



CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING POLICY

PURPOSE

12x12 Gymnastics Ballina Inc.(12x12) believe that all children who visit our venues have a right to feel and be safe. We are committed to promoting and maintaining a culture that does not permit or tolerate child abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

Our priority is to ensure the welfare and safety of every child that has contact with our customers, Team Members, Volunteers, and Contractors.

We are committed to the cultural safety of First Nations children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, LGBTQIA+ children, children with disability, and their families.

SCOPE

This policy applies to every person undertaking work for 12x12, including Team Members, Volunteers, Contractors, and Consultants.

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS TO SAFETY AND PARTICIPATION

Team Members and Volunteers encourage children to express their views. We listen to their suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect them.

We actively encourage all children who use our services to 'have a say' about things that are important to them.

We listen to, and act on, any concerns children or their family/carers raise with us.

GLOSSARY

A glossary of terms can be found in [Appendix 1](#) of this policy.

ABOUT THIS POLICY

This policy has been developed to give effect to the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and our child safe obligations in the jurisdictions where we operate.

This policy demonstrates our commitment to child safety and informs our leaders, Team Members, Contractors, and Volunteers of their obligations to act ethically towards children, and their responsibilities in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children.

This policy gives guidance on the processes and procedures that aim to ensure child safety and wellbeing across all areas of 12x12

Our child safety and wellbeing policy is guided by the following principles:

1. Recognise children's rights and interests.
2. Build and maintain a child safe culture and environment
3. Ensure all Team Members are aware of, and comply with, relevant child safety requirements.
4. Provide support and protection to Team Members and Volunteers who report incidents under this policy.



This policy was developed in collaboration with Team Members, Volunteers, children, and their families across venues we operate.

This policy, and a child friendly version of this policy is published on 12x12's public website:

<https://www.12x12ballina.com.au>

BREACHES OF THIS POLICY

All Team Members, Contractors and Volunteers are required to adhere to their responsibilities regarding the application of this policy.

Failure to adhere to any aspect of this policy may constitute a breach of the policy and may result in disciplinary action that could include termination of employment/engagement.

CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

NATIONAL PRINCIPLES FOR CHILD SAFE ORGANISATIONS

In response to recommendations made by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, Australia's National Children's Commissioner led the development of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

There are 10 principles aimed to provide a nationally consistent approach to creating organisational cultures that foster child safety and wellbeing.

Refer to [Appendix 2](#) of this policy for The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

New South Wales Child Safe Standards:

The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations have been accepted by the NSW government and embedded into the Children's Guardian Act 2019 through Children's Guardian Amendment (Child Safe Scheme) Bill 2021 as the New South Wales Child Safe Standards.

Refer to [Appendix 3](#) of this policy for the New South Wales Child Safe Standards.

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

12x12 has a Staff Code of Conduct Policy (The Code) that confirms standards of professionalism, confidentiality, and ethical behaviour expected by our office bearers, committee members, Team Members, Contractors, and Volunteers. The Code informs children, families, and the community of the standard of professional conduct they can expect from us.

The Code is published on 12x12's public website

<https://www.12x12ballina.com.au>

Office bearers, committee members, Team Members and Volunteers are required to read and acknowledge the Code of Conduct and are expected to treat all children with respect by acting in accordance with the code at all times.

VALUING DIVERSITY

12x12 values diversity. We do not tolerate any discriminatory practices. To achieve this, we:



1. Support the cultural safety, participation, and empowerment of First Nations children and their families/carers.
2. Support the cultural safety, participation, and empowerment of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families/carers.
3. Welcome children with disability and their families/carers and act to promote their participation.
4. Seek to recruit appropriate candidates from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds,
5. LGBTQIA+ people, First Nations people, and people with disability.
6. Welcome same sex attracted, transgender, intersex and gender diverse children and families/carers.
7. Have a physical environment that actively celebrates diverse cultures and recognises cultural difference.
8. Commit to ensuring our venues promote inclusion of children of all abilities.
9. Ensure Team Members and Volunteers receive training on diversity and inclusion.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

Ensuring the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children is the responsibility of all office bearers, committee members, Team Members, Contractors, and Volunteers.

