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whānau āwhina



Whānau Āwhina Plunket Child Protection Policy

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Child Protection Policy 2020

Whānau Āwhina Plunket has a stated goal of equitable outcomes for whānau Māori and for all by 2025.

Whānau Āwhina Plunket is committed to upholding the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi as stated in Wai 2575, Hauora Report. Principles of Equity, Active Protection, Options, Partnership and importantly Tino Rangatiratanga.

In undertaking all its activities, Whānau Āwhina Plunket is committed to an equitable partnership with Māori in ways that recognise that Māori have distinctive indigenous rights as Tangata Whenua, cultural and legal rights, and different social and administrative contexts within which they live, including the specific guarantees of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Policy Statement

The Royal New Zealand Plunket Trust, (Whānau Āwhina Plunket) supports the development of healthy whānau. Whānau Āwhina Plunket believes that all children have the right to live in loving, nurturing, and safe environments and to be protected from all forms of harm (including harm to their development and well-being), abuse, neglect, ill-treatment, or deprivation. All Whānau Āwhina Plunket people are responsible for being able to recognise and identify signs or risks of all forms of harm and respond appropriately.

Whānau Āwhina Plunket people work in partnership with whānau to ensure they have the opportunity to achieve their health and wellbeing aspirations. Whānau Āwhina Plunket people will work to respond to the holistic and cultural needs of all whānau. Whānau Āwhina Plunket people will keep whānau involved and informed as outlined in the Child Protection Procedures.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Whānau Āwhina Plunket people operate in ways which assist in keeping children protected from all forms of harm (including harm to their development and well-being), abuse, neglect, ill-treatment, or deprivation.

Scope/Application

This Policy applies to all Whānau Āwhina Plunket people who provide service delivery and/or work with members of the public including any person, or group of people, working for, or at Whānau Āwhina Plunket and including, but not limited to contractors, volunteers, and students, whether working (paid or unpaid) on a full time, part time, casual, or temporary basis.

Policy

1. Whānau Āwhina Plunket people will be guided by the well-being and best interests of children as the first and paramount consideration, including the following principles:
 - a) The well-being of the child will be at the centre of decision making that affects that child.
 - b) The child's rights (including those rights set out in United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities) will be respected and upheld.
 - c) The child will always be treated with dignity and respect and protected from harm.
 - d) Mana tamaiti (tamariki) and the child's well-being will be protected by recognising their whakapapa and the whānaungatanga responsibilities of their whānau, hapū, iwi, or family group.

- e) Wherever possible, the relationship between the child and their whānau, hapū, iwi, or family group will be maintained and strengthened.
 - f) Wherever possible, a child's whānau, hapū, iwi, or family group should participate in decisions, and regard should be had to their views.
 - g) Decisions will be made and implemented promptly and in a time frame appropriate to the age and development of the child, in line with Whānau Āwhina Plunket's Child Protection Procedures.
 - h) A holistic approach will be to view the child as a whole person which includes, but is not limited to, the child's:
 - i. developmental potential,
 - ii. educational and health needs,
 - iii. whakapapa,
 - iv. cultural identity,
 - v. gender identity,
 - vi. sexual orientation,
 - vii. disability (if any), and
 - viii. age.
2. All services provided by Whānau Āwhina Plunket for the safety and wellbeing of children will adhere to the principles, rights and responsibilities as outlined in te Tiriti o Waitangi. Whānau Āwhina Plunket is committed to:
- a) Working in partnership with whānau Māori to empower them to ensure they can achieve their health and wellbeing aspirations.
 - b) Positively promoting equity for whānau Māori.
 - c) Actively protect whānau Māori rights to their autonomy and to manage the full range of their affairs in accordance with their own tikanga.
 - d) Mana tamaiti (tamariki) and the child's well-being will be protected by recognising their whakapapa and the whānaungatanga responsibilities of their whānau, hapū, iwi, or family group.
 - e) Ensuring decision making about whānau Māori is informed by Māori perspectives through the involvement of kaimahi Māori.
3. Any harm (including harm to their development and well-being), abuse, neglect, ill-treatment, or deprivation against children is unacceptable.
4. All Whānau Āwhina Plunket people have a full and active part to play in promoting child wellbeing and work with whānau to protect children from all forms of harm (including harm to their development and wellbeing), abuse, neglect, ill-treatment, or deprivation.
5. Whānau Āwhina Plunket people must have knowledge and awareness of the indicators of all forms of harm of children whether actual or potential; whether a single incident or cumulative incidents.
6. If a Whānau Āwhina Plunket person believes that a child or young person has been, or is likely to be, harmed, ill-treated, abused, (whether physically, emotionally, or sexually), neglected, or deprived, or if they have concerns about the well-being of a child or young person, they will follow the procedures as outlined in the Whānau Āwhina Plunket Child Protection Procedures.
7. All Whānau Āwhina Plunket people must understand and adhere to Whānau Āwhina Plunket's Child Protection Policy and follow the Child Protection Procedures.

