

SHINE FOR KIDS CLIENT SERVICES

Policy: Safeguarding Children & Young People Statement

Policy Change History

Version	Date of Effect	Change Description	Approved by
V2	1 November 2016	This is a new policy.	Board of Directors on 21 October 2016.

1. Purpose

SHINE for Kids is a not-for-profit organisation assisting children and young people with a relative in the criminal justice system, providing services to children and young people between the ages of birth and 24 years.

Our organisation operates in NSW, ACT, VIC and QLD and provides a range of services to support children and their families when a family member enters the criminal justice system.

We take seriously our responsibility to deliver all our programs in a supportive environment that is caring, nurturing and safe. Our Board of Directors approves and endorses SHINE for Kids commitment to safeguarding children and young people from abuse and neglect.

It is the responsibility of all at SHINE for Kids, from Executive to staff and volunteers, to understand the important responsibility they have to:

- protect children and young people from all forms of abuse, bullying and exploitation by our people;
- be alert to incidents of child abuse and neglect occurring outside the scope of our operations and services that may have an impact on the children and young people to whom we provide a service; and
- create and maintain a child safe culture that is understood, endorsed and put into action by all the individuals who work for, volunteer or access our programs and services.

This Safeguarding Children and Young People Statement has been adopted by the Chief Executive Officer of SHINE for Kids.

2. Scope

The Safeguarding Children and Young People Statement applies to all personnel involved with SHINE for Kids.

3. Related documents

The following SHINE for Kids policies must be considered in relation to this document:

- Safeguarding Code of Conduct
- Responding to Child Abuse and Allegations Reporting Policy
- Recruitment and Screening Policy

4. Related legislation

In upholding this Statement, the relevant legislation in the states and territories we operate must be considered by all SHINE for Kids personnel.

5. Definitions

Involved Personnel – Includes the following:

- All employees and volunteers with direct contact with children or young people their supervisors and managers;
- All senior managers with responsibility for delivering services to children or young people;
- Anyone involved in dealing with reports or allegations of child abuse or with access to children's or young people's records;
- All directors, chief executive officer, director general or equivalent personnel; and
- Includes those whom we employ directly, those we employ indirectly through other groups or organisations, and all those who are involved as volunteers.

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); and/or
- *Psychological* (spreading rumours, stalking, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions).

Child or young person - A person under the age of eighteen years.

Safeguarding Code of Conduct - The Safeguarding Code of Conduct aims to identify and prevent behaviour that may be harmful to Members, children and young people in all our activities and programs. The Safeguarding Code of Conduct outlines what is, and what is not

acceptable behaviour or practice when working with or engaging with children and young people.

Direct role in providing activities, programs and services to children and young people - A direct role is considered one that has contact with children and young people that is not incidental, but normally part of providing a service, program or activity for children and young people. This direct delivery may require regular physical contact and forms of ongoing communication. For example, Child & Family Workers.

Emotional or psychological abuse - Emotional or psychological abuse occurs when a child does not receive the love, affection or attention they need for healthy emotional, psychological and social development. Such abuse may involve repeated rejection or threats to a child. Constant criticism, teasing, ignoring, threatening, yelling, scapegoating, ridicule and rejection or continual coldness are all examples of emotional abuse. These behaviors continue to an extent that results in significant damage to the child's physical, intellectual or emotional wellbeing and development.

Family Violence - Family violence occurs when children are forced to live with violence between adults in their home. It is harmful to children. It can include witnessing violence or the consequences of violence. Family violence is defined as violence between members of a family or extended family or those fulfilling the role of family in a child or young person's life. Exposure to family violence places children and young people at increased risk of physical injury and harm and has a significant impact on their wellbeing and development.

Grooming - Grooming is a term used to describe what happens when a perpetrator of abuse builds a relationship with a child with a view to abusing them at some stage. There is no set pattern in relation to the grooming of children. For some perpetrators, there will be a lengthy period of time before the abuse begins. The child may be given special attention and, what starts as an apparently normal display of affection, such as cuddling, can develop into sexual touching or masturbation and then into more serious sexual behaviour. Other perpetrators may draw a child in and abuse them relatively quickly. Some abusers do not groom children but abuse them without forming a relationship at all. Grooming can take place in any setting where a relationship is formed, such as leisure, music, sports and religious activities, or in internet chatrooms, in social media or by other technological channels.