A table of responsibilities by key positions is listed in [Appendix 4](#) of this policy.

This policy:

- Aligns with relevant legislation, government policy and/or 12x12 requirements/strategies/ values
- Is implemented and monitored (i.e. the policy is followed, reflects the changing policy environment, and emerging issues are identified), and
- Is reviewed to evaluate its continuing effectiveness (e.g. achieving its purpose, remains relevant/current).

REGULAR RISK ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION

We recognise the importance of a risk management approach to minimising the potential for child abuse or harm to occur and to inform our policy, procedures, and activity planning. In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to our children.

12x12 will undertake an annual risk assessment in relation to child safety activities, to identify the level of responsibility for, and contact with, children and young people, evaluate the risk of harm or abuse, and put in place appropriate strategies to manage identified risks.

Leaders will ensure child safety/protection is considered when developing their own risk plans and managed in accordance with 12x12's risk management practices.



WORKING SAFELY WITH CHILDREN

ASSESSMENT OF CHILD SAFE ROLES

12x12's office bearers and committee members are responsible for assessing which roles are classified as child safe positions in the jurisdictions where we operate and record child safe requirements on relevant position descriptions.

JOB ADVERTISING AND RECRUITMENT OF A CHILD SAFE POSITION

We acknowledge that child safe recruitment practises facilitate hiring child safe candidates and deter applications from individuals who may seek to abuse or harm children.

We state our commitment to being a child safe organisation in job advertisements for child safe positions.

We state that successful candidates must obtain and maintain a New South Wales working with children check.

Applicants for child safe positions can access our Child Safety Statement, Staff Code of Conduct, and Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy from links in job advertisements.

Position descriptions for child safe positions state child safety responsibilities and working with children check requirements. Position descriptions are linked to job advertisements for child safe roles.

Applicants for child safe roles must agree to obtain a working with children check in a pre-screen prior to completing a job application.

Reference checks must be undertaken for all prospective Team Members and include questions related to an applicant's suitability for child related work for child safe positions.

CHILD SAFE TRAINING

Team Members are required to complete online child safety training at induction, refresher training and any other child safety training as directed by their mentor.

We recognise that child safety training requirements of individual workplaces vary. Local management have discretion to deliver child safety training relevant to their specific workplace risk mitigation plans and jurisdictional requirements.

Examples of site-specific training could include, but are not limited to, webinars, team talks, policy refreshers, facilitated training, subscriptions to child safe newsletters, and child safe industry conferences.

Site-specific training must be approved and authorised by management.

Records of training delivered, and attendance records must be kept locally and available for auditing.

REPORTING SUSPICIONS OF CHILD ABUSE OR HARM

If you believe a child is in immediate danger or there is another emergency, please call 000 immediately.

A parent, child, Team Member, Contractor or Volunteer could have their suspicions or concerns for the safety of a child raised in several ways, such as:

1. A child discloses abuse.



2. Seeing the abuse occur; this may be by a family member, Team Member or another child.
3. Noticing signs and symptoms of mistreatment, including neglect.
4. Physical signs: bruising or evidence of physical hurt which may or may not be accompanied by unusual behaviour by the child.

BEHAVIOURS THAT CONSTITUTE CHILD ABUSE

[Appendix 5](#) lists unacceptable behaviours (misconduct) and concerning behaviours as they relate to different forms of child abuse.

INCIDENT REPORTING

Suspicious of child abuse or harm of a specific child should be reported immediately to management who will contact 12x12's Child Safe Officer.

The incident must be confirmed in writing within 24 hours using 12x12's Child Protection Incident Report Form.

The process flowchart for reporting suspicions of child abuse or harm is outlined in [Appendix 6](#) of this policy.

A delay in incident reporting could prejudice the welfare of a child. If the concerns relate to the conduct of a Team Member, Contractor, or Volunteer, these should be reported by telephone to the Child Safety Officer at the earliest opportunity.