8. In a situation where any Whānau Āwhina Plunket person believes that a child is in immediate danger, the Police must be informed as soon as safely possible, in consultation with the Clinical Leader of the area in which the child resides.
9. Whānau Āwhina Plunket people will not investigate allegations of abuse or neglect. The statutory responsibility to investigate allegations of child abuse and neglect and all forms of harm rests with Oranga Tamariki and the Police. Whānau Āwhina Plunket has no statutory powers to investigate allegations or risks of child abuse.
10. Whānau Āwhina Plunket is considered a 'child welfare and protection agency' under the Children's and Young People's Well-being Act 1989 Act and must comply with rules regarding the gathering and sharing of information relating to the child and whānau, hapū, iwi or family group. The legislation provides clear rules surrounding the use and disclosure of personal information relating to the child. This is described in the Child Protection Procedures and Privacy policy.

For support in implementing this policy refer to the Whānau Āwhina Plunket Child Protection Procedures.

Responsibilities and Compliance

Role	Responsibility
Deputy CE Operations	Oversight of Whānau Āwhina Plunket Operations including monitoring and gaining assurance the Child Protection Policy requirements are implemented and followed.
Clinical Governance Groups	<p>The National Clinical Governance Group provides strategic oversight; identifies systemic issues and themes; makes recommendations which informs an organisational wide view of clinical quality, risk and risk mitigation/quality improvement. The group uses data and insights to provide advice on improvement implementation. The group reports findings quarterly to the Whānau Āwhina Plunket Executive Leadership Team and to the Risk, Assurance and Audit Committee. Significant risks are raised immediately with the Chief Executive.</p> <p>The Regional Clinical Governance committees provide monitoring and oversight of Whānau Āwhina Plunket's response to Child Protection at the regional level. Identifies themes and makes recommendations concerning quality and safety of clinical practice, clinical risk and clinical quality improvement processes related to Child Protection including whether these best suit a team, regional or national approach. Provides a quarterly summary with recommendations to the National Clinical Governance Group.</p>
Clinical Leader or Family Start Team Leader in the area where the affected child resides	Accountable for managing the Child Protection process for whānau and families, as outlined in the prescribed procedures, including referrals.
Registered Nurses and Social Workers	Accountable for assessing safe child practices and applying interventions as per the Child Protection Procedures to protect children where child protection issues are suspected or disclosed.
All Managers	<p>Ensure Child Protection procedures are being followed and instigate improvement where required. Ensure Whānau Āwhina Plunket people have received training as appropriate for their role, during orientation, then regular updates.</p> <p>Where a manager is not a Clinical Leader (CL) or Family Start Team Leader (FS TL), support Whānau Āwhina Plunket people to access appropriate support where child protection concerns are identified or suspected.</p>
Whānau Āwhina Plunket People	Awareness and an understanding of Whānau Āwhina Plunket Child Protection Policy and implementation of Procedure as required in their role, including the requirement to discuss any child protection concerns or suspicions with a CL or FS TL allocated to the area where the whānau or family lives.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Child	Any person under the age of 14 years.
Child Abuse	The harming (whether physically, emotionally or sexually), ill treatment, abuse, neglect or serious deprivation of any child.

Cumulative harm	<p>Cumulative harm is the outcome of exposure to multiple episodes of abuse and/or neglect and/or harm experienced by tamariki.</p> <p>Repeat episodes of abuse can have a profound impact on the development of the child, with life-long implications. A chronology is important when considering the impacts of cumulative harm and enables identification of patterns of events, over time that are impacting on tamariki.</p> <p>When considered individually, each episode of abuse or neglect may not be deemed to be significantly harmful but cumulative harm is the result of several incidents where the collective effects are serious enough to be described as harmful.</p>
Emotional Abuse	<p>Emotional abuse is defined by the characteristics of a particular relationship between the child/ren and the abuser when the mental health and social and/or emotional functioning and development of tamariki has been damaged by their treatment.</p> <p>Emotional abuse can be significant when the pattern of abuse is targeted, systematic and purposeful towards the child or when there are repeated incidents of children witnessing the abuse of others.</p> <p>Examples of emotional abuse include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Patterns of degradation, constant criticism, or repeated negative comparison to others. ▪ Deprivation of contact with people significant to the child. ▪ Corrupting, exploiting, or actively scaring and threatening the child. ▪ A significant period of denying access to cultural, faith or other associations that sustain the sense of normality, identity and self-esteem for the child. Ongoing exposure to family violence.
Family Violence	<p>Family violence is committed against a person in a family relationship.</p> <p>Violence can be physical, sexual or emotional abuse. It includes threats and coercive control. It can be a single incident or a pattern of behaviour and can have cumulative impact.</p> <p>Psychological abuse includes threats, abuse of animals, financial abuse, damage to property, threats to withdraw support and/or care.</p> <p>Psychological abuse includes allowing children to witness or hear (or be at risk of witnessing or hearing) family violence of someone the child has a family relationship with.</p>
Hapū	Sub-tribe
Iwi	Tribal grouping
Kaimahi	Employee or staff member

