

# Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Version 1

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## 1. Purpose

The Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy outlines Arche Health's commitment to creating and maintaining an environment where all children and young people are safe, respected, valued, and empowered. It establishes the principles, expectations, and procedures that guide our approach to preventing harm and responding to concerns.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees
- Volunteers
- Contractors and service providers
- Students on placement
- Board members and organisational leaders
- Any adult engaged in our programs, services, or activities

It covers all organisational environments, including physical spaces, online platforms, events, and off-site activities.

Term	Definition
Child/Children	Any person under the age of 18 years.
Young Person	In the headspace context, this refers to individuals up to the age of 25 years
Child Safety	Measures and practices that protect children from harm, abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
Wellbeing	A child's physical, emotional, social, and cultural health and development
Child Abuse	Includes physical, sexual, emotional abuse, neglect, and exposure to family violence.
Cultural Safety	An environment where a child's cultural identity is respected, valued, and supported.
Mandatory Reporter	A person legally required to report suspected child abuse to authorities under relevant legislation, in WA this is managed by Department of Communities' Mandatory Reporting Service
Reportable Conduct Scheme	The Reportable Conduct Scheme provides independent oversight of how organisations that exercise care, supervision or authority over children handle allegations of, and convictions for, child abuse by their staff. In WA this is managed by the Ombudsman's Office
Working With Children Check WWCC	A screening process to assess a person's suitability to work with children, in Western Australia this is managed by the Working with Children Screening Unit

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## 3. Commitment to Child Safety

As an organisation, Arche Health is committed to:

- A zero-tolerance approach to child abuse.
- Upholding the rights of children and young people.
- Creating environments where children feel safe, heard, and respected.
- Ensuring families and communities are informed, involved, and supported.
- Embedding child safety in our culture, governance, and everyday practice.

We recognise that children from diverse backgrounds — including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with disability, LGBTQIA+ young people, and culturally and linguistically diverse children — may face additional barriers to safety and participation.

## 4. Guiding Principles

Our policy is guided by the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, including:

- Child-centred practice
- Equity and inclusion
- Transparency and accountability
- Ongoing review and improvement
- Empowerment of children and families

## 5. Roles and Responsibilities

### 5.1 Board and Leadership

- Ensure compliance with child safety legislation and standards.
- Allocate resources to support child safety initiatives.
- Promote a culture of safety and accountability.

### 5.2 Managers and Supervisors

- Implement child safety procedures.
- Support staff training and supervision.
- Respond to concerns or allegations appropriately.

### 5.3 Staff, Volunteers, and Contractors

- Uphold this policy at all times.
- Complete required training.
- Report any concerns, disclosures, or breaches immediately

## 5.4 Children and Young People

- Are encouraged to express their views and participate in decisions.
- Are supported to raise concerns safely.

## 6. Child Participation and Empowerment

We will actively involve children by:

- Seeking their feedback on programs and safety practices.
- Providing age-appropriate information about their rights.
- Creating safe avenues for children to express concerns.
- Ensuring their views influence organisational decisions.

## 7. Working with Families and Communities

We will:

- Communicate openly with families about our child safety practices.
- Provide accessible information about policies and reporting pathways.
- Respect cultural, linguistic, and family diversity.
- Encourage family involvement in programs and decision-making.

## 8. Recruitment, Screening and Training

We will maintain safe staffing practices by:

- Requiring Working with Children Checks (or equivalent) for all relevant roles.
- Conducting reference checks and role-specific screening.
- Including child safety responsibilities in job descriptions.
- Providing induction and ongoing training in child safety, reporting, and professional boundaries.

## 9. Code of Conduct

All individuals working as agents of Arche Health must:

- Act in the best interests of children.
- Maintain professional boundaries.
- Treat children with dignity and respect.
- Never engage in behaviour that constitutes abuse, grooming, or exploitation.

The Arche Health QF-85-GOV Child Safe Code of Conduct outlines expected behaviours in detail.

## 10. Identifying and Managing Risk

We proactively manage risks as per QFW-03-GOV Risk Management Framework v3, including:

- Conducting regular risk assessments across all programs and environments.
- Considering physical, online, cultural, and situational risks.
- Implementing strategies to reduce or eliminate identified risks.
- Reviewing risks after incidents or changes in operations.

## 11. Responding to Concerns, Disclosures or Allegations

We will respond to all concerns promptly, respectfully, and in line with legal obligations.

Our response includes:

- Listening to and supporting the child.
- Taking all disclosures seriously.
- Escalating any concerns to an appropriate Manager/Executive Team Member
- Reporting to relevant authorities (e.g., police, child protection).
- Following mandatory reporting requirements.
- Ensuring procedural fairness for all parties.
- Documenting actions and maintaining confidentiality.

The CP-28-Gov Mandatory Reporting Requirements Policy and Procedure and CP-34-HR Reportable Conduct Policy and Procedure refer, including protection for anyone who raises a concern.

## 12. Privacy and Record Keeping

We protect personal information by:

- Storing records securely.
- Limiting access to authorised personnel.
- Complying with privacy legislation.
- Ensuring child safety records are accurate and complete.

Please see the CP-07-HR Privacy and Confidentiality Policy v4 and QP-08-GOV Release of Client and Patient Information Procedure v1

## 13. Review and Continuous Improvement

This policy is reviewed:

- Every two years, or
- After any significant incident, legislative change, or organisational shift.

Feedback from children, families, staff, and volunteers informs improvements and QFW-01-QA Quality Management System Framework v3 provides further information.

## 14. Related Documents

- QF-85-GOV Child Safe Code of Conduct
- Corporate and Service Induction Materials
- CP-28-Gov Mandatory Reporting Requirements Policy and Procedure
- CP-34-HR Reportable Conduct Policy and Procedure
- CP-12-HR Complaints Policy
- CP-28-Gov Mandatory Reporting Requirements Policy and Procedure
- CP-34-HR Reportable Conduct Policy and Procedure
- QFW-37-Gov Reportable Conduct Reporting Procedure Flowchart
- QP-08-GOV Release of Client and Patient Information Procedure
- QP-17-HR Staff Recruitment
- QP-22-HR Complaints-Incidents Flowchart Procedure
- QP-36-HR Credentialing Procedure
- QFW-03-GOV Risk Management Framework
- QFW-01-QA Quality Management System Framework
- CP-07-HR Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- CP-01-GOV Quality Policy
- CP-24-HR Diversity, Access & Equity Policy
- CP-25-HR Social Media and Artificial Intelligence Policy
- CP-20-HR Access and Equity Statement