thief or habitually under the influence of alcohol or drugs;

is under the guardianship or in the custody of a person whom the court considers unfit to have guardianship or custody;

is not being maintained properly by a near relative, or is deserted;

is found in a place where any drug or prohibited plant is used and is in the opinion of the court in need of care and protection by reason thereof;

being under the age of 14 years is employed or engaged in any circus, traveling show, acrobatic entertainment, or exhibition by which his [her] life, health, welfare, or safety is likely to be lost, prejudiced, or endangered;

is unlawfully engaged in street trading;

is ill-treated, or suffers injuries apparently resulting from ill-treatment;

lives under conditions which indicate that the child is lapsing or likely to lapse into a career of vice or crime; or

is living under such conditions, or is found in such circumstances, or behaves in such a manner, as to indicate that the mental, physical or moral welfare of the child is likely to be in jeopardy.

Victoria

In Victoria section 64 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1989 states that anyone who reasonably believes that a child or young person is in need of protection should notify the circumstances to the Department of Human Services or the police.

Section 63 of the Act indicates that a child is in need of care and protection if any of the following grounds exist –

- (a) the child or young person has been abandoned and, after reasonable inquiries, the parents cannot be found and there is no other suitable person who is willing and able to care for the child or young person;
- (b) the child or young person's parents are dead or incapacitated and there is no other suitable person willing and able to care for the child or young person;

the child or young person has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of physical injury and the child or young person's parents have not protected, or are unlikely to protect, the child or young person from harm of that type;

the child or young person has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of sexual abuse and the child or young person's parents have not protected, or are unlikely to protect, the child or young person from harm of that type;

the child or young person has suffered, or is likely to suffer, emotional or psychological harm of such a kind that the child or young person's emotional or intellectual development is, or is likely to be, significantly damaged and the child or young person's parents have not protected, or are unlikely to protect, the child or young person from harm of that type; and

the child or young person's physical development or health has been, or is likely to be, significantly harmed and the parents have not provided, arranged or allowed the provision of, or are unlikely to provide, arrange or allow the provision of, basic care or effective medical, surgical or other remedial care.

Tasmania

In Tasmania under section 13(1) of the Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997 an adult who knows, or believes or suspects on reasonable grounds, that a child is suffering, has suffered or is likely to suffer abuse or neglect has a responsibility to take steps to prevent the occurrence or further occurrence of the abuse or neglect.

Section 13(2) of the Act states that one step the adult may take to prevent the occurrence of abuse or neglect is to inform the Secretary of his or her knowledge, belief or suspicion.

Under section 4(1) of the Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997, for the purposes of the Act, a child is at risk if –

- (a) the child has been, is being, or is likely to be, abused or neglected; or

- (b) any person with whom the child resides or who has frequent contact with the child (whether the person is or is not a guardian of the child) –

has threatened to kill or abuse or neglect the child and there is a reasonable likelihood of the threat being carried out; or

has killed or abused or neglected some other child or an adult and there is a reasonable likelihood of the child in question being killed, abused or neglected by that person; or

the guardians of the child are –

unable to maintain the child; or

unable to exercise adequate supervision and control over the child; or

unwilling to maintain the child; or

unwilling to exercise adequate supervision and control over the child; or

dead, have abandoned the child or cannot be found after reasonable inquiry; or

are unwilling or unable to prevent the child from suffering abuse or neglect; or

the child is under 16 years of age and does not, without lawful excuse, attend school regularly.

The Act defines “abuse or neglect” as meaning –

- (a) sexual abuse; or

- (b) physical or emotional injury or other abuse, or neglect, to the extent that –

the injured, abused or neglected person has suffered, or is likely to suffer, physical or psychological harm detrimental to the person’s wellbeing; or

the injured, abused or neglected person’s physical or psychological development is in jeopardy –

and abused or neglected has a corresponding meaning.

Queensland

In Queensland any person acting honestly can notify or give information about a his or her suspicions that a child has been, is being or is likely to be harmed.

Section 10 of the Child Protection Act 1999 states that a child in need of protection is a child who

- (a) has suffered harm, is suffering harm, or is at unacceptable risk of suffering harm; and
(b) does not have a parent able and willing to protect the child from the harm.

(See section 11 of the Act for the definition of “parent”)

Section 9 of the Act defines “harm” –

- (i) “Harm” to a child, is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child’s physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing.

- (ii) It is immaterial how the harm is caused.
- (iii) Harm can be caused by –
 - physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect; or
 - sexual abuse or exploitation.

