



## **6.14 CHILD SAFETY AND PROTECTION**

### **KURRAJONG STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY**

Kurrajong is a Child Safe Organisation

At all levels of our organisation, Kurrajong commits to create appropriate cultures, adopt strategies and act to prevent harm to children. We will do this by developing and maintaining policies that adhere to the NDIS Quality & Safeguards Commission Practice Standards and the Child Safe Standards, and having risk assessed procedures and environments. We will be vigilant in our staff recruitment and provide appropriately targeted staff training. Through acceptance of our Code of Conduct, staff will act to systematically:

- Adhere to organisational policies and procedures to ensure children are safe and free from harm.
- Adhere to organisational policies and procedures to ensure any incidents of harm to children are identified and reported to the appropriate authorities through our Incident Reporting System.
- Respond appropriately to disclosures, allegations and suspicions of harm through our Complaint Management System.

Kurrajong will apply appropriate risk management strategies to ensure that our systems are robust to protect children from abuse and neglect.

### **SCOPE**

This policy and its procedures apply to all Kurrajong staff, contractors, volunteers and students who support children in services, or who have a role in decision making about those children and their services, or have access to those children's information eg. Board Directors, Quality & Safeguards staff, admin staff.

## MAKING SURE PEOPLE KNOW ABOUT CHILD SAFETY AND PROTECTION

Kurrajong will ensure that child participants, families, staff and the community are aware of our commitment to child safety by:

- Our Statement of Commitment is publicised on the Kurrajong website (insert link). It will form part of the induction process for Board members, staff, volunteers and students through the Kurrajong Code of Conduct.
- Signing off on the Code of Conduct annually is a mandatory requirement by the Board, staff and volunteers.
- As part of Kurrajong's Keeping Our People Safe series, a training module specifically about this statement and this policy and its procedures is being developed for all people captured in the scope above.
- The Kurrajong Statement of Commitment to Child Safety will be included in service information publications for clients and families.

## POLICY

Children have the right to access the supports that promote and respect their legal and human rights under the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, support their development of functional skills, and enable them to participate meaningfully and be included in everyday activities with their peers.

Under the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission Practice Standards and Quality Indicators around providing Early Childhood Supports, Kurrajong must ensure an environment that promotes safety and well-being of children who access our services.

- a) As a provider of services to children and young people, Kurrajong is a mandatory reporter who must make a report to the Department of Communities and Justice when there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is at risk of significant harm and those grounds arise in the course of, or from our work or roles.
- b) In 2018 Section 43B was inserted into the Crimes Act 1900 (NSW) creating the offence of **Failure to reduce or remove risk of child becoming victim of child abuse**. This section applies to adults working or volunteering for an organisation which carries out 'child-related work'.
- c) Kurrajong is required to notify the Office of the Children's Guardian of any staff conduct that is implicated in incident involving a child or young person under the age of 18 years. This obligation is mandated under the Reportable Conduct Scheme in the Children's Guardian Act 2019. See Section 10 of this policy.
- d) Additionally, as a Schedule 1 entity who provides Specialised Substitute Residential Care (SSRC – formerly known as Voluntary Out Of Home Care) Kurrajong is required to act under the Child Safety Standards. See Section 11 of this policy to learn more about these Standards.

See [Form 51 Specialised Substitute Residential Care Guidelines](#).

## RELATED LEGISLATION, REGULATIONS AND STANDARDS

This policy outlines Kurrajong's procedures to provide a safe environment and our responsibilities as a Mandatory Reporter, as legislated under:

- *Children's Guardian Act 2019*
- *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012*
- *Child Protection (Working with Children) Regulation 2013*
- *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*
- *Crimes Act 1900*
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Regulation 2012
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) (Child Employment) Regulation 2015
- *Disability Inclusion Act 2014*
- *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977*

Regulatory Standards include:

- United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child
- Child Safe Standards
- NDIS Quality & Safeguards Commission Practice Standards and Quality Indicators

## POLICY AIMS

Kurrajong is committed to ensuring that:

- Each child accesses supports that promote and respect their legal and human rights, support their development of functional skills, and enable them to participate meaningfully and be included in everyday activities with their peers.
- Each family receives family-centred supports that are culturally inclusive, responsive, and focus on their strengths.
- Each child accesses supports that engage their natural environments and enable inclusive and meaningful participation in their family and community life.
- Each child receives coordinated supports from a collaborative team comprising their family, the provider and other relevant providers, to facilitate their development and address the family's needs and priorities.
- Each child receives supports that build the knowledge, skills and abilities of the family and other collaborating providers in order to support the child's learning and development.
- Each child receives evidence-informed supports from providers with quality standards and validated practice.
- Each child receives supports that are outcome-based and goal-focused.

