



Children and Vulnerable Persons' Safety Policy

Policy Reference Number	37CP
Responsible Department	Corporate & Community Services
Related Policies	Risk Management; Aged Services; Volunteers; Youth; Recreation and Sport Development; Council Facilities Hire; Arts and Cultural Development; Accessibility; Library Service
Related Procedures	Safe Environment Policy Guidelines
Date of Initial Adoption	21 March 2006
Last Reviewed by Council	15 March 2011

1. Purpose

To define Council's role and ensure that staff and volunteers are supported and encouraged to build and maintain a safe environment for children and other vulnerable people.

This Policy will apply to Council Elected Members, staff, volunteers, contractors, consultants and any others involved in the delivery of Council services and programs to children and other vulnerable people.

2. Introduction

The City of Campbelltown is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and other vulnerable people who access services and programs. Council supports the rights of the child and vulnerable persons in the community and will act without hesitation to ensure a safe environment is maintained at all times. Council will also support the rights and wellbeing of staff and volunteers and encourage their active participation in building and maintaining a safe environment for all participants.

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3. Power to Make the Policy

The following Acts, Regulations and Guidelines provide the legislative framework for this Policy:

- Commonwealth legislation
 - Aged Care Act 1997
 - Disability Discrimination Act 1992
 - Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- South Australian legislation
 - Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935
 - Children's Protection Act 1993, Children's Protection Regulations 2006, and Department of Families and Communities Children's Protection Act Guidelines 2007
 - Equal Opportunity Act 1984

4. Strategic Plan Link

This Policy has the following link to Council's Revised Strategic Plan [2010-2020](#):

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[Quality Living \(Goal 1\) -
A quality lifestyle that meets the changing needs of the community](#)

5. Principles

The following principles underpin this policy:

- Abuse is abhorrent, illegal and must not be tolerated or ignored;
- Children and vulnerable people deserve respect, care and protection of their human rights regardless of special needs, cultural or socioeconomic factors;
- Children and vulnerable people should know that they have the right to be safe from abuse at all times;
- Children and vulnerable people are entitled to the support of a responsible person if they experience or are at risk of harm;
- Council has a role to play in fostering a safe local environment and in contributing towards the protection of children and vulnerable people from abuse.

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- A cohesive and culturally diverse
community enjoying a high quality of
life, with equitable access to a range
of quality services and facilities which
will also serve future generations.

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6. Definitions

Definitions for the purpose of this Policy are:

Child Abuse:	Refers to all aspects of abuse, that is, neglect, physical, emotional, psychological and sexual.
Children:	Refers to a person under 18 years of age.
Elder Abuse:	Refers to all aspects of abuse, that is, neglect, physical, verbal, sexual, financial and social.
Criminal history screening	Refers to the process where a report is obtained from the Commissioner of Police or another prescribed source regarding the criminal history of a person that is 18 years or over for the purposes of determining whether that person is suitable to work with children.
Vulnerable People:	Refers to those who may be at risk of abuse or exploitation due to their dependency on others or experiences of disadvantage, and could include people with a physical, intellectual or psychological disability, the frail aged, children, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, refugees, and those living in poverty.
Prescribed Position:	Is one that requires or involves one or more prescribed functions including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular contact with children or working in close proximity to children on a regular basis where that contact is not directly supervised at all times • Supervision or management of the above positions.

7. Policy

One of Council's paramount considerations in delivering services and programs is to foster the safety of children and other vulnerable people. In doing so, Council will:

- Nominate a Children and Vulnerable People's Safety Contact Officer to provide support to Council Elected Members, staff, volunteers, contractors and consultants on the policy, procedure and guidelines.
- Increase awareness within the organisation about providing an environment where children and vulnerable people are safe and protected from abuse.
- Maintain a rigorous staff and volunteer recruitment, screening and selection process, including a criminal history screening of existing employees in a prescribed position at least once in every 3 years of employment
- Obtain a criminal history screen for service providers, facilitators and other persons who are employed or contracted by Council to work with or supervise children and vulnerable people (eg for school holiday programs, youth events etc).
- Provide ongoing training (including Child Safe Environment Training) and support to Elected Members, staff, volunteers and all those involved in the delivery of services and programs to ensure they are able to fulfil their duty of care.
- Establish supportive and responsive procedures for fulfilling mandatory reporting obligations, where relevant, and dealing with complaints and issues effectively as they arise.
- Take appropriate security measures for the collection and maintenance of appropriate records related to children during delivery of Council services and programs.
- Collaborate and consult with other relevant agencies in matters concerning the protection of children and vulnerable people from abuse.
- Develop, monitor, evaluate and review risk management strategies and procedures to minimise harm to children and other vulnerable people.
- Ensure that all Council Elected Members, employees, volunteers, contractors and consultants comply with the code of conduct endorsed by Council which sets out standards of conduct when providing services to children and other vulnerable people.

Responsibilities

Council

- [Adopt](#) the Policy
- Promote protection of children and other vulnerable people from abuse.

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Chief Executive Officer

- Ensure the Policy is implemented, monitored, reported on and evaluated
- Awareness of mandatory reporting requirements, procedures and associated legal responsibilities
- Ensure significant changes to relevant legislation are brought to the attention of Council in a timely manner.

The document on Council's Records Management System is considered to be the current and controlled version. Before using a printed copy, verify that it is the current version.

General Managers, Managers

- Recruitment and selection in accordance with Council policies, procedures and requirements for criminal history screening of existing employees and preferred applicants for prescribed positions.
- Effective implementation of the policy, procedures and safe work practices.
- Awareness and promotion of acceptable behaviours when dealing with children and other vulnerable people.
- Provide appropriate induction and ongoing training as required.
- Establish and maintain supportive procedures for fulfilling mandatory notification requirements and ensure mandated notifiers understand their legal responsibilities.
- Report any reasonable suspicion of abuse of a child to the child Abuse Report Line.
- Support staff and respond to enquiries regarding suspicions of abuse or related issues, maintain appropriate records and ensure records are securely stored.
- Maintain confidentiality and fully cooperate with the Department for Families and Communities, the South Australian Police and other relevant government agencies in their investigations of suspected abuse of a child or other vulnerable person.

Employees and Volunteers

- Follow the policy, procedures and guidelines for providing a safe environment for children and other vulnerable people.
- Report any reasonable suspicion of abuse of a child to the Child Abuse Report Line.

Children and Vulnerable Person's Safety Contact Officer

- Provide support and advice to Elected Members, employees, volunteers, contractors or consultants on the policy, procedure and guidelines.

8. Review & Evaluation

This Policy will be reviewed annually. The Chief Executive Officer will report to Council on the outcome of the review and make recommendations for amendment, alteration or a substitution of a new Policy if considered necessary.

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9. Availability of the Policy

This Policy will be available for inspection at Council's principal office during ordinary business hours and at Council's website www.campbelltown.sa.gov.au. Copies will also be provided to interested members of the community upon request, and upon payment of a fee in accordance with Council's Schedule of Fees and Charges.