Harm - Harm to a child, is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing. It is immaterial how the harm is caused. Harm can be caused by:

- physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect;
- sexual abuse or exploitation;
- a single act, omission or circumstance; and

- a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances.

Neglect - Neglect is the persistent failure or deliberate denial to provide the child with the basic necessities of life. Such neglect includes the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, adequate supervision, clean water, medical attention or supervision to the extent that the child's health and development is, or is likely to be, significantly harmed. Categories of neglect include physical neglect, medical neglect, abandonment or desertion, emotional neglect and educational neglect. The issue of neglect must be considered within the context of resources reasonably available.

Physical abuse - Physical abuse occurs when a person subjects a child to non-accidental physically aggressive acts. The abuser may inflict an injury intentionally or inadvertently as a result of physical punishment or the aggressive treatment of a child. Physically abusive behavior includes (but is not limited to) shoving, hitting, slapping, shaking, throwing, punching, biting, burning, excessive and physically harmful over training, and kicking. It also includes giving children harmful substances such as drugs, alcohol or poison. Certain types of punishment, whilst not causing injury can also be considered physical abuse if they place a child at risk of being hurt.

Sexual abuse - Sexual abuse occurs when an adult or a person of authority (e.g. older) involves a child in any sexual activity. Perpetrators of sexual abuse take advantage of their power, authority or position over the child or young person for their own benefit. It can include making sexual comments to a child, engaging children to participate in sexual conversations over the internet or on social media, kissing, touching a child's genitals or breasts, oral sex or intercourse with a child. Encouraging a child to view pornographic magazines, websites and videos is also sexual abuse. Engaging children to participate in sexual conversations over the internet is also considered sexual abuse.

Sexual exploitation - Sexual exploitation occurs when children are forced into sexual activities that are then recorded in some way and/or used to produce pornography. Such pornography can be in the form of actual photos or videos or published on the internet. Exploitation can also involve children who are forced into prostitution.

6. Responsibilities

The Board of Directors is responsible for the development and endorsement of the SHINE for Kids Safeguarding Children and Young People Statement. It delegates the implementation of the Statement to the Chief Executive Officer. The role of each entity in relation to the development and compliance of the SHINE for Kids Safeguarding Children and Young People Statement is detailed below.

Board / CEO

- Promote the commitment to this Statement and its expectations.
- Support policy review on an annual cycle as a minimum or at a time governed by legislation, regulations, or organisational learnings that promote a change to the Statement and all relevant policy or procedural guidelines.
- Ensure compliance to the Statement via an inbuilt review mechanism.
- Ensure adequate resources are allocated to allow for the development and effective implementation of this policy.
- Develop opportunities for regular discussion at all levels to support a culture of openness and continued improvement and accountability to child protection and member welfare.
- Advocate and promote child rights, empowering and engaging children and young people in support of this Statement and its expectations.

CEO/Managers/Supervisors

Ensure all involved Personnel understand their obligations in accordance with the Safeguarding Children and Young People Statement and any relevant policy and procedural documentation. This includes induction, a minimum of one compulsory training session, and regular discussion and guidance at supervision and team meetings.

- Ensure the Safeguarding Children and Young People Statement is implemented and adhered to amongst relevant member stakeholders.
- Ensure the development and implementation of required internal policy/work procedures and guidelines are in place to support child protection practice in accordance with the expectations of the Safeguarding Children and Young People Statement.
- Ensure adequate resources are allocated to allow effective implementation of the Safeguarding Children and Young People Statement.
- Ensure to support Personnel in a joint way with a decision to initiate any form of action to protect a child from abuse, neglect, grooming or exploitation.
- Ensure appropriate supports, such as counselling and formal debriefing, are provided for any Personnel involved in a matter relating to responding to a concern for the safety and wellbeing of a child or young person.
- Advocate and promote child rights, empowering and engaging children and young people in support of this Statement.

- Proactively share resources and experience in the development of child safe initiatives as they are identified.
- Develop opportunities for regular discussion at all levels to support a culture of continuous improvement and accountability of child protection and member welfare.
- Ensure that our Personnel are aware of the appropriate recruitment, screening and employment practice in relation to individuals with specific roles in working, coaching or volunteering with children and families.

