

Caringbah Major Incident YMCA Parent Update

2nd April 2012

Parents and Families
YMCA Children's Services
Via email and mail

RE: Information for new YMCA parents – Court proceedings

Dear Parents and Families,

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all our new OSHC families for 2012 and to update you on a matter currently before the court involving a former YMCA employee.

We want to ensure that all our new parents and families are aware of the facts of the proceedings to date and our commitment to keeping you updated as new information comes to hand, as we have done throughout the entire case with our existing families.

As you may, or may not, be aware, a former YMCA employee, Jonathan Lord, was charged with the aggravated indecent assault of a number of children on 14th October, 2011. The matter first appeared before court on 10th November, 2011 and, since this time, additional charges have been laid. The accused now faces 29 charges against 12 children. While the YMCA acknowledges that a number of the charges relate to Lord's employment with the Y, we were not the only organisation to have been affected.

A plea hearing is scheduled for 1st May, 2012 at Central Local Court, at which time a guilty or innocent plea will be entered into and a sentencing or trial date set.

As a new parent of the Y, we would like to assure you that from the moment we were informed of the allegations we have taken steps to ensure both the safety of the children in our care and the course of open justice, and will continue to do so. We have also been committed to working with NSW Police and openly communicating with the staff and 600 parents and families across our Children's Services community in the Sutherland Shire, and will continue to do so.

To date, the Y has also:

- Reviewed all YMCA child protection policies and procedures.
- Engaged an independent body to conduct an audit of the Y's policies and procedures for Children's Services.
- Held three parent information sessions in the Sutherland Shire region and offered a professional counselling service to parents and families. Concerned parents and carers have also been advised to call the Child Protection Helpline on 132 111.
- Introduced mandated Child Protection Training for all Children's Services staff.

What is the Y doing now?

As this case is ongoing, so too is our dedication to providing support, counsel and information to our families. We are also making some positive changes within our OSHC Centres including advertising for



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the position of Child Protection and Compliance Manager in NSW and an increase in Child Protection briefings for all staff across NSW Centres to ensure the Y remains at the forefront of industry standards.

The safety of the children in our care is our number one priority and we will do everything possible to ensure this continues.

I encourage you to get in touch with me if you have any questions or concerns.

Yours sincerely,



Liam Whitley
General Manager
Children's Services

Email [REDACTED]

