



ADL's Child/Young Person Protection Policy

Scope and Purpose

This policy outlines the steps ADL will undertake to ensure children and young people are safe. It applies to actions by management and employees, including interns and students on placement and people working under contract for the service. It also seeks to ensure that staff work within their scope of practice and do not step outside this into areas which are the statutory responsibility of Oranga Tamariki.

It recognises the important role and responsibility staff have in the accurate detection of suspected young person/child abuse and/or neglect, and the early recognition of children/young people at risk of abuse. It ensures that any services provided, or actions taken in respect of child/young person abuse, neglect, or suspected or potential child/young person abuse and neglect situations are guided by this organisation's Child Protection Policy. It also seeks to ensure staff safety, both physical and legal, in dealing with suspected child abuse/neglect.

ADL recognises te mana tamaiti and te mana o te whanau – the whakapapa and whanaungatanga relationships that a child or young person has and our responsibilities to families and caregivers of children / young people. ADL will endeavour to work with whanau and caregivers, to provide an opportunity to participate in decisions, and regard will be given to their views wherever possible. They will be supported in giving their views and provided reasonable accommodation to enable participation.

Policy Content

This policy provides ADL with a framework to identify and manage actual and/or suspected child abuse and neglect.

Responsibilities

The Chief Executive is ultimately responsible for:

- Ensuring that the organisation complies with all statutory requirements in relation to child/young person abuse/neglect reporting any incidents of child/young person abuse/neglect identified by staff to the Directors and advise where there are implications for ADL policies.

The People and Capabilities Leader is responsible for:

- Ensuring recruitment processes comply with the Children's Act requirements.
- Ensuring all staff have three yearly vetting checks completed (Police and OT vetting checks for Core Workers and Ministry of Justice vetting checks for Non-Core Workers).
- Ensuring that the Child Protection Policy will be reviewed by all staff in teams on a two-yearly cycle and signed off as being completed.

Service Leaders are responsible for:

- Ensuring that their staff members have read and understood ADL's Child/Young Persons Protection Policy.
- Ensuring that all staff take part in the ongoing training associated with this policy and will report completion of this to the People and Capability Leader.

Staff are responsible for:

- Adherence to all the procedures outlined in this policy.
- Being aware of the signs and symptoms of neglect or abuse and taking appropriate action to protect the wellbeing and safety of children and young people, whether the child/young person is directly or indirectly a client of the service.
- Consulting immediately with their Service Leader if they suspect child abuse or neglect. If child abuse or neglect is suspected the Clinician/Service Leader must report this to Oranga Tamariki and a safety

plan documented and put in place where possible.

- **Staff should not carry out any investigation beyond ADL's usual assessment protocols.**
- Phoning the police in the first instance if there is an immediate safety issue. Refer also to Section 8 – Security.

Procedures

Pre-employment procedures

When interviewing candidates, the Interview questions will include those relating to the candidate's views, behaviours and experience regarding child/young person safety issues. In addition, referees will be asked specific questions relating to child and young person safety issues. HR Safety Checks will be undertaken, as required by the Children's Act 2014, prior to employment, for all Core Workers and Non-Core Workers. These will be completed by the People & Capability Leader and cover the requirements of the Children's Act as set out in ADL's HR Safety Check Template.

Risk Assessments for existing staff

- All staff will have three yearly vetting checks completed (Police and OT vetting checks for Core Workers and Ministry of Justice and OT vetting checks for Non-Core Workers).
- Any vetting report that includes a result (i.e. a conviction or other unexpected matter) will be notified to the People & Capability leader who will undertake an HR Staff Risk Assessment, to assess whether there are any risks to the young people we work with and whether any mitigations might be needed.
- Where a vetting report includes a result, the People and Capability will complete the HR Staff Risk Assessment against the template and this will be escalated to ELT and the Board for consideration and decision-making.
- All vetting reports and HR Staff Risk Assessments are to be filed in personnel folders and monitored for renewal by the People and Capability Administrator.

Behaviour Management of Clients.

ADL does not advocate for the use of restraints with clients, instead use thorough planning and risk management systems to mitigate. Allow clients to regulate in safe and supported spaces.

New Staff and Students/Interns

The Child Protection Policy will be covered in the induction process with new staff and signed off as being completed.

Existing Staff

The Child Protection Policy will be reviewed by all staff in teams on a two-yearly cycle and signed off as being completed.

Contractors to ADL

Due diligence will be undertaken to ensure external contractors to ADL who work face -to-face with clients have Child Protection Policies and Processes - i.e. Outdoor Instructors.

Referring to Oranga Tamariki

Referrals to Oranga Tamariki are made by phone or email. This must be documented in the client's file and acknowledgement of receipt of notification also included. Oranga Tamariki must be given an ADL email to confirm receipt of the notification.

