carinity

CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

At Carinity, our calling is clear: to make a real difference in the lives of those we are called to care for. This commitment begins with the most vulnerable among us - our children. Their safety, wellbeing, and dignity are not just priorities; they are fundamental to every service we provide to and for young people.

I am pleased to introduce our Child Safety and Wellbeing Community Handbook. This resource has been developed to guide and empower our community in creating environments where every child feels safe, valued, and supported. It outlines practical steps, clear expectations, and shared responsibilities that help us protect children and nurture their growth.

Child safety is more than a policy - it is a reflection of who we are. It speaks to our deep belief that every person is created with inherent worth and deserves to flourish. By safeguarding children, we honor that worth and live out our promise to care with compassion, integrity, and respect.

This handbook is a resource for all of us – staff, families, volunteers, and partners - because child safety is a shared responsibility. Together, we can build communities where trust thrives, where voices are heard, and where every child can experience hope and belonging.

Thank you for partnering with us with this vital work to ensure every child in our care is protected and cherished.

KEVIN GRIFFITHS
CARINITY CEO

WHY DO WE NEED THIS BOOKLET?

Carinity is a Child Safe Entity under the *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024* (Qld). This means that we are required to take active steps to ensure that we provide our services in a way that promotes child safety and wellbeing.

The purpose of this booklet is to show you how we are making sure that we provide the highest quality services to our service users, which includes complying with our legal requirements.

You can learn more about what it means to be a "Child Safe Entity" on the **Queensland Family and Child Commission website**.

OUR COMMITMENTS TO YOU

At Carinity, we are committed to ensuring that we create spaces and provide services that preserve and uphold the safety and wellbeing of all children.

We have formal Statements of Commitment available on our website which outline our commitments to the children and families that we serve. You can access these statements at the below links:

Statement of Commitment to Child Safety and Wellbeing

Statement of Commitment to Cultural Safety

OUR SERVICES

Carinity provides services across multiple different areas of need, both directly to children and in areas where children may be indirectly present. These services include:

EDUCATION

Carinity operates Special Assistance Schools throughout Queensland, and an independent school in Townsville which operates under the same model of service.

YOUTH SERVICES

Carinity operates two youth accommodation services. One is for children who are under guardianship of the Department of Child Safety, and the other supports independent teens and young people at risk of homelessness.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Carinity is an NDIS service provider, and some of our NDIS clients are children. In addition, we provide counselling and family support, and we also run the Carinity Fassifern Community Centre, which may include children as service users.

AGED CARE SERVICES

While children will not receive care through our aged care services, they may be regular visitors to our Residential Aged Care Homes, or they may visit or live in the same home as a Home Care client.

RETIREMENT VILLAGES

While children will not ordinarily reside in our Retirement Villages, they may visit or stay with a resident at times.

CHAPLAINCY

Our school and youth chaplains directly serve children in their roles. Other chaplains may indirectly interact with children as part of their usual activities.

We may indirectly interact with children who are not our service users at any and all of our sites. In these cases, our policies and procedures will apply as relevant to those children.

OUR VALUES

As an organisation, our values underpin all of our activities. We have listed below some ways that we apply our values when providing care and support to children.

COMPASSION

We uphold the dignity of every child in a safe and nurturing environment. We listen to them, and seek to understand and address their needs.

RESPECT

We value the uniqueness of each child and their right to feel safe and protected from harm in a welcoming environment that respects their cultures, needs, identities, and experiences.

EXCELLENCE

We strive to provide outstanding services that promote the safety, wellbeing, and independence of children, by providing outstanding services that focus on the individual needs of each child.

ACCOUNTABILITY

We take responsibility for our decisions, behaviours, and actions, holding each other accountable to ensure a child-safe environment

TEAMWORK

We work together to create a safe and welcoming space where we strengthen and develop each child's skills, confidence, and relationships so they reach their full potential.

ENGAGING POSITIVELY

We each contribute to the creation of a caring, welcoming, and inclusive workplace culture that values children and protects children from harm.

OUR PEOPLE

Here at Carinity, our workers are vital to the quality service that we deliver. The compassionate and expert care Carinity delivers is only possible because of the high quality of people who work for us.

We take pride in our workers, and we complete screening checks (including Blue Cards, NDIS clearance checks, and police checks, as applicable) for all workers whose roles involve working with children or vulnerable people.

Our expectations for our workers are outlined in our **Employee Code of Conduct**, our **Code of Conduct for Engaging with Children**, and our **Volunteer Guidelines**, which you can access at the links above.

You can also find more details about our Executive team and our Council on **our website**.

YOUR RIGHTS

Children and young people have rights regardless of their age, where they are from, what they believe or how they choose to live their lives.

