



## Child Safe Code of Conduct Policy (including staff agreement)

Document Information	
Document Title:	Child Safe Code of Conduct Policy (including staff agreement)
Version:	PL2024-04-2.0
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Approval for use details:	Owner: Work Health and Safety Project Manager Approved by: Board Endorsed by: Senior Leadership Team Date approved for use: April 2024 Date due for internal review: April 2027
Purpose:	<p>The KWHB Child Safe Code of Conduct establishes clear guidelines and expectations for all KWHB staff and volunteers interacting with children and young people, ensuring their safety, wellbeing, and dignity.</p> <p>The code aims to create a secure environment by outlining appropriate behaviour, fostering respect, and promoting a culture that prioritises the protection and empowerment of children and young people in all of their interactions with KWHB.</p> <p>It is a condition of employment that staff members must acknowledge this Child Safe Code of Conduct and agree to the accompanying work requirements.</p>
Related Policies and Procedure/s:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Code of Conduct Policy for Staff members</li> <li>Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy</li> <li>Consent for Minors Policy and Procedure</li> <li>Informed Consent Policy and Procedure</li> <li>Equity, Diversity, and Anti-Discrimination Policy</li> <li>Complaints Policy and Procedure, Privacy Statement and Confidentiality Policy</li> <li>Working with vulnerable children: Mandatory reporting (AMSED online training module, required for all staff)</li> </ol>
Related Form / Document:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultural Security of KWHB</li> </ol>



Key Word/s:	Child Safe, Code of Conduct, Child Safe Organisations, <i>Care and Protection of Children Act 2007</i> .
External References:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. National Principles for Child Safe Organisations</li> <li>2. Care and Protection of Children Act 2007 (NT)</li> <li>3. Report Child Abuse - NT.GOV.AU</li> </ol>

## Background

The KWHB Child Safe Code of Conduct is a key part of KWHB's commitment to embedding the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations into KWHB's organisational culture and delivery of services and safeguarding the welfare of children and young people receiving services from KWHB.

This Child Safe Code of Conduct is informed by the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, recognised best practice, legal frameworks, and a dedication to creating a secure environment that prioritises the protection, wellbeing, and rights of children and young people.

## Scope

This Child Safe Code of Conduct applies to all KWHB board members, employees, contractors, volunteers, and visitors.

## Definitions

Term	Definition
<b>Child abuse</b>	<p>Any act that causes physical, psychological, or emotional harm to a child, that is carried out by someone who is in a position of responsibility, trust, or power. This might be an adult or an older child.</p> <p>Child abuse includes physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, exploitation, and exposure to family violence.</p>
<b>Child-centred care</b>	Care where healthcare professionals are encouraged to place the child and their interests at the centre of thought, values, and actions and, where able, children are encouraged and supported to be active participants in the healthcare they receive.
<b>Child or young person</b>	A child is any person under the age of 18 years. It is also a person that is considered to be under the age of 18 years when that person's age cannot be proved.



# KATHERINE WEST HEALTH BOARD

Aboriginal Corporation

## Policy

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Term	Definition
<b>Child safe organisation</b>	<p>An organisation that creates a culture, adopts strategies, and takes action to promote child wellbeing and prevent harm to children and young people.</p> <p>An organisation that consciously and systematically</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• creates an environment where children’s safety and wellbeing is at the centre of thought, values and actions</li> <li>• places emphasis on genuine engagement with and valuing of children and young people</li> <li>• creates conditions that reduce the likelihood of harm to children and young people</li> <li>• creates conditions that increase the likelihood of identifying any harm</li> <li>• responds to any concerns, disclosures, allegations, or suspicions of harm.</li> </ul>
<b>Cultural security</b>	<p>Building on from cultural awareness and cultural safety, Aboriginal cultural security is when there’s an ongoing commitment to Aboriginal-lead decision-making and control, where Aboriginal voices are heard and respected in relation to the needs and quality of the healthcare they receive.</p>
<b>Discrimination</b>	<p>When a person, or a group of people, is treated less favourably than another person or group because of their background or certain personal characteristics, including ethnicity, age, sex, or disability.</p>
<b>Grooming</b>	<p>When someone builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a child or young person so they can manipulate, exploit, and abuse them.</p>
<b>Harm to a child</b>	<p>Any negative effective of a significant nature on a child’s physical, psychological, or emotional wellbeing.</p> <p>Harm can be caused by physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, exploitation, or exposure to family violence.</p>
<b>Human rights</b>	<p>Recognition of the inherent value of each person, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status. Human rights are based on principles of dignity, equality, and mutual respect.</p>