## DEFINITIONS

**Child** – a person aged under 16 years. As a mandatory reporter in NSW, Kurrajong staff are required to report concerns about the safety, welfare or well-being of a child.

**Employee** – refers to all employed staff, contractors and volunteers.

**Head of a Relevant Entity (HRE)** – Under the Reportable Conduct Scheme, the HRE has responsibility for making reportable conduct notifications.

**Mandatory Reporter** - In NSW mandatory reporting obligations apply to persons who deliver the following services wholly or partly to children as part of their professional work or other paid employment, and those in management positions in organisations that deliver these services:

- health care (e.g. registered medical practitioners, specialists, general practice nurses, midwives, occupational therapists, speech therapists, dentists and other allied health professionals working in sole practice or in public or private health practices);
- welfare (e.g. psychologists, social workers, caseworkers and youth workers) ;
- education (e.g. teachers, counsellors and principals);
- disability services (e.g. disability support workers and personal care workers);
- children’s services (e.g. child care workers, family day carers and home-based carers);
- residential services (e.g. refuge workers);
- law enforcement (e.g. police);
- persons in religious ministry or persons providing religion-based activities to children (e.g. minister of religion, priest, deacon, pastor, rabbi, Salvation Army officer, church elder, religious brother or sister);
- registered psychologists providing a professional service as a psychologist (whether or not exclusively to children).

For more information on mandatory reporting you can visit the Department of Communities and Justice website at:

<https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/families/Protecting-kids/mandatory-reporters>

**Reportable Conduct** - The Children’s Guardian Act 2019 defines reportable conduct as:

- a sexual offence
- sexual misconduct
- ill-treatment of a child
- neglect of a child
- an assault against a child
- an offence under s 43B (failure to protect) or s 316A (failure to report) of the Crimes Act 1900; and
- behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child.

Kurrajong is required to make a notification under the Reportable Conduct Scheme if a staff member is implicated in any of this behaviour towards a child. See Section 10 of this policy.

**Significant Harm** - You must make a report to Communities and Justice (DCJ) when you have current concerns about the safety, welfare and wellbeing of a child for any of the following reasons:

- the basic physical or psychological needs of the child or young person are not being met (neglect);
- the parents or caregivers have not arranged necessary medical care for the child or young person (unwilling or unable to do so);
- the parents or caregivers have not arranged for the child or young person to receive an education in accordance with the Education Act 1990 (unwilling or unable to do so);
- risk of physical or sexual abuse or ill-treatment;
- parent or caregiver's behaviour towards the child causes or risks serious; psychological harm (emotional abuse);
- incidents of domestic violence and as a consequence a child or young person is at risk of serious physical or psychological harm (domestic or family violence);
- the child was the subject in a prenatal report and the birth mother did not engage successfully with support services.

### Types of Abuse and Neglect

- **Neglect** – Neglect is when a parent or caregiver cannot regularly give a child the basic things needed for his or her growth and development, such as food, clothing, shelter, medical and dental care, adequate supervision, and enough parenting and care.
- **Sexual abuse** – Sexual abuse is when someone involves a child or young person in a sexual activity by using their power over them or taking advantage of their trust. Often children or young people are bribed or threatened physically and psychologically to make them participate in the activity. Sexual abuse is a crime.
- **Physical abuse** – Physical abuse is a non-accidental injury or pattern of injuries to a child or young person caused by a parent, caregiver or any other person. It includes but is not limited to injuries which are caused by excessive discipline, severe beatings or shakings, cigarette burns, attempted strangulation and female genital mutilation. Injuries include bruising, lacerations or welts, burns, fractures or dislocation of joints. The application of any unreasonable physical force to a child is a crime in NSW. For example, hitting a child or young person around the head or neck, or using a stick, belt or other object to discipline or punish a child or young person (in a manner that is not trivial or negligible) may be considered a crime
- **Emotional abuse or psychological harm** – Serious psychological harm can occur where the behaviour of their parent or caregiver damages the confidence and self- esteem of the child or young person, resulting in serious emotional disturbance or psychological trauma. Although it is possible for 'one off' incidents to cause serious harm, in general it is the frequency, persistence and duration of the parental or carer behaviour that is instrumental in defining the consequences for the child or young person. This can include a range of behaviours such as excessive criticism, withholding affection, exposure to domestic violence, intimidation or threatening behaviour.