Children's rights are set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and include the right to:

- An identity, to be given news and information and to express themselves freely.
- Be protected from violence, harmful drugs, sexual abuse, and exploitation.
- Family support and if they can't be looked after by their family, they have a right to be looked after by people who respect their religion, culture and language.
- A full and decent life and to a standard of living that meets their physical and mental needs.
- An education, rest and play.
- Grow up learning to use their rights in the best way.
- Have adults and governments thinks about how their decisions will affect children to ensure that people and places responsible for looking after children are doing a good job.
- Have connection with family unless this might harm the child.
- Protection of their privacy.

CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

In response to these rights, the Queensland Government has enacted the Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Qld), which requires child safe entities to uphold 10 child safe standards:

1. Leadership and culture
2. Voice of children
3. Family and community
4. Equity and diversity
5. People
6. Complaints management
7. Knowledge and skills
8. Physical and online environments
9. Continuous improvement
10. Policy and procedures

Child safe entities are also required to embed the Universal Principle across the 10 standards. The Universal Principle requires child safe entities to provide an environment that promotes and upholds the right to cultural safety of children who are Aboriginal persons or Torres Strait Islander persons.

OUR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

We have numerous policies and procedures in place to ensure that all children who engage directly or indirectly with Carinity are safe and protected from harm. These policies and procedures:

1. Provide an environment that upholds the right to cultural safety of children who are Aboriginal persons or Torres Strait Islander persons;

2. Embed child safety and wellbeing into Carinity's leadership, governance, and culture;

3. Provide space and opportunity for children to have a voice, including enabling them to be informed about their rights, to participate in decisions affecting them, and to be taken seriously;

4. Allow families and communities to be informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing;

5. Reflect Carinity's ongoing commitment to deliver services in a way that upholds equity and inclusion, and enables and celebrates diversity;

6. Provide systems for screening potential new employees/volunteers and for reporting current staff/volunteers where there are concerns about their conduct or their suitability to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice;

7. Include a feedback and complaints management system which is designed with the safety and wellbeing of children in mind;

8. Provide for all staff/volunteers to receive ongoing training and education to equip them with the knowledge, skills, and awareness to keep children safe;

9. Maintain physical and online environments that promote the safety and wellbeing of children, and minimise the opportunity for children to be harmed;

10. Facilitate regular reviews of Carinity's policies, procedures, systems, and practices to ensure continuous improvement; and

11. Document how Carinity promotes the safety and wellbeing of children in our policies and procedures.

REPORTING CONCERNS

We want to hear from you about how we can make our child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures the best they can be. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any feedback or ideas about how we can improve.

How you can report a concern

If something happens that isn't quite right, we encourage you to tell us so that we can help. You can talk to one of our staff directly, or contact us in another way that works best for you.

If your concern relates to a child safety matter, you should talk to one of our members of staff directly.

If you wish to give feedback or make a complaint, we will work with you to find a resolution to your concerns. More details about how we manage feedback and complaints are outlined in our **Feedback and Complaints Policies**.

If your concern is particularly serious, you may be eligible to make a Whistleblower report. We use an external service to receive and triage review all Whistleblower reports, and you can access the service at this link: **https://ispeakup.co/carinity.** More information about this process and who is eligible to be a Whistleblower is available in our **Whistleblower Policy**.

What we do with reports we receive

We are required by law to report certain matters both internally and externally, and these requirements are outlined in our Child Safe Reporting Policy.

All our Workers are required to report immediately to the CEO if they become aware of any allegations that a Carinity Worker has engaged in Reportable Conduct or has had a Reportable Conviction.*

Our teachers, On Track Workers, and Registered Nurses are Mandatory Reporters under the *Child Protection Act 1999* (Qld). This means that they are required to report to the Department of Child Safety any "reasonable suspicion" that a child is likely to suffer harm and does not have a parent willing and able to keep them safe.

Our Disability Support workers and our Health Practitioners (psychologists and nurses) have additional reporting requirements for reportable incidents (NDIS) and alleged harm done by health practitioners. Details about these requirements are included in our Child Safe Reporting Policy.

And lastly, all adults in Queensland (including our workers) are required to report child sexual abuse to the police pursuant to the Criminal Code.**

We look forward to continuing to care for you. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you would like to discuss anything in this booklet, or if you have any other questions or concerns.

* Reportable Conduct Scheme – Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Qld).

** Registered Nurses and Psychologists are exempt from this requirement if they obtained the information: while acting in their professional capacity, in the course of a confidential professional relationship, and they reasonably believe there is no real risk of serious harm to the child or any other child in not disclosing the information to a police officer.

Call us today on **07 3550 3737**
or email **info@carinity.org.au**
Visit **carinity.org.au**

AN OUTREACH OF QUEENSLAND BAPTISTS

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