



Safeguarding Children and Young People Statement

Parents Version

CatholicCare NT is a not-for-profit organisation based in Darwin with offices throughout the Northern Territory. We provide a range of services to people of all ages including children and young people between the ages of 0 – 18 years. The services listed all have a focus on children and their families:

- Children's Contact Services – in Darwin and Alice Springs
- Family Strengths – in Darwin
- Drug and Alcohol Intensive Support for Youth (DAISY) – in Darwin
- School Counselling – in Darwin, Katherine and Alice Springs
- Supporting Children After Separation Program (SCASP) – in Darwin
- Kids in Focus (KIF) – in Darwin and Alice Springs
- Safe Houses in Nauiyu (Daly River) and Milikapiti (Melville Island)
- Children + Parenting
- Community Mental Health
- Youth Diversion Program

Children become involved in our services for many different reasons and we take our responsibility for keeping children and young people SAFE very seriously. We have a number of Policies and Procedures that we follow, with the aim of keeping children and young people who are involved in our services SAFE. Below is a summary of these policies and procedures.

1. Staff Roles and Responsibilities

- 1.1 All staff have clear roles and responsibilities with respect to safeguarding children and young people.
- 1.2 We also have a Code of Conduct that guides staff behaviour particularly in regard to children and young people.
- 1.3 One quote from the Code of Conduct states: "Staff are required to demonstrate the utmost respect for children and not to do anything that would directly or indirectly harm children. As of March 2011, CatholicCare NT staff and volunteers are required to have a "Working with Children" clearance (also known as the Ochre Card)."

2. Transport

- 2.1 Children may be transported by workers but only when connected with the achievement of identified goals.
- 2.2 Children under 12 years old must be in the company of a parent, carer or other authorised person, otherwise, written permission is required.
- 2.3 Young people between the ages of 12 and 18 may be transported without authorisation from a parent, carer or other authorised person dependant on assessment, although this must be connected with identified goals.
- 2.4 Staff are never to give children or young people casual lifts.

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3. Physical Contact with Children and Young People

Any physical contact with children and young people must be appropriate to the delivery of the services and based on the needs of the child or young person (such as to assist or comfort a distressed young person) rather than on the needs of our staff.

4. Positive Guidance

- 4.1 CatholicCare NT encourages children and young people to become aware of the acceptable limits of their behaviour. There are times when staff may be required to use appropriate behaviour management strategies to ensure an:
- effective and positive environment
 - the safety and/or wellbeing of children, young people or staff involved in our services
- 4.2 Any behaviour management strategy used must be:
- fair
 - respectful
 - appropriate to the developmental stage of the children or young people involved
- 4.3 The child or young person is to be provided with clear directions and given an opportunity to redirect their misbehaviour in a positive way.
- 4.4 Under no circumstances are our staff to take disciplinary action involving physical punishment or any form of treatment that could reasonably be considered as degrading, cruel, frightening or humiliating.

5. Maintain Role Boundaries

Our staff are not to act outside of the confines of their duties, as specified in their role description, when helping to deliver our services. For example, CatholicCare NT duties would not include a staff member taking a child to their home for a meal or activity.

6. Photographs of Children and Young People

Photography or other recordings of children by staff is only permitted when there is a clear work-related purpose for obtaining the imagery and:

- a written parental/guardian/carer authorisation is obtained; an example of where photographs of children may be permitted are community events organised by CatholicCare NT or when involved in such events
- children are to be appropriately dressed and include parents or other staff in the photographs
- images are to be maintained securely, i.e. loaded onto a database and password protected; once the images are no longer required, they are destroyed

7. Use of Electronic Communication

- 7.1 Wherever possible and appropriate, email and text messages sent to a child or young person is to be copied to their parent or guardian.
- 7.2 Any communication is to be restricted to issues directly associated with service delivery such as advising that a scheduled event is cancelled.

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7.3 The use of social networking sites for CatholicCare NT staff is restricted. Permission must be requested and approved by a Manager for staff to use any social networking site and it must be for work related purposes.

8. Responding to Child abuse reports and allegations

- 8.1 The reporting of child abuse is mandatory in the Northern Territory under the Care and Protection of Children Act 2007. CatholicCare NT has a comprehensive Child Protection Policy and Procedure that includes mandatory reporting and associated processes.
- 8.2 All staff have a responsibility to protect children and young people who may be at risk of harm due to a form of abuse or neglect. We are required to identify, report and respond to any concerns about, or incidents of, abuse or neglect towards children or young people to whom we provide services.
- 8.3 Staff are required to report suspected abuse to their line supervisor and report suspected abuse to the Department of Children & Families with only authorised staff in these organisations having access to documentation regarding a report.