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Date Last Updated: 19/09/2025



Child Safe Policy

Policy 14

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 SAFE ENVIRONMENTS - NDIS PRACTICE STANDARD

NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators states that each Participant accesses supports in a safe environment that is appropriate to their needs.

1.2 POLICY STATEMENT

Beyond Barriers Australia is committed to recognising and upholding the right of all Participants to receive services that are safe and free from harm, including neglect, assault, exploitation, and abuse. In particular, Beyond Barriers Australia is dedicated to safeguarding the welfare of children and young people (individuals under the age of 18 years), ensuring that all legal and regulatory requirements for working with children are met.

The organisation understands the necessity of creating a safe, supportive, and empowering environment where children and young people are encouraged to actively participate in decisions regarding their health and the way they receive support services. Beyond Barriers Australia adheres to all relevant legislation, including the [Children and Young People \(Safety\) Act 2017 \(SA\)](#), the [Child Safety \(Prohibited Persons\) Act 2016 \(SA\)](#), and aligns its practices with the [National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#).

1.3 SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to Beyond Barriers Australia staff, Participants, and relevant third parties in connection with services; it sets out the responsibilities of Beyond Barriers Australia staff to uphold child safe commitments and ensure that services provided to children and young people are safe, equitable, and consistent with legal, ethical, and professional standards.

1.4 VALUES DEMONSTRATED BY BEYOND BARRIERS AUSTRALIA

- a) Beyond Barriers Australia recognises the safety of children as central to all practices, and ensures that their rights to feel safe, be protected from harm, abuse, and neglect, and participate in decisions affecting their care where appropriate are upheld.

- b) Beyond Barriers Australia staff are held accountable for adhering to the highest ethical and legal standards in their interactions with children, including complying with relevant child safety legislation, and following organisational policies and procedures.

1.5 DEFINITIONS

Code of Conduct	A set of rules and expectations about how staff should behave, especially when working with children, young people, and Participants.
Child Safe Behaviour	Actions and attitudes that protect children and young people from harm, and ensure they feel safe, respected, and supported.
Professional Boundaries	Limits that staff must maintain in their relationships with Participants to keep the relationship respectful, safe, and appropriate.
Inappropriate Contact	Any touching or interaction that is aggressive, sexual, or crosses boundaries — this is not acceptable under any circumstances.
Support Plan	A personalised document that outlines the services, supports, and care a Participant needs, including safety considerations.
Mandated Notifier	A person who is legally required to report concerns of child abuse or harm. This includes staff who work directly with children.
Mandatory Reporting	A legal duty to report suspected abuse, neglect, or harm to a child or young person to the authorities, such as the Department for Child Protection.
CARL (Child Abuse Report Line)	The 24/7 phone and online service in South Australia where people report concerns of child abuse or risk of harm (Ph: 131 478).
Disclosure	When a child tells someone they are being harmed, abused, or neglected. Staff must take this seriously and follow proper reporting steps.
Reportable Incident	A serious event that affects a Participant's safety or wellbeing and must be reported to the NDIS Commission.
Information Sharing	Sharing relevant details about a child or young person only when required by law or when it helps keep them safe.
Consent Form	A document signed by the Participant and their parent/guardian to give permission for things like taking photos or sharing information.

2 PROTECTING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

2.1 CODE OF CONDUCT

Beyond Barriers Australia staff are expected to adhere to Beyond Barriers Australia's [Code of Conduct](#) at all times, which establishes standards of behaviour, Participant rights, and responsibilities. Any staff member found to have breached the Code of Conduct, or other contractual or legal obligations, will be subject to the disciplinary procedures outlined in Beyond Barriers Australia's [Human Resource Management Policy](#). Disciplinary measures may include suspension or termination of employment where appropriate.

2.2 CHILD SAFE BEHAVIOUR

All staff of Beyond Barriers Australia must treat children, young people, Participants, and members of the wider community with respect, professionalism, and care. Unacceptable behaviours demonstrated by staff will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action to be undertaken.

Unacceptable behaviour includes, but is not limited to:

- Sarcasm, derogatory or offensive remarks;
- Non-constructive criticism, belittling, or teasing;
- Unreasonable or excessive demands; or
- Hostility, verbal abuse, or harassment in any form.

2.3 APPROPRIATE CONTACT WITH CHILDREN

Staff and volunteers must maintain professional boundaries at all times. Physical contact with a child or young person is only acceptable when it is necessary for the performance of their role and in line with the participant's support plan.

Examples of appropriate contact with children and young people includes:

- Assisting a child with a task;
- Providing first aid, or supporting skill development.

Inappropriate physical contact includes, but is not limited to:

- Hitting, pushing, slapping, kicking, or other forms of physical aggression; or
- Touching of a sexual nature or any sexualised behaviour.