**Young Person** - a person aged 16 years and above but under 18 years. As a mandatory reporter in NSW, Kurrajong staff are strongly encouraged to report concerns about the safety, welfare or well-being of a young person, however penalties for not doing so have been removed. It's not mandatory to make a report about an unborn child, or a young person aged 16 to 17.

## PROCEDURES

### 1. WORKER SCREENING

Registered NDIS providers must ensure that workers are screened by the NDIS Quality & Safeguards Commission as a mandatory requirement of NDIS provider registration. This guarantees that key personnel and workers in roles delivering NDIS supports or services do not pose an unacceptable risk to the safety and wellbeing of NDIS participants. Kurrajong procedures are outlined in [Policy 3.1 Recruitment and Selection of Staff](#), and in particular:

- a) Kurrajong have identified risk-assessed roles that require extra checks. All child-related roles, and roles that can access children's information and/or can make decisions relating to children, require the prospective staff member to supply a current Working with Children Check. This check is valid for 5 years, and Payroll sends a reminder for staff to renew before employment can continue. Recruitment advertisements for child related employment must contain a Child Safe statement and refer to this Working with Children Check obligation.
- b) Staff are offered positions at Kurrajong subject to a satisfactory NDIS worker screening check. Payroll maintains the currency of the check for each staff member every 4 years.
- c) People & Culture or the service Manager performs at least two referee checks on preferred candidates before employment is offered, using [Form 102 Referee Check](#), or through the online Referee Checking tool XREF. Referees will specifically be asked if the candidate is a suitable person to work with children and young people.

### 2. RISK MANAGEMENT

- A risk profile will be conducted for every child entering Kurrajong services, using [Form 169 Client Risk – Assessment Tool and Profile](#).
- A Risk Management Plan outlining potential risks and controls for each activity type will be completed and regularly reviewed.
- Known risks about the services we provide and the type of clients we support have been risk assessed and those risks logged onto Kurrajong's Risk Register.
- For each activity that is considered SUN – significant, unusual, or new – a risk assessment will be conducted.
- Staff will utilise the Take 5 dynamic risk assessment tool to assess and control everyday risks. This could include (but not limited to):
  - keeping line of sight with other workers/adults when working individually with a child;
  - planning daily activities and making sure those plans are communicated to your supervisor;
  - always carrying a mobile phone;
  - documenting your activities well;
  - providing community supports in public places where possible;

- if taking photos/videos of a child, they must be deleted from your phone immediately after transfer to a Kurrajong device; and images of children other than your client are not to be taken without consent of their person responsible.

- Risk factors

The following risk factors (either singularly or in combination) are associated with increased risk of harm for children and young people:

- the age of the child;
- the child's disability and/or barriers to communication;
- certain behaviours of concern;
- increased need for personal care supports
- social or geographic isolation of the child, young person or family, including lack of access to extended family;
- previous abuse or neglect of a brother or sister;
- family history of violence including domestic violence;
- physical or mental health issues for the parent or caregiver which affects their ability to care for the child or young person in their care;
- the parent or caregivers' abuse of alcohol or other drugs that affects their ability to care for the child or young person in their care;
- barriers to disclosure such as shame, fear, stigma, feeling that they won't be believed, or been threatened 'not to tell';
- lack of supervision of staff;
- poorly designed environments and activities that offer opportunities for abuse;
- poor recruiting practices – not screening or checking references;
- increased use, misuse and abuse of online environments.

### 3. STAFF TRAINING

- As a condition of employment, all staff need to complete the NDIS Orientation Module.
- Keeping Our People Safe, a training module about reportable incidents and restrictive practices, is mandatory training for all staff. A training module specifically about Kurrajong's expectations of staff when working with children will be developed for all staff who support children.
- Staff must sign off every year on the NDIS Commission Code of Conduct, which includes Kurrajong's expectations about the supports of children by staff. Posters Code of Conduct posters are displayed in every workplace.
- Staff are encouraged to complete the online training Zero Tolerance, abuse and neglect training provided by the National Disability Services.
- Staff who work in children's services regularly receive training and supervision, including guidance in child protection issues.