INCIDENT INVESTIGATION

The Child Safety Officer will consider the report and either:

1. Refer this immediately to the authorities, after taking appropriate advice (which may include
2. discussing the circumstances on a confidential basis with the appropriate government department); or
3. Decide not to refer the concerns to the authorities but keep a full record of the concerns, lines of investigation, meeting notes and any corrective action/disciplinary action taken.

RESPONDING TO COMPLAINTS OR DISCLOSURES ABOUT AN OFFICE BEARER, COMMITTEE MEMBER, TEAM MEMBER, CONTRACTOR, OR VOLUNTEER

Allegations of harm to a child, against an office bearer, committee member, Team Member, Contractor, or Volunteer will be fully investigated.

The individual will be asked to step aside while the matter is investigated and all information in relation to the matter will be kept strictly confidential to protect all parties involved while the investigation is being conducted.

Matters that require disciplinary measures following an investigation will be dealt with by 12x12 in conjunction with the relevant authorities where applicable.

Any proven misconduct will be dealt with swiftly and harshly by 12x12.



REPORTABLE CONDUCT SCHEMES

12x12 has committed to be a child safe organisation that complies with all relevant legislation, including Reportable Conduct Schemes in the jurisdictions we operate in.

Reportable Conduct Schemes provide independent oversight of the handling of allegations of child abuse and neglect perpetrated by a person with an organisation. i.e., office bearer, committee member, Team Member, Volunteer, or Contractor.

Reportable conduct generally includes sexual offenses or sexual misconduct, assault, ill-treatment or neglect of a child or young person, or any behaviour that causes psychological or emotional harm. It also includes offenses relating to a failure to report, reduce or remove a risk of child abuse.

In the jurisdiction of New South Wales, the reportable Conduct Scheme is available at:

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

RESPONDING APPROPRIATELY TO A CHILD MAKING A DISCLOSURE

A recurring theme in submissions to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse was that victims of abuse were not believed when they disclosed abuse.

It is very important to validate a child's disclosure, no matter how you feel about it. This means listening to the child, taking them seriously and responding and acting on the disclosure.

The following steps are appropriate for responding to a child making a disclosure:

1. Stay calm.
2. Listen carefully to what is said. Give the child your full attention.
3. Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you.
4. When appropriate and possible, tell the child that the matter will only be disclosed to those who need to know about it and reassure them that you will not be speaking with the perpetrator about it.
5. Allow the child to continue at their own pace. Ask questions for clarification only, avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer.
6. Do not share personal stories about yourself or others with the child.
7. Tell the child what you will do next, and with whom the information will be shared.
8. Praise the child for helping the Organisation become safer for children.
9. Contact the child's parents/carers to let them know (other than if the disclosure related to
10. abuse within the family).
11. Assist the child and their family to access appropriate support for the child, such as counselling where appropriate.
12. Record what was said in the incident report, using the child's own words, as soon as possible, note the date, time, any names mentioned, and to whom the information was given.



13. It is important to remember that the person who first encounters a case of alleged abuse is not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. This is a task for the professional child protection agencies, following a referral from the Organisation.

RECORD KEEPING AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Records relating to child safety complaints, disclosures or breaches of this policy and related child safety policies including the staff code of conduct, must be recorded, and stored securely in accordance with security and privacy requirements.

Records must be kept for actions taken, any internal investigations and any reports made to statutory authorities or professional bodies in relation to a child safe incident.

Privacy must be ensured when handling matters of suspected child abuse/harm. Ensure that only those who need to know are advised.

To avoid confusion and maintain confidentiality, everyone, including children, should be made aware of the need to report serious matters involving child protection to external authorities. Confidentiality cannot be promised in these matters.

MANDATORY REPORTING

Mandatory reporting is the legislative requirement for selected classes of people to report suspected child abuse and neglect to government authorities.

Each state and territory has legislation about mandatory reporting. Mandatory reporting requirements for New South Wales can be found at the link below and in [Appendix 7](#) of this policy.