Staff must ensure one-on-one interactions with children or young people are visible to another adult wherever possible. The physical and emotional environment must be monitored to ensure safety. Any risks or concerns must be reported to Beyond Barriers Australia management and, where appropriate, to parents, guardians, or carers.

2.4 TRANSPORT

Children and young people may only be transported by staff when all of the following conditions are met:

- Transport is explicitly outlined in the child or young person's support plan;
- The staff member holds a current and valid driver's license;
- The vehicle used is legally registered and appropriately insured;
- Suitable child car seats, restraints, or safety equipment are available, correctly fitted, and used in accordance with legal requirements.

Staff must always prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children during transport and adhere to all relevant road safety and organisational procedures.

2.5 GIFTS

Staff and volunteers must not provide or receive gifts from participants without prior written approval from the Director. This measure protects both the Participant and staff from potential conflicts of interest and maintains professional boundaries.

3 RISK MANAGEMENT

3.1 RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

It is a requirement of Beyond Barriers Australia that each Participant must have an updated and current [Risk Assessment](#) completed and stored on their file. As per the [Risk Management Policy](#), risk assessments must identify known and potential risks for the Participant and mitigation strategies. This information may also be included in the [Participant Support Plan](#). All staff are required to follow Beyond Barriers Australia policies regarding risk management and incident reporting.

Beyond Barriers Australia implements the following strategies to manage risks for children and young people:

- Management ensures all policies, processes, and practices comply with relevant legislation and industry best practice;
- Identification of potential risks of harm or actual harm to children and young people;
- Recording of all identified risks and incidents, including submitting Reportable Incident reports to the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission when required;
- Training for staff on mandated reporting;
- Maintenance of current Working With Children Checks for all staff, and recording these for expiry monitoring appropriately;
- Completion of NDIS Worker Orientation training and induction training at commencement of employment; and
- Regular review, supervision, and professional development of staff regarding child-safe practices.

Beyond Barriers Australia upholds the privacy and confidentiality of all Participants. Information regarding children and young people is shared only with their support network or other relevant organisations when permitted or when required by law as per the [Privacy and Confidentiality Policy](#).

No images, recordings, or media of children or young people are taken or used without explicit written consent from the Participant and their parent or legal guardian as indicated on their signed [Consent Form](#).

4 REPORTING HARM

4.1 MANDATORY REPORTING

Definition of Harm or Risk of Harm

Under the [Children and Young People \(Safety\) Act](#), *harm* is defined as physical or psychological harm (whether caused by an act or omission), including harm caused by sexual, physical, mental, or emotional abuse or neglect.

Mandated Notifiers

The [Children and Young People \(Safety\) Act](#) requires certain people to report harm or risk of harm to children and young people. Mandated notifiers include any employee or volunteer of an organisation that provides services wholly or partly for children or young people, who:

- Provide services directly to children or young people; or
- Hold a management position with direct responsibility for, or supervision of, services to children or young people.

Within Beyond Barriers Australia, all staff members who provide direct services to children and young people and all management personnel are mandated notifiers.

If a new role is created within Beyond Barriers Australia that meets the criteria of a mandated notifier (e.g., psychologist, nurse), the organisation will update policies and procedures to ensure obligations and responsibilities are clearly communicated. These roles will be fully subject to the provisions of this and all related child safety policies.

4.2 PROCESS FOR MANDATORY REPORTING

Emergency Services

- If a child or young person is at immediate risk of harm, staff and volunteers must call SA Police on 000 without delay.

Child Abuse Report Line (CARL)

- Mandated notifiers must report to the Department for Child Protection if they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child or young person has been, or may be, harmed.
- Reports must be made at the earliest practicable time by phoning the Child Abuse Report Line (131 478) or via the [eCARL](#) online reporting system. CARL is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- When making a report to CARL or SA Police, staff must provide as much information as possible, including:
 - Child's details: name, age, date of birth, address;
 - Description of the harm or risk of harm, including any previous concerns;
 - The child's current situation and location;
 - Details of the parent/caregiver and alleged perpetrator (including current whereabouts);
 - When and how the suspicion was formed; and
 - If the child is Aboriginal, details of their clan group (if known).
- CARL may also ask for additional information including:
 - Parents and caregivers: names, household composition, siblings;
 - Alleged perpetrator: name, age, address, relationship to the child, current whereabouts;
 - Current and expected contact between the child and alleged perpetrator; and
 - Any relevant legal orders (e.g., Family Court, AVOs, DVOs).
- Notifiers may also be required to provide information about themselves, including:
 - Full name, job title, agency name, contact details.
 - Relationship to the child/family and type of contact.
 - Frequency of contact and date of last interaction.
 - Capacity in which they are working with the child or family.
- Mandated notifiers are entitled to know whether their concerns were recorded as "child protection".
- Additional feedback may be provided at the discretion of the responsible office.
- If further information arises, staff must contact CARL again to add to their original report.