- f) Staff are required to read each client's Risk Profile, One Page Profile, Communication Profile and any care, behaviour or health management plans prior to supporting the client.
- g) Staff are required to be aware of any Risk Management Plans or assessments before undertaking any new activities or visiting new environments.
- h) 'A Guide to the Child Safe Standards' and the poster 'Child Safe Standards' will be accessible in every environment where children receive supports

#### 4. SUPPORTING CHILDREN SAFELY

- a) Supervision of Children  
Children will be supervised at all times by an authorised person. Staff will at all times plan for natural lines of sight in our environments, and where possible, that staff are not supporting children and young people on their own. For further information, see Policy [3.12 Code of Conduct](#), and all Kurrajong Child Safe Risk Assessments.
- b) Managing drop offs and pick-ups.  
Families will nominate authorised people to pick up children from Kurrajong services. This is documented on [Form 157 Participant Information](#) and [Form 319 Pick Up Authorisation](#). There are protocols in place to manage unplanned unauthorised pick-ups. Staff work with each child and family to ensure smooth transition to and from the service.
- c) Transportation of Children  
Each child has a Risk Assessment and Profile which documents any risks during transportation. Children's preferences will always be considered. Controls to manage safe transportation is documented on the Kurrajong Child Safe Risk Assessment – Transportation.
- d) Online Communication and Social Media Use  
The online safety of children is managed by controls outlined in [Policy 5.7 Computer Hardware and Software](#), and [Policy 5.14 Social Media Platforms](#), and staff vigilance as outlined in all Kurrajong Child Safe Risk Assessments. Staff will not engage with children and young children online.
- e) Photography and the Use of Images  
Families and children are required to provide consent before photos/videos are taken. This is recorded on [Form 60 My Consent](#). The procedures about how these images are used and stored are outlined in [Policy 6.28 Managing Client Information](#).
- f) Pornography  
The possession or transmission of pornography, whether in digital or hard copy, is prohibited in Kurrajong workplaces and in any communication or interaction with Kurrajong clients, especially children. For more detail, see [Policy 6.13 Safeguarding Clients](#).
- g) Alcohol, Drugs, Cigarettes and Vapes  
Kurrajong services are drug, alcohol, smoke and vape free environments. The Kurrajong policies [5.11 Drug and Alcohol-Free Worksite](#) and [5.15 Smoke and Vape Free Environment](#) outline the expectations we have of staff and their personal behaviour at work.



- h) Inappropriate Conversations, Physical Contact and Out-of-Hours contact with Children  
Staff will be trained in Professional Boundaries including:
- physical touch is professional and age appropriate. Touch such as a high five, handshake, pat on the shoulder is acceptable; touching on intimate parts of the body (unless outlined in a Personal Care Plan and with consent), sitting on an adult's lap, hugging and kissing are unacceptable.
  - staff will use acceptable language with children and young people. Inappropriate language such as swearing, sexualised or adult-themed conversations is unacceptable.
  - staff will not maintain a relationship with the child or young person or their family outside the service without notifying their Manager of the relationship. There will be no online contact between staff and clients
- i) Personal and Intimate Care  
In **Policy 6.36 Personal Care** there are procedures outlining how staff approach and facilitate personal and intimate care of clients, including children, that involves consent, communication and an understanding and action of personal preferences.
- j) Gifts and Benefits  
Staff are made aware of the Kurrajong stance on Conflict of Interest, sharp practices and the appropriateness of receiving gifts from clients when they sign off the Code of Conduct declaration upon employment and then annually. See **Policy 3.12 Code of Conduct** and **Form 135 Declaration of Understanding of the Code of Conduct**.
- k) Secondary Employment  
**Policy 3.15 Kurrajong Code of Conduct** outlines the requirement for staff to declare secondary employment.
- l) Overnight Accommodation  
Please see Kurrajong Child Safe Risk Assessment – Group Home and Overnight Accommodation
- m) Illness and Injury Management  
Procedures for illness and injury Management is outlined in **Policy 5.16 Incident and Reportable Incident Management**.
- n) Teaching Children/Young People How to Keep Safe  
Children and young people are trained on how to make a complaint with **Form 127 Child Safe Complaint Poster** upon commencement. This poster is prominently displayed in children's services. All Kurrajong clients are trained in the NDIS Practice Standards. Staff will seize teachable moments to explain about physical and online safety.