<https://reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/s/>

All Team Members that undertake child related work (and their managers or mentors) have a responsibility to familiarise themselves with the mandatory reporting requirements in the state or territory in which they undertake their work and comply with these legislative requirements.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

A range of laws are relevant to this policy, including Commonwealth, international, state, and territory laws.

[Appendix 8](#) of this policy lists relevant laws that apply.

RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

Easy Read Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Child Safety Statement

Code of Behaviour Policy

Member Protection Policy

Staff Code of Conduct Policy

Child Protection Incident Report Form

APPENDIX 1 - GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Term	Definition
Child or children	In Accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, child means any human under the age of 18 years.
Child exploitation	<p>One or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) committing or coercing another person to commit an act or acts of abuse against a child b) possessing, controlling, producing, distributing, obtaining or transmitting child exploitation material c) committing or coercing another person to commit an act or acts of grooming or online grooming d) using a minor for profit, labour, sexual gratification, or some other form of personal or financial advantage.
Child protection	An activity or initiative designed to protect children from any form of harm, particularly that arising from child exploitation and abuse.
Child-related work	<p>Means being engaged in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) work activities where contact (physical, face-to-face, oral, written or electronic contact) between a Team Member and a child would reasonably be expected as a normal part of the work and such contact is not occasional and incidental to the work, or b) work that requires a Working with Children Check (WWCC) in the state or territory jurisdiction in which the work is being undertaken.
Child safe position	A position that has been identified as having contact with a child as a normal part of work activities (that is, child-related work), and therefore is required to obtain and maintain a Working with Children Check in order to be engaged in that position.
Contractor	Individuals performing a service for the organisation, or an employee of a service provider performing a service for the organisation, is a Contractor.
Sexual abuse	The use of a child for sexual gratification by an older or significantly older child, adolescent, or adult.
Team Members	Team Members are either employed by an organisation, engaged by an organisation on a subcontract basis, or engaged by an organisation on a voluntary or unpaid basis, staff can include paid staff, Volunteers, interns, trainees and Consultants.
Working with children	Being engaged in an activity with a child where the contact would reasonably be expected as a normal part of the activity and the contact is not incidental to the activity. This includes Volunteering or other unpaid work.
Working with children check	An assessment of whether a person poses an unacceptable risk to children. As part of this process, the applicant's criminal history, child protection information and other information is checked. A Working with Children Check may also be known under other names, such as a Working with Vulnerable People Check, a Blue Card, Working with Children Clearance, Ochre Card, etc.

APPENDIX 2 - NATIONAL PRINCIPLES FOR CHILD SAFE ORGANISATIONS

National Principle	Requirement
National Principle 1	Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance, and culture.
National Principle 2	Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
National Principle 3	Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
National Principle 4	Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.
National Principle 5	People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
National Principle 6	Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.
National Principle 7	Staff and Volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.
National Principle 8	Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.
National Principle 9	Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved.
National Principle 10	Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

APPENDIX 3 - NEW SOUTH WALES CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

National Principle	Requirement
National Principle 1	Child safety is embedded in organisational leadership, governance, and culture.
National Principle 2	Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
National Principle 3	Families and communities are informed.
National Principle 4	Equity is upheld and diverse needs are taken into account.
National Principle 5	People working with children are suitable and supported.
National Principle 6	Processes to respond to complaints of child abuse are child-focused.
National Principle 7	Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep safe through continual education and training.
National Principle 8	Physical and online environments minimise the opportunity abuse to occur.
National Principle 9	Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is continuously reviewed and improved.
National Principle 10	Policies and procedures document how the organisation is child safe.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Useful practical resources for implementing the NSW Child Safe Standards can be found at:
<https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-scheme/implementing-child-safe-standards>



