



## Child Protection Policy

### Introduction

At Grow Paediatric Therapy, we are committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment for all children and young people. We recognize the importance of ensuring that all children and young people are protected from harm or risk of harm, and understand our legal and moral responsibility to protect children from harm or risk of harm. This policy outlines our commitment and approach to creating a child-safe environment and ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in our care. Everyone working at Grow Paediatric Therapy is responsible for the care and protection of children and reporting information about child harm or risk of harm.

### Commitment to the safety of children and young people

- Children and young people are valued, respected, and encouraged to participate in all matters regarding their safety and protection.
- The safety and protection of children and young people is always the first priority.
- This policy complies with the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017, Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016 and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.
- All children and young people are embraced regardless of their abilities, neurotype, sex, gender, or social economic or cultural background and equity is upheld
- Bullying and harassment will not be tolerated.

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is:

1. To facilitate the prevention of child harm or risk of harm occurring within Grow Paediatric Therapy.
2. To work towards an organisational culture of child safety.
3. To prevent child harm or risk of harm within Grow Paediatric Therapy.

4. To ensure that all parties are aware of their responsibilities for identifying possible occasions for child harm or risk of harm and for establishing controls and procedures for preventing such harm or risk of harm and/or detecting such harm or risk of harm when it occurs.
5. To provide guidance to staff/volunteers/contractors as to action that should be taken where they suspect any harm or risk of harm within or outside of the organisation.
6. To provide a clear statement to staff/volunteers/contractors forbidding any such harm or risk of harm.
7. To provide assurance that any and all suspected harm or risk of harm will be reported and fully investigated.

### **Scope of policy**

- This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, contractors, students, and anyone else involved with Grow Paediatric Therapy who has contact with children.
- Throughout this policy, all employees, volunteers, contractors, students, and anyone else involved with Grow Paediatric Therapy are hereafter referred to as 'personnel', 'we' or 'us'.
- All personnel are required to agree in writing to accept and act in accordance with the policy.
- All contractors are required to accept and act on the policy as a condition of contracts or agreements.

### **Communication**

The Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017 requires that an organisation must, on request provide a copy of the organisation's child safe environments policies and procedures.

- Grow Paediatric Therapy's child safe policy and procedures are available to children, young people and families on the Grow Paediatric Therapy website and/or on request.
- Grow Paediatric Therapy's child safe policy and procedures are available to personnel provided as part of induction process.

### **Participation of families, children and young people**

Grow Paediatric Therapy informs families, children and young people about their rights and encourages children and young people to participate and provide feedback. Personnel of Grow Paediatric Therapy do this by:

- Listening to children and young people,
- Encouraging children and young people to be involved and informed about their rights,
- Encouraging children and young people to understand what child safety and wellbeing means,
- Encouraging children and young people to provide feedback including raising complaints,

- Clearly communicating with children and young people using age and developmentally appropriate language, and
- Educating children and young people on their rights including their right to safety and right to be listened to.

### **Child Safe Code of conduct**

- Grow Paediatric Therapy's Child Safe Code of Conduct applies to all personnel and can be accessed upon request, as well as on the Grow Paediatric Therapy website.
- All personnel are required to agree in writing to accept and act in accordance with the code of conduct.
- All contractors are required to accept and act on the code of conduct as a condition of contracts or agreements.
- Breaches of the code of conduct can be reported in accordance with Grow Paediatric Therapy's complaints, feedback and disputes policy.
- Personnel who breach the code of conduct will face disciplinary action, including and up to termination of employment or cessation of engagement with Grow Paediatric Therapy.

### **Recruitment**

Grow Paediatric Therapy undertakes a comprehensive recruitment and screening process for all workers and volunteers that aims to:

- Promote and protect the safety of all children under the care of Grow Paediatric Therapy;
- Identify the safest and most suitable people who share Grow Paediatric Therapy's values and commitment to protect children; and

- Prevent a person from working at Grow Paediatric Therapy if they pose a risk to

children. The recruitment process at Grow Paediatric Therapy includes:

- Position descriptions with a commitment to child safety and wellbeing;
- Face-to-face interviews that include behavioural questions in relation to child safeguarding; and
- At least two referee checks

Grow Paediatric Therapy meets the requirements of the Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016 which requires that personnel and contractors have a current, 'not prohibited' Working with Children Check issued by the DHS Screening Unit. Grow Paediatric Therapy will verify the accuracy of the Working with Children Check before employing them to work with children and young people, and for existing employees, Grow Paediatric Therapy will verify they renew their Working with Children Check every 5 years and the status remains as not prohibited. Verification will be done online through the Organisation Portal via the DHS Screening Unit. Grow Paediatric Therapy advises the Screening Unit

when the organisation becomes aware of certain information regarding any person involved with Grow Paediatric Therapy, including any serious criminal offence, child protection information, or disciplinary or misconduct information. Once engaged, personnel and contractors must review and acknowledge their understanding of this policy.

