

External Reporting Policy and Procedure

Purpose

At the Huon Valley PCYC, we are committed to upholding the safety and wellbeing of all children, young people and persons with disabilities who attend our facility and programs. We are guided by and follow the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and the NDIS Code of Conduct.

National Principle 6 outlines that Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.

6.4 The organisation has policies and procedures in place that address reporting of complaints and concerns to relevant authorities, whether or not the law requires reporting, and co-operates with law enforcement.

6.5 Reporting, privacy, and employment law obligations are met.

This policy is designed to provide guidance on the processes and procedures regarding external reporting and mandatory reporting requirements in relation to breaches or potential breaches of children's safety and wellbeing across all areas of the Huon Valley PCYC's functions and undertakings.

The NDIS Code of Conduct outlines that workers:

- Take all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to all forms of violence, exploitation, neglect, and abuse of people with disability.
- Take all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to sexual misconduct.

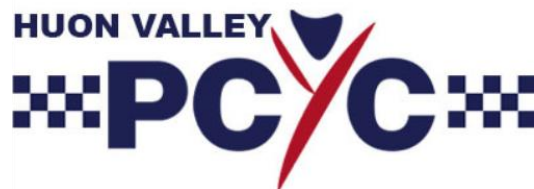
Scope

Who this policy applies to "Workers":

- Huon Valley PCYC Staff, Volunteers, Board Members, Internal and External Liaisons, Facility Users, Members, Contractors, and Consultants.

What this policy applies to:

- All activities in the organisation which involve, result in, or relate to contact with children or young people.
- All activities in the organisation which involve, result in, or relate to contact with persons with disabilities.



Responsibilities

All people attending the Huon Valley PCYC in a private or professional capacity (including employees and the general public) and all those interacting or collaborating with the Huon Valley PCYC have a duty of care to support and protect the children, young people and persons with disability with whom they are professionally involved.

This duty is determined through common law, Criminal Code Act 1924 (Tas), Civil Liability Act 2002 (Tas), Wrongs Act 1954 (Tas), and other circumstance-specific legislation.

When workers form a reasonable suspicion that a child, young person, or person with a disability has been harmed or is at risk of harm, they are ethically bound to protect the safety and wellbeing of that child, young person or person with disability. This also applies if a reasonable suspicion is formed outside of work. Failing to report suspected abuse, neglect, or other conduct reportable under legislation is a criminal offence and workers may be prosecuted.

What is reportable?

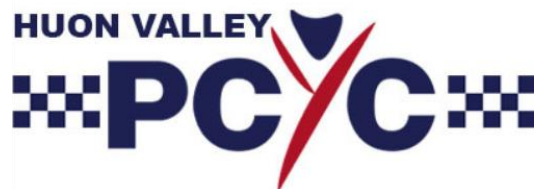
You must report if you know, believe or suspect that an unborn baby, child, or young person or person with a disability is being abused or neglected, including:

- grooming
- sexual abuse
- physical abuse, including restricted practices.
- emotional abuse, including exposure to family violence or suspected family violence.
- neglect, including isolated incidents or a pattern of failure over time, to provide the development and wellbeing of the child/young person/person with disability in one or more of the following areas:
 - health
 - education
 - emotional development
 - nutrition
 - shelter and safe living conditions.

Procedure

If you have concerns for the safety or welfare of a child:

- Contact *Strong Families, Safe Kids - Advice and Referral Line* on **1800 000 123**. A staff member will be available to talk through your concerns and explore what can be done to help.
- As well as notifying Strong Families, Safe Kids, you must notify Tasmania Police on the Police Assistance Line on 131 444 if you are concerned that a crime has been committed (such as the physical or sexual abuse of a child).



- If a child is at immediate risk and Police or medical assistance is required, dial **000**.

If you have concerns for the safety or welfare of a person with a disability:

- Contact the NDIS *Quality & Safeguards Commission* on **1800 035 544**. A staff member will be available to talk through your concerns and explore what can be done to help.
- As well as notifying the NDIS Quality & Safeguards Commission, you must notify Tasmania Police on the Police Assistance Line on 131 444 if you are concerned that a crime has been committed (such as the physical or sexual abuse of a child).
- If any person is at immediate risk and Police or medical assistance is required, dial **000**.

Employees are encouraged to contact the HVPCYC EAP line on 1800 064 039 for further support and counselling if required.

Legal obligations to maintain confidentiality are outlined in the Tasmanian Government Legislation: Personal Information Protection Act 2004 and the HVPCYC Privacy & Confidentiality Policy. In addition, maintaining confidentiality is integral to preserving trust in a mentor/mentee relationship. Particularly when working with children and young people.

The Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997 outlines:

Duty to maintain confidentiality:

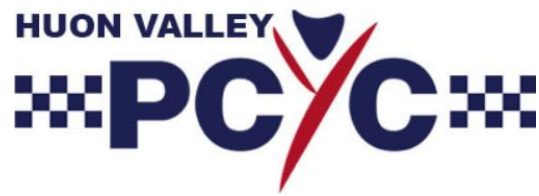
(1) A person engaged in the administration of this Act who, in the course of that administration, obtains personal information relating to –

- (a) a child; or
 - (b) a guardian of a child; or
 - (c) a family member of a child; or
 - (d) any person alleged to have abused, neglected or threatened a child –
- must not divulge that information.

The matter should not be discussed with friends, family, or other employees, and doing so may result in criminal, civil and/or internal disciplinary action.

Definitions

Child/Children/Young Person:	Person under the age of 18 years.
Persons with Disability:	Any person supported by the National Disability Insurance Agency



Relevant Legislations and Standards

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997. Tasmania.
- Family Violence Act 2004.
- Safe and Supported: The National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children 2021-2031
- Tasmanian Government CBOS Working with Vulnerable People Requirements.
- The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.
- The National Standards for Out-of-Home Care.
- Charter of Rights for Tasmanian Children & Young People in Out-of-Home Care
- CCYP Strategic Framework 2022 & 2023
- Disability Services and Inclusion Act 2023
- NDIS Code of Conduct

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