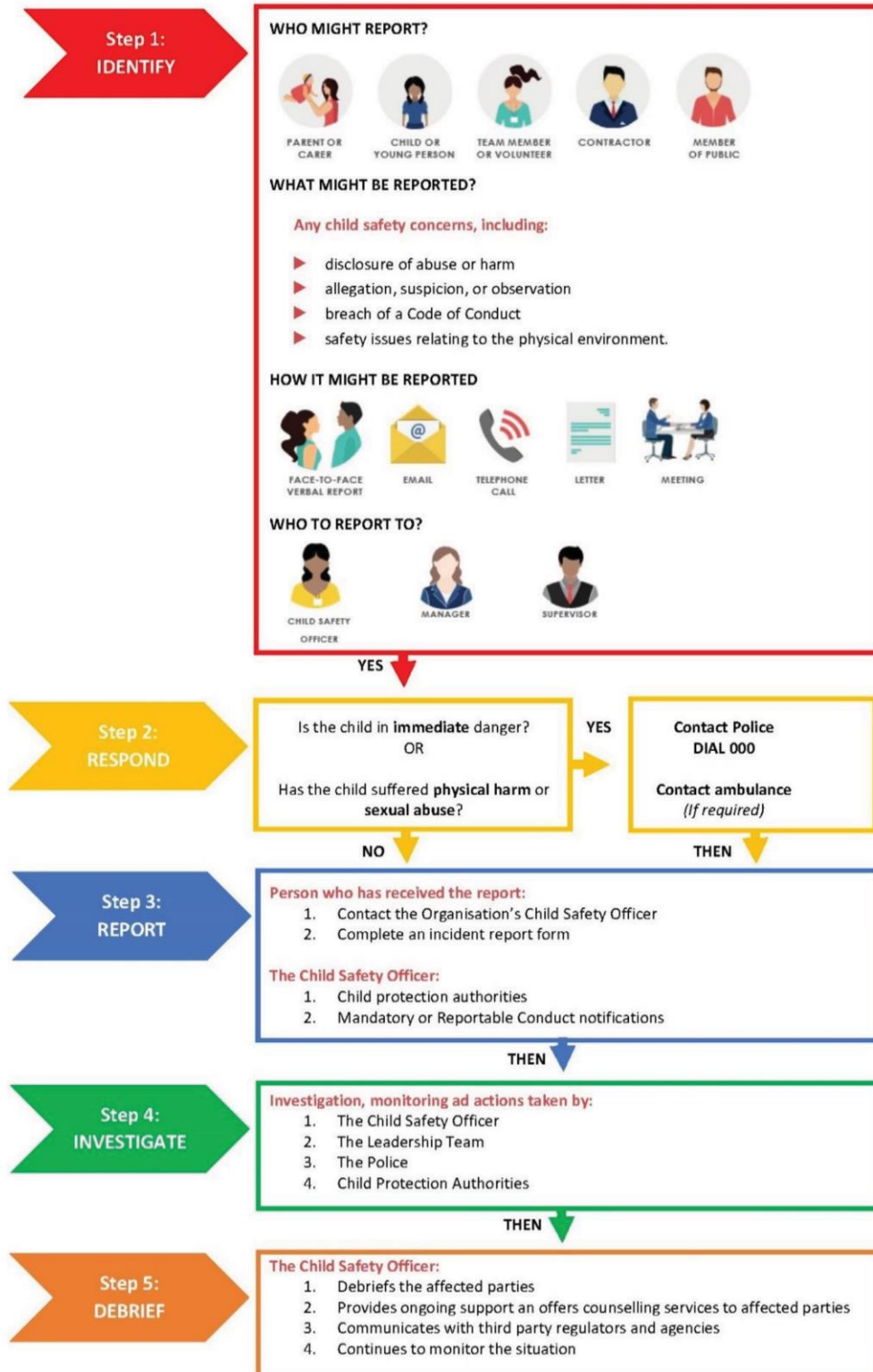
APPENDIX 4 - ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY MATRIX