Mana tamaiti (the child)	The intrinsic value and inherent dignity derived from a child’s or young person’s whakapapa (genealogy) and their belonging to a whānau, hapū, iwi, or family group, in accordance with tikanga Māori or its equivalent in the culture of the child or young person. ¹
Neglect/Deprivation	<p>Neglect is when the basic needs of the child are not met, including any act or omission that results in impaired physical functioning, injury and/or development of a child. Neglect could happen once, or it could happen regularly.</p> <p>Neglect can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not providing the necessities of life such as adequate shelter, food and clothing. ▪ Not providing comfort, attention and love. ▪ Leaving the child without someone safe looking after them. ▪ Not taking care of health needs. Allowing truancy, failure to enroll in education, or inattention to education needs.
Oranga Tamariki – Ministry for Children	Formally known as Child Youth and Family. Oranga Tamariki is a Government Ministry dedicated to supporting children in Aotearoa/New Zealand, whose wellbeing is at significant risk of harm now, or in the future.
Physical Abuse	Physical abuse can be any act that may result in physical harm to the child. This includes, but is not limited to, beating, hitting, shaking, burning, drowning, suffocating, biting, poisoning or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.
Whānau Āwhina Plunket Person/ Whānau Āwhina Plunket People	Includes any person, or group of people, working for, or at Whānau Āwhina Plunket and including, but not limited to contractors, volunteers, and students, whether working (paid or unpaid) on a full time, part time, casual, or temporary basis.
Sexual abuse	Sexual abuse is any action where a child is used for a sexual purpose. Sexual abuse can be any act that involves forcing or enticing the child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not a child understands what is happening.
Whakapapa	Genealogy; one’s ancestors’ line of descendants.
Whānaungatanga	A sense of family connection between people, which develops through trust in the relationship and as a result of kinship rights, and obligations; a sense of belonging through shared experiences and working together. ²

¹ Oranga Tamariki Act 1989. Children’s and Young People’s Well-being Act 1989

² Te Aka Online Māori Dictionary, Whānaungatanga, *Māori Dictionary*, <https://maoridictionary.co.nz/word/10068>

Relevant links and documents

Whānau Āwhina Plunket documents

- Child Protection Procedures
- Family Violence Policy
- Family Violence Procedures
- Child Protection and Family Violence Guidance (under review)
- [Health and Safety Policy](#)
- [Te Rautaki Māori Ngā Pae o te Harakeke \(Whānau Āwhina Plunket Māori Strategic Plan\)](#)
- Whānau Āwhina Plunket [Health Worker Standards of Practice](#)
- [Privacy Policy](#)
- [Standards of Practice for Whānau Āwhina Plunket WCTO Nurses](#)
- [Supporting Whānau Āwhina Plunket People Affected by Domestic Violence Policy](#)

External documents

- [Care of Children Act 2004](#)
- [Crimes Act 1961](#)
- [Domestic Violence Victims' Protection Act 2018](#)
- [Employment Relations Act 2000](#)
- [Family Violence Act 2018](#)
- Fanslow J L, Kelly P, Ministry of Health. 2016. [Family Violence Assessment and Intervention Guideline: Child abuse and intimate partner violence](#) (2nd edition). Wellington: Ministry of Health.
- [Health and Disability Commissioner Act 1994](#)
- [Health and Disability Commissioner \(Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights\) Regulations 1996](#)
- [Health and Safety at Work Act 2015](#)
- [Health Information Privacy Code \(1994\)](#)
- [Human Rights Act 1993](#)
- [Information Sharing Guidance for Health Professionals July 2019](#)
- [Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 Children's and Young People's Well-being Act 1989](#)
- [Privacy Act 1993](#)
- United Nations [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)
- [Victims' Rights Act 2002](#)
- [Vulnerable Children Amendment Act 2017](#)
- [Vulnerable Children \(Requirements for Safety Checks of Children's Workers\) Regulations 2015](#)