## 5. RECOGNISING SIGNS OF ABUSE

**If you think a child or young person is at immediate risk of harm from abuse or neglect, contact the Child Protection Helpline on 132 111 (open 24 hours/7 day)**

There are common physical and behavioural signs that may indicate abuse or neglect. The presence of one of these signs does not necessarily mean abuse or neglect. Other things need to be considered, such as the circumstances of the child, young person or family.

When considering if a child or young person has been abused or neglected, or is at risk of this, it is important to keep in mind the life circumstances of the child, young person and their family.

Kurrajong and its staff have obligations as Mandatory Reporters. **Please see Appendix A – Possible Signs of Abuse or Neglect**

## 6. THE DECISION TO MAKE A REPORT TO POLICE OR DCJ

- a) If a child has been injured, staff should follow emergency procedures. If a staff member believes that a child is at risk of imminent significant harm, they should call 000 and report to police.
- b) Kurrajong staff should report any suspicion they have about the abuse or neglect of a child who accesses our services to their Manager. The Manager and General Manager will guide the staff member through the correct procedures. It is important that the staff member does not:
  - investigate the matter independently;
  - talk to the child or family about the matter;
  - make promises to a child that lawfully can't be kept eg. not disclosing the matter to others.
- c) Mandatory reporters should use the Mandatory Reporter Guide (MRG) to help decide whether a child is suspected to be at risk of significant harm and, if so, a report should be made. The MRG is a Structured Decision Making (SDM) tool intended to complement mandatory reporters' professional judgement and critical thinking. The MRG supports mandatory reporters in NSW to:
  - Determine whether a report to the Department of Communities and Justice is needed.
  - Identify alternative supports for vulnerable children, young people and their families.The MRG works by posing specific questions that help reporters work systematically through the issues relating to the concerns they have about a child. At the end of the process, a decision report will guide the reporter as to what action to take. The MRG can be accessed at <https://reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/s/>
- d) Any suspected or actual neglect or abuse of a child is a Reportable Incident. The Manager of the relevant section will follow the procedures outlined in **Policy 5.16 Incident and Reportable Incident Management**. The People & Culture Manager will become involved in the management of the incident if a Kurrajong staff member is implicated, following the guidelines of the Reportable Conduct Scheme.
- e) If you want to report a child and family you do not have a professional relationship with, do so as an individual and not as a mandatory reporter.

## 7. HOW TO MAKE A REPORT

- a) Mandatory reporters can call the NSW Child Protection Helpline on 132 111 if they have concerns for a child's immediate welfare or safety. The Child Protection Helpline is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Mandatory reporters can also register to submit a child protection report (eReport) directly through the following website:  
<https://reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/s/>

Once registered, mandatory reporters:

- can create eReports after running the MRG

- will be notified by email when there is a change of status for one of their reports
  - can log in to the ChildStory Reporter Community website to see the status of any previous reports they have submitted.
- b) Kurrajong staff will document the incident in a CTARS Incident Report.

## 8. TRAINING AVAILABLE TO MANDATORY REPORTERS

- a) The NGO Learning Centre is a free public website for staff of non-government organisations working with children, young people, families and communities in NSW. The website offers an online training course on understanding the child protection reporting process. The website is accessible at <http://ngolearning.com.au/identifying-supporting-young-carers-2/>
- b) The Association of Children's Welfare Agencies Centre for Community Welfare Training deliver cost effective training courses specifically to mandatory reporters on identifying and responding to children and young people at risk. More information is available at <https://www.acwa.asn.au/ccwt/>.

## 9. PROTECTIONS FOR REPORTERS

- a) The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse 2018 found that a lack of reporter protections can act as a barrier to reporting. To remove this barrier and comply with the Royal Commission's recommendations, additional protections for reporters have been inserted into the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998. Amendments have been made to the Act to build on existing protections for people who make reports to government authorities in good faith by providing these reporters with protection against civil and criminal liability.
- b) A new section has been inserted into the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 providing specific protections to reporters who make reports to institutions engaged in child related work. These reporters are protected from liability for defamation and civil and criminal liability. The section also provides that the report does not constitute a breach of professional etiquette or ethics, or amount to unprofessional conduct.
- c) All reporters are now protected against retribution for making, or proposing to make, a report.