Who	Responsibilities
<p>Office Bearers</p> <p>David Keith</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy • Provide endorsement, leadership, and resources towards the organisations efforts and initiatives supporting child safety
<p>Committee Members</p> <p>Michelle Harris, Leah Gordon, Aiden Plummer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy owner • Ensures compliance with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and our child safe obligations in the jurisdictions where we operate • Embed child safety into the WHS framework of the organisation • Provide advice on strategies to mitigate risk to the safety of children and young people • Embed child safety into the WHS framework of the organisation • Provide advice on strategies to mitigate risk to the safety of children and young people
<p>Child Safety Officer</p> <p>Michelle Harris</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for promoting the importance of child safety • Oversee the implementation and review of the Child Safe Policies • Oversee the annual review of the organisation's Child Safe Risk Management plan • Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on child safety issues • Liaise with leaders to raise awareness of child safety in the organisation • Ensure Team Members have access to and understand, child safe policies and procedures • Promote training opportunities for Team Members
<p>Senior Coaches and Mentors</p> <p>Alyssa Steenson, Aiden Plummer, Michelle Harris</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Team Members are aware of this policy and their obligations and assist them meet their obligations • Support Team Members to complete child safety training relevant to their role • Support Team Members to access the EAP where appropriate • Provide immediate feedback and take immediate action when a Team Member may not be meeting their obligations under this policy
<p>All Team Members</p> <p>Alyssa Steenson, Marlon Denning, Bella Waples, Keira Schenke, Penelope Axman, Michelle Harris, Aiden Plummer.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Child Safety training as directed • Comply with the Child Safety Code of Professional Conduct • Comply with all relevant requirements of this policy, and related policies, in the course of their work and any work-related functions (e.g. work events where children may be present) • Comply with all requirements or directions given to them by their manager for the implementation of risk controls • Comply with applicable state, territory and Commonwealth legislation • Appropriately report potential risk to child safety including any breaches of this policy • Team Members who require a Working with Children Check must comply with the appropriate legislative requirements based on the jurisdiction, including reporting a change in circumstances and mandatory reporting requirements

APPENDIX 5 - BEHAVIOURS THAT CONSTITUTE CHILD ABUSE

Type of Abuse	Unacceptable Behaviour
Neglect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depriving a child of necessities such as food and drink, clothing, critical medical care or treatment, or shelter. • Failing to protect a child from abuse (such as, failing to report abuse when a child discloses it or when a staff member observes it). • Exposing a child to a harmful environment (such as, an environment where there is illicit drug use or illicit drug manufacturing). • Failing to adequately supervise a child, resulting in injury or harm.
Ill-treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making excessive and/or degrading demands of a child. • Disciplining or correcting a child in an unreasonable and seriously inappropriate or improper manner. • Seriously inappropriate and/or degrading comments or behaviour towards a child. • Repeated hostility towards a child. • Seclusion and other types of restrictive practices. • Locking up a child in a room. • Pushing a child to train or perform when they are injured.
Grooming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging in unauthorised contact with a child online for the purpose of developing a sexual relationship. • Using a computer, mobile phone, camera or other device to exploit or harass a child. • Unacceptable personal communication that explores sexual feelings or intimate personal feelings with a child. • Sharing details with a child of one's own sexual experiences. • Inappropriately extending a relationship with a child outside of work. • Giving a child special attention or isolating them from peers with the intention of making it easier to access the child for sexual activity. • Offering a child gifts, food, cigarettes, money, attention or affection with the intention of making it easier to access the child for sexual activity. • Making close physical contact, like inappropriate tickling and 'play' wrestling.
Failure to prevent/report abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An obvious or very clearly unreasonable failure to respond to information strongly indicating that another adult working at the organisation poses a serious risk of abusing a child. • Knowing or believing, that a child has been abused and not reporting it to police (or not reporting in circumstances where the person ought reasonably to have known).

APPENDIX 6 - FLOWCHART FOR REPORTING SUSPICIONS OF CHILD ABUSE OR HARM



APPENDIX 7 - MANDATORY REPORTING

Jurisdiction	Further information on mandatory reporting	What is to be notified
NSW	https://reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/s/ Email the NSW ChildStory Reporter team at childstory.support@facs.nsw.gov.au Phone: 1300 356 696	A reasonable suspicion that a child or young person has suffered or is suffering sexual abuse or non-accidental physical injury.

APPENDIX 8 - RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

Jurisdiction	Name of legislation/standard
NSW	Child Protection (Working With Children) Act 2012 Children's Guardian Act 2019
International	The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child