Serious Concerns

- Staff must use the telephone reporting system (not eCARL) where:
 - A child or infant is in imminent or immediate danger of serious harm, serious injury, or chronic neglect; or
 - A child in the care of the Department is suspected of being harmed, abused, or neglected.

Voluntary Notifiers

- Individuals who are not mandated notifiers (including staff, volunteers, or community members acting outside their role at Beyond Barriers Australia) are strongly encouraged to make a report if they suspect harm or risk of harm.
- If such a report is not made, Beyond Barriers Australia management will make the notification independently with the information available.

Internal Reporting

- All staff must notify Beyond Barriers Australia management including the Director and the Operations Manager after making a report to the relevant authority.
- Management is responsible for supporting staff throughout the reporting process and ensuring organisational compliance.

4.3 MANAGING DISCLOSURES

When a child discloses harm, abuse, or neglect, staff must ensure the child feels supported and safe. Staff should follow the guidance of the Department for Child Protection and relevant Beyond Barriers Australia policies in relation to incident reporting, risk management, storage and sharing of information.

After a Disclosure

When a child has revealed harm, risk of harm, or abuse, staff must:

- Recognise the child may be experiencing a crisis.
- Listen carefully and calmly.
- Control their own expressions of panic or shock.
- Take the disclosure seriously.
- Use the child's own words.
- Reassure the child that they did the right thing by telling someone.
- Explain that some adults do the wrong thing and it is not the child's fault.
- Avoid making promises that cannot be kept.
- Tell the child you must share the information with someone who can help.

Clarifying the Situation

Staff may need to ask questions to better understand the situation. They must:

- Use open-ended, non-leading questions that begin with *Who*, *What*, *When*, *Where*, *How*.
- Avoid leading questions, as these suggest an answer and may affect the child's response.

- Reframe any leading questions into open-ended ones.

Supporting the Child, Young Person, and Families After a Report

Beyond Barriers Australia will provide ongoing support following a report of harm, which may include:

- Referring the child, young person, or family to appropriate external services (e.g., counsellors, support groups).
- Continuing services while monitoring wellbeing and noting any changes in behaviour, mood, or support structures.

Providing information about support services such as:

- *Kids Helpline*: 1800 55 1800
- *Youth Helpline*: 1300 13 17 19

5 WORKPLACE COMPLIANCE

5.1 EMPLOYMENT ONBOARDING PROCESSES

Staff at Beyond Barriers Australia are employed in accordance with the [Human Resource Policy](#), which stipulates mandatory clearances and training all staff must hold. This is further documented in the Position Descriptions which applicants have access to before applying. All staff must maintain the relevant skills, training, and experience to safely work with children, based on the Participant's specific circumstances.

Included in the mandatory clearances required is a valid and current [Working With Children Check](#) issued by the Department of Human Services. The check must indicate that the individual is 'Not Prohibited' from working with children. Beyond Barriers Australia verifies all WWCCs via the DHS Screening Unit portal as required by law. WWCCs must have been obtained within the last five years and are to be renewed every five years.

Individuals are prohibited from working with children under Beyond Barriers Australia if they:

- Have been issued a prohibition notice under the WWCC system;
- Are prohibited from working with children under Commonwealth or State/Territory law; or
- Have been found guilty of a prescribed offence as an adult, including offences such as assault with intent, murder, manslaughter, kidnapping, unlawful child removal, rape, sexual offences, incest, or child exploitation offences, or equivalent offences under other jurisdictions.

No individual may commence work with children while awaiting processing of their WWCC.

4.2 TRAINING

Beyond Barriers Australia ensures that all staff undergo a comprehensive induction process with ongoing learning through professional development opportunities and annual refresher training.

Minimum training requirements include:

- Reading and understanding Beyond Barriers Australia policies relating to child welfare and child safe practices, including the [Code of Conduct](#);
- Reading and understanding the [Mandatory Notification Information Booklet](#); and

- Undertaking any additional training as directed by management to support the safety and wellbeing of children and young people;

5 APPENDIX

RELATED DOCUMENTS

[Children and Young People \(Safety\) Act 2017 \(SA\)](#)

[Child Safety \(Prohibited Persons\) Act 2016 \(SA\)](#)

[National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#)

[Code of Conduct](#)

[Human Resource Management Policy](#)

[Risk Assessment](#)

[Risk Management Policy](#)

[Participant Support Plan.](#)

[Privacy and Confidentiality Policy](#)

[Consent Form](#)

[Children and Young People \(Safety\) Act](#)

[eCARL](#)

[Human Resource Policy](#)

[Working With Children Check](#)

[Mandatory Notification Information Booklet](#)

VERSION AND UPDATE HISTORY

Version	Date Approved	Nature of Changes	Approved By	Date of Review
V2	19/09/2025	Updated in accordance with practice standards.	Tiffany Kelly	19/09/2026