For more information, click here to read the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998

<https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/act/1998/157>

## 10. REPORTABLE CONDUCT SCHEME NOTIFICATIONS

In addition to reporting an incident concerning a child to the police (if a criminal matter), and to the Department of Communities and Justice (if there is risk of significant harm), a report also needs to be made to the Office of the Children's Guardian if the incident involved reportable conduct by staff.

The Reportable Conduct Scheme is an allegation-based scheme. The threshold for making a notification to the Office of the Children’s Guardian is that a reportable allegation has been made – that is, there is an allegation that an employee has engaged in conduct that may be reportable conduct or that they are the subject of a conviction that is considered a reportable conviction.

Under the Act, heads of relevant entities must consider whether reportable allegations relate to conduct that is in breach of established standards that apply to the subject employee and, in doing so, must have regard to relevant Codes of Conduct (including professional or ethical codes), professional standards and accepted community standards.

The HRE for Kurrajong is the CEO. In his absence, this responsibility is delegated to the General Manager acting as CEO.

There are timeframes attached to making notifications and providing information relating to the corresponding investigations. All notifications are made using forms located here:

<https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/organisations/reportable-conduct-scheme/reportable-conduct-notification-forms>

Click this link to access fact sheets about reportable conduct and how to report it.

<https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/organisations/reportable-conduct-scheme/how-scheme-works>

The Office of the Children’s Guardian can be contacted to answer questions about reportable conduct. Business hours are Monday to Friday, 9am – 4pm.

Email: [reportableconduct@ocg.nsw.gov.au](mailto:reportableconduct@ocg.nsw.gov.au)

Phone: 02 8219 3800

## **11. NSW Child Safe Standards and National Principles for Child Safe Organisations**

The NSW Children’s Guardian Act 2019 includes a set of Standards to keep children safe. In 2019, the Federal and State governments agreed on a set of National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. They are very similar.

Note: The only Kurrajong services that are legislated by the Child Safe Standards are Specialised Substitute Residential Care supports and Therapy Plus clients funded by Department of Social Services.. All other services provided to children and young people are legislated by the NDIS Quality & Safeguards Practice Standards. However, Kurrajong is a Child Safe Organisation and acknowledges the Child Safe Standards.

Click this link to see the full NSW Child Safe Standards Guide:

[https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-12/g\\_CSS\\_GuidetotheStandards.pdf](https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-12/g_CSS_GuidetotheStandards.pdf)

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

- Standard 1. Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.  
This Child Safety and Protection policy is accessible to staff and families. Kurrajong will include specific references to the Child Safe Standards in the Kurrajong Code of Conduct. Kurrajong’s Statement of Commitment to Child Safety is publicised to the community through the website.
- Standard 2. Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.  
All supports are planned with the child and the family in Kurrajong’s person-centred

philosophy. Children and their families can access the Kurrajong Complaint Management system. A Complaints poster specifically designed for children is displayed in all services providing supports to children.

- Standard 3. Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.  
A poster and a handbook outlining the Standards are accessible in every service providing supports to children. The Child Safe Standards will be referenced in service information and newsletters.
- Standard 4. Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.  
Kurrajong has a person-centred and trauma informed philosophy of supports.
- Standard 5. People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.  
Advertisements for recruiting child-related positions will include a Child Safe statement. All potential employees are referee checked with specific child safety related questions. NDIS Worker screening and Working With Children Checks will be obtained prior to employment and renewed at relevant intervals.
- Standard 6. Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.  
The Kurrajong Complaint Management Policy references how children and their families can safely make complaints and disclosures. A Complaints poster specifically designed for children is displayed in all services providing supports to children.
- Standard 7. Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.  
Services providing supports to children will reference the Child Safe Standards in Team meetings, staff training and performance reviews. As part of Kurrajong's Keeping Our Clients Safe training program, staff working with children will be required to complete the training module titled Child Safety. The Child Safe Standards are accessible to staff in every environment providing supports to children.
- Standard 8. Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.  
All child related environments and activities will be risk assessed for safety.
- Standard 9. Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved.  
A regular scheduled review of policy and procedures is maintained against current legislation and best practice.
- Standard 10. Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.  
Kurrajong has declared a public commitment to Child Safety by posting a Child Safe Statement on its website. A Child Safe lens will be applied to all relevant policy and procedure development.