To contact Oranga Tamariki Phone: 0508 326 459 or Email: contact@ot.govt.nz

Note:

It is important to ensure that accurate and specific information identified as being specifically observed in the first person or as being hearsay coming from a third party is provided in a notification. However, it is reiterated that it is not the responsibility of staff nor is it within ADL's scope of practise and staff skill sets to carry out an investigation of the veracity of any suspected child/young person abuse or neglect concerns. Staff and management must be clear about this and **not engage in an investigation process**. To do so may place the young person and or the staff member's safety at greater risk and impact the due process of a subsequent investigation. **Oranga Tamariki are required to acknowledge receipt of the Notification of Concern.**

Referring a child/young person to Oranga Tamariki who is not a client

All cases where there is a concern for a child/young person's safety must be acted on by ADL staff even if the child/young person concerned is not a client.

Communication

Informing parents/caregivers of a referral

Communication with the child/young person's parents or caregivers that a referral to the police or Oranga Tamariki has been made should be managed with respect, sensitivity and consideration to the safety of the child/young person, staff, and other family members. You should advise parents/caregivers unless doing so creates further risk. Informing the client/caregivers of a referral should be undertaken in a safe environment for both staff and the client, parents or caregivers e.g. in the ADL offices, or by telephone in consultation with your Service Leader.

Documentation

Service Delivery staff are required to document the following in the clinical notes:

Observations and assessments. Disclosures must be client-led and service delivery staff need to document in as much detail as possible clearly delineating between client self-report and what is the service delivery staff members assessment of the situation. This should be recorded in the exact words of the client as much as possible, with quotation marks and quoted back to them to ensure the accuracy of the client's intentions.

Clearly specify where information has come from a third party (i.e. hearsay) with preferably the exact words used in quotation marks.

Discussions with appropriate ADL management (Service Leader, Clinical Leader and/or Kaiwhakahaere Māori).

Documentation of what was reported to Oranga Tamariki.

Any ongoing risk must be stated in the Risk Overview document.

Any ongoing risk to third parties must be documented and acted on.

We are required to evidence the acknowledgement of receipt of notification to Oranga Tamariki.

Security

For circumstances where the safety of the child/young person, family or staff member is at high-risk staff are to:

- a. consult immediately with their Service Leader, SDLT member, Teina, or a designated clinician.
- b. arrange appointments with the family at a safe venue outside of the home preferably where other people are in attendance and have been briefed on what to do if there are any difficulties.
- c. carry a cell phone with a prearranged contact number on favourites /speed dial or visit in pairs.

Letter to the Child/Young Person's GP

Where appropriate a letter to the child/young person's GP may be completed informing him/her of a referral to Oranga Tamariki with the young person's informed consent. [Consent to Provide Information to Other Agency 2025](#)

Staff Support

Staff can access further support through:

A debrief with a Service Leader, Teina, Kaiwhakahaere Māori or Supervisor.

ADL's EAP counselling.

Incident Reporting

Staff are to complete a Recordbase incident report as soon as practical.

Information to staff and training

Staff will be informed of this policy and the supplementary notes every two years using a team meeting as the vehicle, and training /updates given to all staff, as required. All new staff will be informed of this policy as part of their induction. The importance of this policy will be reflected in the workforce development plan.

Standards

Health & Disability Services (General) Standard NZS8134.1.1.7 Consumer Rights

Social Sector Accreditation Standards – Level 1 & 2 – Community Wellbeing

Definitions

Child abuse defined in the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 as "the harming (whether physically, emotionally, or sexually), ill-treatment, abuse, neglect or deprivation of any child or young person."

Core Worker ADL treats all workers who work directly with young people as Core Workers, including but not limited to Clinicians, Community Support Workers, Intake Clinicians, Wellbeing Coaches, and Guides.

Non-Core Worker ADL interprets staff who do not work directly with a young person as a non core worker.

Definitions specific to each kind of abuse or neglect as well as possible signs and symptoms of either abuse or neglect are to be found in the supplementary notes and staff training linked to this policy.

Protection concerns can arise either by disclosure, or recognition of signs and symptoms in a young person receiving services from this service. It also includes child/young person protection concerns related to a child/young person indirectly involved with a client, for example in the household.

References

[Family violence and sexual violence – Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora](#)

National Child Protection Alert System Memorandum of Agreement with the Ministry of Health and New Zealand Paediatric Society. 2012.

Legislation - Vulnerable Children Act 2014 <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2014/0040/latest/whole.html>

Child Matters: How can I tell – Recognising child abuse

<https://www.childmatters.org.nz/downloads/2019-HCIT-PDF.pdf>