Staff and Volunteers

- Maintain a full understanding of the commitments and expectations of this Statement, as well as all other policy relevant to safeguarding children and young people.
- To undertake any induction and training anticipated in this Statement, in relation to policy and procedures relevant to safeguarding children and young people.
- To seek guidance from a supervisor or manager if there is ever any lack of understanding in relation to the commitments and expectations as set out in this Statement.
- To take action to protect children and young people from all forms of abuse, bullying and exploitation.
- To assist in creating and maintaining a child safe culture and a culture of inclusion and safety

7. Our Commitment

SHINE for Kids endorses and supports the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 (ratified in Australia in 1990). The Convention recognises that children under the age of 18 years need special care and protection.

In recognition of our support for the Convention on the Rights of the Child, we make the following commitments and expectations with the purpose to protect the children, young people and families who access our activities, programs, services and facilities:

Our commitment to children and young people

- We are committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people who access any of our activities, programs, services or facilities.
- We are committed to providing children with positive and nurturing experiences.
- We will support families and communities to promote children's healthy development and wellbeing.
- We will take action to ensure that children and young people are protected from abuse,

family violence and neglect.

- We will take action to ensure that children are not exploited, abused or harmed during the time that they are involved with any of our activities, programs, services or facilities.
- We will listen to children and address any concerns that they raise with us.

Our commitment to parents and carers

- We are committed to supporting parents and carers to protect their children.
- We will offer assistance that builds on a family's strengths, is sensitive to their cultural and religious beliefs and empowers them to meet the changing needs of their children.
- We are committed to communicating honestly and openly with parents and carers about the wellbeing and safety of their children.
- We aim to be transparent in our decision-making with parents and carers as long as doing so do not compromise the safety of children or young people or breaches any confidentiality obligations.

Our commitment to our Personnel

- We are committed to providing our Personnel with the necessary support to enable them to fulfill their roles.
- We will put in place a management structure that supports and develops staff in their roles.
- We are committed to providing our Personnel with appropriate guidance and development.
- We will work to ensure that our Personnel have access to a senior person to make decisions in relation to any action required to protect children from abuse, bullying and exploitation.
- We will work to ensure that there are safeguards in place to protect our Personnel from violence or any kind of harassment in their work place.

Our commitment to ensuring a child safe organisation

- We are committed to using best practice standards in the recruitment, screening and employment of any Personnel.
- We will work to create an environment in which children are safe and feel safe in any of our program, activities, events or facilities.
- We will work to ensure that Personnel do not harm, abuse or exploit children and young people who are involved with our programs, services or facilities.

Our commitment to maintaining a child safe culture

It is a requirement that SHINE for Kids adopt the Safeguarding Children and Young People Statement as a minimum standard and that SHINE for Kids become and remain compliant, at

all times with, the Seven Standards of the Safeguarding Children Accreditation Program of the Australian Childhood Foundation. The Standards, as set out below, when implemented in their totality, support our organisation to develop and maintain an effective child safe culture across all of its activities, programs and services.

Standard One	Commitment to Safeguarding Children
Standard Two	Personnel roles and conduct
Standard Three	Recruitment and screening
Standard Four	Personnel induction and training
Standard Five	Involving children and parents
Standard Six	Child abuse reports and allegations
Standard Seven	Supporting a child-safe culture

8. Records and documentation

We retain records of changes to this document (see 10. Monitoring and Review).

9. Communication

SHINE for Kids commits to ensuring our Safeguarding Children and Young People Statement is communicated to:

Service users

- on our website
- in age-accessible formats for children and young people
- as part of enrolment forms and program information provided to parents and families

All 'Involved' Personnel

- during recruitment and induction processes
- in minimum compulsory training on safeguarding children and young people policies and procedures
- on agendas for team meetings
- when there are any updates or changes to this document

10. Monitoring and review

This document will be reviewed at least every 3 years, after consultation. Some circumstances may trigger an early review, this includes but is not limited to legislative changes, organisational changes, incident outcomes and other matters deemed appropriate by the Board and/or Chief Executive Officer. We retain records to document each review undertaken. Records may include minutes of meetings and documentation of changes to policies and procedures that result from a review.

External audit and verification based on a sample, conducted by the Australian Childhood Foundation shall occur at 3 yearly intervals.

11. Supporting resources

The Safeguarding Children and Young People Statement for Children and Young People
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The Safeguarding Children and Young People Statement for Parents and Families