Term	Definition
<b>Informed consent</b>	When a person has enough information and understanding about their health condition or a medical procedure, understands the risks, benefits and alternatives of proposed tests, medicines, treatments, or procedures, and agrees to a proposed healthcare plan.
<b>National Principles for Child Safe Organisations</b>	Ten principles, endorsed by all Commonwealth, state and territory governments, that provide a nationally consistent approach to embedding child safe cultures in organisations that engage with children.

## Child Safe Values

As a child safe organisation delivering culturally secure healthcare services across the Katherine West region, KWHB values

### 1. Child-centred care

The best interests of a child or young person are at the forefront, emphasising their emotional, physical, and mental well-being. There is a focus on tailoring healthcare and interactions to suit each child's unique needs and preferences, ensuring a nurturing and supportive environment that promotes their health and wellbeing, growth, and development.

### 2. Informed consent

Ensuring that children, where appropriate, understand the nature and implications of their healthcare consultations and have information provided in an understandable manner, allowing them and their guardians to make informed choices for healthcare treatments and plans.

### 3. Child advocacy

Supporting and promoting the rights and interests of children, speaking up for children who might be vulnerable or unable to articulate their needs, and ensuring that their voices are heard and respected in decision-making processes.

### 4. Respect and dignity

Consulting with local staff members regarding respectful cultural manners, what is polite language and the appropriate ways of working with children and young people.

Upholding respect and dignity, treating children with fairness, and kindness, recognising their individuality, avoiding discrimination, and fostering an environment where children feel valued, safe, and appreciated for who they are, irrespective of their background or abilities.



## **5. Maintaining boundaries**

Understanding appropriate boundaries in interactions with children. Ensuring adults maintain professional and ethical standards, refraining from behaviour or actions that could potentially harm or exploit the trust and vulnerability of children receiving a service from KWHB.

## **6. Addressing child safety concerns**

Promptly addressing child safety concerns, creating channels for reporting, and addressing any suspicions or observations of potential harm, abuse, or risks to a child's safety.

## **7. Training and education**

All KWHB staff have the necessary knowledge and skills to create a safe and supportive environment for children, with regular training and education to deliver child safe services.

## **8. A safe environment**

KWHB delivers services in physical, emotional, and social settings where children feel secure and protected, ensuring there are safe spaces, appropriate facilities, and policies to minimise risks and hazards to a child's wellbeing.

## **9. Privacy and confidentiality**

Children's privacy and confidentiality is safeguarded and information about a child is shared only on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with KWHB privacy standards.

## **10. Compliance**

Commitment and adherence to the laws, regulations and KWHB policies and procedures concerning child protection, and regular review and updating of policies to align with best practices and legal requirements.

## **Child safe principles**

KWHB is committed to the adoption and application of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and continues to work to embed child safety and wellbeing across every aspect of the organisation.



### **National Principles for Child Safe Organisations**

1. Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance, and culture.
2. Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
3. Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
4. Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.
5. People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
6. Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.
7. Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.
8. Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.
9. Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved.
10. Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

### **Legal Considerations**

Under the *Care and Protection of Children Act 2007* (NT) all KWHB staff are required to obtain working with children clearance and all staff have legal requirements to report concerns if they believe a child is being or has been harmed or abused.