### **Supervision, training and support for employees, volunteers**

Grow Paediatric Therapy encourages and provides regular training and support to personnel on child protection and safety, including how to identify, prevent, and respond to child harm or risk of harm. We also encourage and provide support and supervision to personnel to help them manage the emotional and psychological impact of their work. This includes:

- Supervision
  - Regular on-the-job supervision sessions that include a focus on child safety and wellbeing; and
  - Encouraging personnel to seek additional external professional supervision.
- Support:
  - An induction process that includes new personnel receiving a copy of this policy and that is clear on their responsibilities to children and young people, including record keeping, information sharing and reporting obligations; and
  - Regular performance appraisals.
- Training:
  - All personnel read and understand the [Mandatory Notification Information Booklet \(https://dhs.sa.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/103179/CSE-Mandatory-notification-information-booklet.PDF\)](https://dhs.sa.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/103179/CSE-Mandatory-notification-information-booklet.PDF)
  - Require mandated notifiers within Grow Paediatric Therapy attend a 'Safe Environments: Through Their Eyes' training course every 3 years or Responding to Risk of Harm – Education and Care (RRHAN-EC) training every 3 years;
  - All personnel to view the resources Keeping our kids safe at developed by SNAICC at <https://www.snaicc.org.au/policy-and-research/child-safety-and-wellbeing/keeping-our-kids-safe/>
  - Child safety as a standing item on meeting agendas; and
  - Professional development opportunities to build knowledge and skills regarding the wellbeing and development of children and young people.

### **Reporting and responding to harm or risk of harm**

- Mandated notifiers at Grow Paediatric Therapy are those who:
  - provide a service directly to children and young people
  - hold a management position in the organisation the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of the provision of those services to children and young people
- All mandated notifiers have a legal obligation to report a reasonable belief that a child or young

person has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

- Non-mandated notifiers are encouraged to make voluntary reports about harm or risk of harm to a child or young person.
- Reports regarding the reasonable belief that a child or young person is, or may be, at risk of harm are to be made to the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) on 13 14 78 or if at immediate risk, report to South Australia Police (SAPOL) on 000. In cases involving Aboriginal children and young people, support is provided by Yaitya Tirramangkotti - an Aboriginal team, via the CARL number.
- The individual who identifies the harm or risk of harm is the person who makes the report to CARL/SAPOL and this is not reported internally for another staff member to determine if it is a reportable matter.
- Personnel will be guided by the relevant authority (CARL/SAPOL) about whether an internal investigation is appropriate.
- Following making a report to authorities an internal report is to be made to the reporter's supervisor (note: if the supervisor is suspected of involvement in the activity, or if the person having the suspicion does not believe the matter is being appropriately addressed or dealt with, the matter should be reported to the next highest level of supervision).
- The supervisor is to then make a report to the Director.
- If someone within Grow Paediatric Therapy is reported for causing harm to a child or young person they will be immediately removed from any role that has contact with children or young people until authorities have concluded their investigation.
- Following a report, families and young people are continued to be supported by Grow Paediatric Therapy by:
  - Referring the child, young person or their family to other appropriate services
  - Continuing to provide a service to the child or young person and their family and monitoring their circumstances

### **Reporting and responding to general complaints or feedback**

Information on how we inform children, young people and their families on their rights to provide complaints or feedback and the process to do so is written within the service agreement provided on commencement of services. Children and young people are also verbally informed of their rights to provide feedback at times throughout their therapeutic process. The Complaints, Feedback and Disputes policy is also available on request, or on the Grow Paediatric Therapy website. Grow Paediatric Therapy will deal with all complaints and feedback promptly, sensitively and fairly.

Children, families and young people can make complaints and provide feedback to the director by

- Emailing us directly at [hello@growpaediatrictherapy.com.au](mailto:hello@growpaediatrictherapy.com.au)
- Calling us on 0405 280 303

The director will:

- Listen to the complaint/feedback and make a record of it
- Advise the time expected for an outcome (typically within one week)
- Respond to the complainant with an outcome
- Clearly document and securely store decisions and actions taken in response to complaints and feedback
- Make sure that procedural fairness is followed at all times.

If the person making the complaint, dispute or feedback would like to speak to someone independent of Grow Paediatric Therapy, they can contact:

*The National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA)*

- Phone 1800 800 110
- Email [feedback@ndis.gov.au](mailto:feedback@ndis.gov.au), or
- Visit one of their offices in person

*The Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner (HCSCC)*

- Phone the HCSCC on 8226 8666 or 1800 232 007.
- Make an HCSCC complaint online.

### **Risk management**

Grow Paediatric Therapy conducts risk assessments and implements risk management strategies to identify and minimize potential risks to children, including physical, emotional, and psychological risks. We also ensure that all facilities, equipment, and activities are safe and appropriate for children.

Identified risks that are relevant to Grow Paediatric Therapy, specific to children and young people, as well as what we do to prevent and/or lessen these risks are provided in the Risk Management Policy upon request and on the Grow Paediatric Therapy website.

### **Related policies and procedures**

Grow Paediatric Therapy has a number of policies and procedures that relate to child safe environments. The following policies and procedures are all available upon request, or on the Grow Paediatric Therapy website:

- Child Protection Policy (this document)
- Child Safe Code of Conduct
- Complaints, Disputes, and Feedback policy
- Privacy Policy
- Risk Management Policy

### **Policy review**

- Grow Paediatric Therapy will, at a minimum, review the policies and procedures once every 5 years as required by the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017*.
- Grow Paediatric Therapy will lodge a new child safe environments compliance statement with Department of Human Services each time we review and update our policy.
- We will also review this policy when:
  - new or added risks are identified for children or young people, which may require a change in the policy or procedures
  - a critical incident where a child or young person has experienced harm through involvement with Grow Paediatric Therapy
  - Concerns are raised by anyone involved in your organisation about child safety or welfare within Grow Paediatric Therapy
  - Awareness or compliance to the child safe policy and/or procedures is low
  - Legislative changes/requirements.

Next review date: February 2028