

SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY



At Sunnyfield, we are committed to prioritising the welfare, safety, wellbeing, and development of children and young people under 18 years of age as per the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

In fostering a secure and positive environment for children accessing our services, we engage in active collaboration with parents and/or guardians, acknowledging the crucial role they play in a child's life.

We champion the involvement of children in decision making processes, recognising and respecting the uniqueness of each child and valuing their opinions.

Sunnyfield is devoted to creating an environment where every child not only feels safe but also has the opportunity to thrive.

1. Application of the Policy

This policy applies to all Sunnyfield staff who support children and young persons.

Sunnyfield currently only provide services and support to children and young persons in NSW.

Under the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW):

- a “**child**” means a person who is under the age of 16 years”
- a “**young person**” means a person who is aged 16 years or above but who is under the age of 18 years”.

2. Services provided to Children and Young Persons

These have been summarised below:

- Community Access
- Community Hub Based Programs
- Vacation Care
- After School Programs
- Specialised Substitute Residential Care
- School Leaver Employment Supports
- Support Coordination

3. Key principles

- 1) We treat children and young people with the utmost dignity and respect. This includes respecting the evolving capacities of children and young people with disability and their right to preserve their identities.
- 2) We promote and respect children and young peoples’ legal and human rights in an environment free from abuse, neglect, exploitation, or discrimination.



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3. Key principles (cont.)

- 3) We support children and young people to develop skills for life, which recognises their need of access to a range of community, mainstream and specialist services, including continuing education.
- 4) We ensure that service selection, planning, development, and review is based on the child or young person's strengths, interests, culture, traditions and changing needs throughout their life stages, in conjunction with their parents and/or guardians.
- 5) We work collaboratively with children and young people to support and maintain connection to natural supports including family, friends, and other personal relationships.
- 6) Wherever suitable (taking into consideration their safety and welfare) we will seek to maximise the involvement of parents and/or guardians and family members as service partners.
- 7) We develop and maintain strong links with community-based organisations and other sector providers so children and young people can be meaningfully included as active members of the community.
- 8) We respect children and young peoples' privacy as well as their personal and sensitive information. Unless we have concerns for their safety, welfare, and well-being or are required by law to devolve private information due to legally mandatory reporting requirements.
- 9) Sunnyfield's Supporting Children and Young People Policy has been prepared in accordance with Commonwealth and State laws, other regulatory requirements, and applicable guidance.
- 10) Resources related to this Policy:
 - Children's Guardian Act 2019 (NSW)
 - Children's Guardian Regulation 2022 (NSW)
 - Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)
 - Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Regulation 2022 (NSW)
 - Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 (NSW)
 - Coroners Act (NSW)
 - Crimes Act 1900 (NSW)
 - Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (NSW)
 - National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013
 - National Disability Insurance Scheme (Code of Conduct) Rules 2018
 - National Disability Insurance Practice Standards
 - National Disability Insurance Scheme (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018
 - Modern Slavery Act 2018 (Cth)
 - National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
 - Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
 - United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child



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As part of Sunnyfield's commitment to being a Child Safe Organisation, Sunnyfield acknowledges that it will take the necessary steps in relation to staff, contractor and volunteer management to help keep children and young people safe.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- 1) Ensuring policy, procedures and training are in place to protect the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people.
- 2) Ensuring Specialised Substitute Residential Care (SSRC) requirements are followed including data entered in the SSRC Register, and completion of training related to SSRC requirements.
- 3) Ensuring all staff and volunteers working with children and young persons, including Senior Leadership Team and Board members, have a current Working with Children check (WWCC) and criminal record check.
- 4) Barring anyone who does not have a valid and current WWCC from working or volunteering in a role supporting children or young persons at Sunnyfield.
- 5) Ensuring staff read and follow the Sunnyfield Code of Conduct, Child Safe Code of Conduct and the Maintaining Professional Boundaries Procedure.
- 6) Provide training and supervision in relation to supporting children and young people, including how to promote their safety, welfare, and wellbeing, and the safeguarding of rights and freedom from abuse, assault, neglect and exploitation.
- 7) Providing information in a format and manner that is suitable for families, children and young people, including providing information on what safety measures are in place and how to report issues and concerns.
- 8) Ensuring children and young people are informed of their rights, and how they can give feedback and make complaints in a child-centred way.
- 9) Ensuring children and young people are empowered to give feedback and participate in decision making so that the diverse needs and views of children are accommodated.
- 10) Implementation of a risk management framework which includes identifying and managing risks specific to the client and the service.
- 11) Ensuring children and young people are placed in age-appropriate services, including:
 - a) Completing a risk assessment and implementing appropriate safety and welfare controls when a young person (16 to 18 years old) is to be placed in services which may include adults.
 - b) Not placing children (15 years and younger) in programs with adult clients.
 - c) Not placing children or young people in Shared Living (group) homes.
 - d) Not employing children or young people in supported employment.
 - e) Reporting to the NSW Ombudsman and the NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Commission as required.



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4. Responsibilities

- 1) All staff providing services and support to children and or young people are responsible for familiarising themselves with and adhering to this Policy, the Child Safe Code of Conduct and Supporting Children and Young People Guide.
- 2) Service Managers/Service Coordinators are responsible for ensuring that volunteers are appropriately trained and supervised.
- 3) The relevant General Managers are responsible for ensuring Service Managers/Service Coordinators are trained and competent to manage tasks related to running services which supports children and young people, including tasks related to SSRC.
- 4) Service Managers/Service Coordinators that support children and young people are also responsible for supporting the implementation of this policy and the Child Safe Code of Conduct, related processing and complying with SSRC requirements in NSW.
- 5) Service Managers/Service Coordinators providing SSRC supports are responsible for complying with SSRC requirements, including accessing and updating the SSRC Register and providing relevant information to and working collaboratively with the designated agency.
- 6) The CEO, General Managers, Risk and Compliance Manager, and Regional Managers of the relevant services will receive and review reporting related to Child Safety.
- 7) The CEO and Senior Leadership team (SLT) is responsible for ensuring that processes needed for supporting children and young people are established, implemented, reviewed, and maintained and that this is communicated within the organisation. This includes processes which enable the ongoing tracking of any significant issues which are raised in relation to concerns about a child or young person's safety, welfare or wellbeing and the reporting of significant issues to the Sunnyfield Board and NSW Ombudsman.
- 8) The Board (via the CEO) is responsible for ensuring Sunnyfield's policy, system of work and internal controls is in place to comply with relevant legislative and regulatory requirements.
- 9) The General Manager of People Learning and Culture (PLC) is responsible for ensuring that a system is in place for all staff, contractors and volunteers to obtain, verify, record, and manage Working with Children and National Criminal Checks, including checking for currency and compliance.