## **ATTACHMENT A – Possible Signs of Abuse or Neglect**

### **Neglect**

#### *Signs in children or young people*

- low weight for age and failure to thrive and develop
- untreated physical problems, such as sores, serious nappy rash and urine scalds, dental decay
- poor standards of hygiene, for example child or young person consistently unwashed
- poor complexion and hair texture
- child not adequately supervised for their age
- scavenging or stealing food and focus on basic survival
- extended stays at school, public places, other homes
- longs for or indiscriminately seeks adult affection
- rocking, sucking, head-banging
- poor school attendance.

#### *Signs in parents or caregivers*

- unable or unwilling to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing, medical attention, safe home conditions
- leaving the child without appropriate supervision
- abandons the child or young person
- withholding physical contact or stimulation for prolonged periods
- unable or unwilling to provide psychological nurturing
- has limited understanding of the child or young person's needs
- has unrealistic expectations of the child or young person.

### **Physical abuse**

#### *Signs in children*

- bruising to face, head or neck, other bruising and marks which may show the shape of the object that caused it eg belt buckle, hand print
- lacerations and welts
- drowsiness, vomiting, fits or pooling of blood in the eyes, which may suggest head injury
- adult bite marks and scratches
- fractures of bones, especially in children under three years old
- dislocations, sprains, twisting
- burns and scalds, including cigarette burns
- multiple injuries or bruises
- explanation of injury offered by the child or young person is not consistent with their injury
- abdominal pain caused by ruptured internal organs, without a history of major trauma
- swallowing of poisonous substances, alcohol or other harmful drugs
- general indicators of female genital mutilation, such as having a 'special operation'.

#### *Signs in parents and caregivers*

- frequent visits with the child or young person in their care to health or other services with unexplained or suspicious injuries, swallowing of non-food substances or with internal complaints
- explanation of injury offered by the parent is not consistent with the injury
- family history of violence
- history of their own maltreatment as a child
- fears injuring the child or young person in their care
- uses excessive discipline.

## **Sexual abuse**

### *Signs in children or young people*

- bruising or bleeding in the genital area
- sexually transmitted diseases
- bruising to breasts, buttocks, lower abdomen or thighs
- child or young person or their friend telling you about it, directly or indirectly
- describing sexual acts
- sexual knowledge or behaviour inappropriate for the child's age
- going to bed fully clothed
- regressive behaviour, such as sudden return to bed-wetting or soiling
- self-destructive behaviour, such as drug dependency, suicide attempts, self-mutilation
- child being in contact with a known or suspected paedophile
- anorexia or overeating
- adolescent pregnancy
- unexplained accumulation of money and gifts
- persistent running away from home
- risk taking behaviours, such as self-harm, suicide attempts.

### *Signs in parents or caregivers*

- exposing a child or young person to prostitution or pornography or using a child for pornographic purposes
- intentional exposure of a child to sexual behaviour of others
- previous conviction or suspicion of child sexual abuse
- coercing a child or young person to engage in sexual behaviour with other children
- verbal threats of sexual abuse
- denial of adolescent's pregnancy by family.

## **Emotional abuse**

All types of abuse and neglect harm children psychologically, but the term 'psychological harm' or 'emotional abuse' applies to behaviour which damages the confidence and self esteem of a child or young person, resulting in serious emotional deprivation or trauma.

### *Signs in children*

- constant feelings of worthlessness about life and themselves
- unable to value others
- lack of trust in people
- lack of people skills necessary for daily functioning
- extreme attention-seeking behaviour
- is obsessively eager to please or obey adults
- takes extreme risks, is markedly disruptive, bullying or aggressive
- is highly self-critical, depressed or anxious
- suicide threats or attempts
- persistent running away from home.

### *Signs in parents or caregivers*

- constant criticism, belittling, teasing of a child or young person, or ignoring or withholding praise and attention
- excessive or unreasonable demands
- persistent hostility and severe verbal abuse, rejection and scapegoating
- belief that a particular child or young person in their care is bad or 'evil'
- using inappropriate physical or social isolation as punishment
- domestic violence.