APPENDIX E

SAMPLE REFERENCE CHECK QUESTIONS

Name of Applicant

Name of Referee

Date of Reference

Relationship of referee to applicant

Questions

1. Are you related to the applicant YES / NO
2. Is the applicant a personal friend YES / NO
3. Can you please make comment on the skills of the applicant and tell me why you think they would be suited to this position
4. What are the applicants strengths
5. Do you have any concerns to how the applicant will respond to supervision and direction
6. What do you perceive as the applicants weaknesses remembering nobody is perfect
7. How confident are you that the applicant will be able to respect the confidentiality of the children, families and young people they will be working with
8. To your knowledge has applicant ever acted inappropriately around young people or children
9. Do you have any concerns about the applicants motivation to work with children or young people
10. Is there anything else you would like to say about the applicant

Other relevant work related questions should be added to the reference check and a hard copy of the questions and answers kept on file within the applicants personal file should they be successful

Some questions should be behavioural based questions, listen carefully for attitude, tone and hesitancy by the referee. Document each answer.

APPENDIX F

STAFF CONFIRMATION/ACCEPTANCE FORM

Staff Confirmation/ Acceptance Form

I, _____(Staff Name) have read and understand the YMCA 's Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Procedures and will ensure this policy is implemented during my employment with the YMCA (enter Legal Entity). I also understand the code of conduct section within the policy

I also understand that a copy of this signed statement will be included in my personal file for future reference.

Staff Signature: _____ Date: __/__/__

Workplace Supervisor Signature: _____ Date: __/__/__

YMCA Staff Induction Use Only:
This form must be included in the staff personal file.

Annual Refresher Training Record

Date	Venue	Presenter	Supervisor Signature
__/__/200			
__/__/200			
__/__/200			
__/__/200			

APPENDIX G

RECOMMENDATION ON COUNSELLING SITUATIONS

In the majority of instances it is preferable for the activity to occur in view of others or within the hearing of others etc. however with counselling specifically it is probably one of the few instances where the activity does occur behind closed doors and by its nature requires confidentiality of the participants.

In this case a formal process may be required to alleviate any child protection issues for the children and young people attending as well as protecting the staff involved

Recommendations

Other staff, volunteers and parents need to know where the child/young person is at all times. Eg. You want to avoid a situation where the counsellor and young person have wandered off in the building somewhere and no one else knows where they are or when they are coming back

Records need to be kept of the details of the sessions. Eg. Who worked with whom, when, which room etc... to maintain some accountability should there be an allegation

Others should be aware (including staff, parents, young person, child) as to when the session is going to end and how long the sessions are scheduled for.

A formal supervision process for the counsellor should be in place so that a supervisor/manager is aware of the work that is being done during a session

Select a venue that offers privacy but is not secluded or isolated, so that a child or young person knows there are others around

Ensure a counsellor and a client are not left on their own on the premises, eg. Particularly relevant for after hours work

Educate the child/young person at the beginning of the sessions about the organisations code of conduct and cover the expectations around physical contact and the complaints process

Encourage parents or carer's to wait outside if appropriate

Seek feedback routinely about how the child/young person is experiencing the service

Ensure staff are appropriately qualified to engage in counselling and maintain professional development opportunities so the persons practises remain relevant and/or ethical

Institute a process for feedback from children and young people when they have completed the counselling or left the service if appropriate

APPENDIX H

STATE CONTACTS FOR POLICE RECORDS CHECKS

Victoria: Consent to Check and Release Police Record form can be obtained at www.police.vic.gov.au or by phoning Public Enquiry service on (03) 9247-5907

Western Australia: Apply in person at a local police station. The application form can be obtained at www.police.wa.gov.au. In WA a National Police Check for Volunteers is currently being piloted. This process enables volunteer groups who provide services to vulnerable people, such as children and young people to obtain a National Police Check for their volunteers for a fee of \$10 per person Contact volunteering@dcd.wa.gov.au.

Tasmania: A Request for Personal Conviction Check Release Form needs to be lodged in person by the applicant. This form can be obtained from www.police.tas.gov.au or phone on 6230-2111

New South Wales: A Freedom of Information Application for Criminal History Check form can be obtained at www.police.nsw.gov.au In NSW people who work with children are required to participate in the Working with Children Check. A form known as a "Prohibited Employment Declaration" must be signed and all child related employment both paid and unpaid of any kind listed by the Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) ACT 1998 are mandated to have this check done prior to employment

Queensland: A National Police Certificate application can be obtained by phoning the police on (07) 3364-6262. In Queensland a Working with children check is required by people who work with children (under 18 years of age) in certain categories of paid or voluntary employment under the Commission for Children and Young People Act 2000. Those found suitable by the Commission are issued with a suitability card or a "blue card" which they must produce to work with children. More information can be obtained from www.chilcomm.qld.gov.au or on 1800-113-611

South Australia: A criminal records check/police clearance can be obtained by applying in person at any police station. For more information phone on (08) 8207-5000

Northern Territory: A criminal history check which includes a name and finger print check can be obtained by contacting the police on (08) 8922-3257

NOTE: Please check recommended storage of police checks in relation to state specific and funding specific guidelines and requirements