Document Modification History:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Created October 2023</li><li>2. Reviewed April 2024</li></ol>
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### Acknowledgement

All KWHB board members, employees, contractors, volunteers, and visitors are responsible for the safety and wellbeing of children and young people who engage with KWHB. It is a condition of employment that staff members must acknowledge the Child Safe Code of Conduct Policy and agree to child safe requirements.

#### Child Safe Code of Conduct Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have read the KWHB Child Safe Code of Conduct Policy and agree to the following requirements:

<b>I will:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Act in accordance with KWHB's child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures at all times.</li><li>• Behave respectfully, courteously, and ethically towards children and their families and towards other staff.</li><li>• Listen and respond to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they communicate (verbally or non-verbally) that they do not feel safe or well.</li><li>• Promote the human rights, safety, and wellbeing of all children in KWHB.</li><li>• Demonstrate appropriate personal and professional boundaries.</li><li>• Consider and respect the diverse backgrounds and needs of children.</li><li>• Create an environment that promotes and enables children to participate, is welcoming, culturally safe, and inclusive for all children and their families.</li><li>• Involve children in making decisions about activities, policies and processes that directly concern them wherever possible.</li><li>• Contribute, where appropriate, to KWHB policies, discussions, learning and reviews about child safety and wellbeing.</li><li>• Identify and mitigate risks to children's safety and wellbeing in accordance with the KWHB Risk Management Policy.</li><li>• Respond to any concerns or complaints of child harm or abuse promptly and in line with the KWHB's Complaints Policy and Procedure.</li><li>• Report all suspected or disclosed child harm or abuse as required by the Care and Protection of Children Act 2007 (NT). This may involve calling the police (on 000) or the child protection reporting line (on 1800 700 250).</li></ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treat children and young people with respect and value their opinions.</li> <li>• Communicate with children in a way that helps them understand information, ask questions, and express their preferences.</li> <li>• Promote the cultural security of Aboriginal children by supporting and encouraging their connection to culture, kin, community, cultural practices, and Aboriginal identity.</li> <li>• Comply with the Privacy Act 1988 and the KWHB Privacy and Confidentiality Policy including the staff agreement in relation to record keeping and information sharing.</li> </ul>
<p><b>I will NOT:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage in any unlawful activity with or in relation to a child or young person.</li> <li>• Engage in any activity that is likely to harm a child or young person physically, sexually, or emotionally.</li> <li>• Unlawfully discriminate against any child, young person, or their family members.</li> <li>• Be alone with a child or young person unnecessarily.</li> <li>• Arrange personal contact, including online contact, with children or young people I am working with for a purpose unrelated to KWHB activities.</li> <li>• Disclose personal or sensitive information about a child or young person, including images of a child or young person, unless the child or young person and their parent or legal guardian consent or unless I am required to do so by KWHB's Privacy and Confidentiality Policy, KWHB's Client Health Record Policy or the Care and Protection of Children Act 2007 (NT).</li> <li>• Use inappropriate language, in the presence or online, of children or young people, or show or provide children or young people with access to inappropriate images or material.</li> <li>• Work with children or young people while under the influence of alcohol or prohibited drugs.</li> <li>• Ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed harm or abuse of a child or young person.</li> </ul>



**If I think another person at KWHB has breached this Code of Conduct I will:**

- Act to prioritise the best interests of children and young people.
- Take actions promptly to ensure that children and young people are safe.

Promptly report any concerns to my manager, the Chief Executive Officer, Board Director, or another manager or leader at KWHB.

- Follow KWHB policies and procedures for receiving and responding to complaints and concerns.
- Comply with the *Care and Protection of Children Act 2007 (NT)* and with the KWHB Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy.

I acknowledge that I have read and accept the above requirements for working at KWHB, a child safe organisation.

I understand that breaches of this Child Safe Code of Conduct may lead to disciplinary action or termination of my employment with KWHB.

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Full name