

## FACS003 – Crèche – Safeguarding the Wellbeing of Children Policy

### 1. POLICY CERTIFICATION

Policy title:	<b>Crèche – Safeguarding the Wellbeing of Children Policy</b>
Policy number:	<b>FACS003</b>
Category:	<b>Policy</b>
Classification:	<b>FACS</b>
Status:	<b>Approved (26/06/2013 OCM)</b>

### 2. PURPOSE

This policy has been developed provide information for Childcare Educators, parents/guardians and caregivers regarding their responsibility associated with the protection of children and mandatory reporting of any suspected abuse or neglect of any child.

### 3. ORGANISATIONAL SCOPE

This policy applies to Crèches run under Roper Gulf Regional Council.

### 4. POLICY STATEMENT

Roper Gulf Regional Council recognises its moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by creating and maintaining a safe learning environment for children and identifying where there are child welfare concerns and taking action to address them, in partnership with other organisations where appropriate.

Roper Gulf Regional Council endeavours to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. Roper Gulf Regional Council is alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice.

### 5. DEFINITIONS

Crèche	is a day care centre where child care educator will take care of children in place of their parents
RGRC	Roper Gulf Regionall Council

### 6. MANDATORY REPORTING

The *Care and Protection of Children Act 2009*(the CPCA) Section 26 imposes a legal responsibility on every person in the Northern Territory to report child abuse and neglect including cases where a child has been or is likely to be the victim of a sexual offence.

Whenever possible, Childcare Educators are required to attend a workshop in Mandatory Reporting so that they understand their legal obligations and reporting process. Child abuse and neglect may be happening when:

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- A child/young person tells you he/she has been abused
- You observe a particular child/young persons behaviour and/or injuries
- A child/young person tells you he/she knows someone who has been abused (a child/young person could possibly be referring to themselves)
- Someone else tells you (perhaps a relative, friend, neighbour, or sibling of the child/young person) who is in a position to provide reliable information.

Childcare Educators are encouraged to discuss any potential notification with their supervisor/ Regional Manager /HR so that you can be supported through this confidential process.

### 7. NOTIFICATION GUIDELINES

**A notification can be made to the 24-hour NT Families and Children Child Protection Hotline on 1800 700 250 or to NT Police on 131 444.**

Childcare Educators need to make the notification even if they do not have all the information required. This includes basic information, description of abuse, current situation and details of informant

#### 7.1 Basic Information

- Child/young person's name, age, date of birth, gender and address
- Parent/Guardian name, age, address and phone number,
- Alleged perpetrators name, age, address, phone number and relationship to the child/young person,
- Other members of the child/young person's household and their relationship to the child/young person.

#### 7.2 Description of Abuse

- Detailed description of any injury, abuse, neglect (both current and previous eg; details of disclosure or incident, size and location of injuries, specific description of abusive acts or omission of care)
- Detailed description of behavioural indicators, including frequency and circumstances,
- When did the informant first become aware of the alleged abuse?
- How does the informant know this and what leads him/her to suspect it is the result of the alleged abuse?
- Who else is aware of this?

#### 7.3 Current Situation

- Other agencies involved with the child/young person and/or family (including schools, doctors and DCF)
- Relevant family information (eg; history of violence, patterns of interaction, extended family relationships, significant others, interaction with the community, etc).
- Any other relevant information

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### 7.4 Details of the Informant (**are optional you can remain anonymous in you report to Intake**)

- Name, address and phone number,
- Relationship with the child/young person, parent/caregiver and alleged perpetrators.

## 8. RECOGNISING SIGNS OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT

Indicators need to be may not mean abuse. They may be warning signs that something is not right for the child. They need to be considered in relation to a child’s developmental stage, medical history and social context. The possibility of abuse may be higher if more indicators are present.

	<b>Behaviour/conditions that could indicate signs of abuse</b>
PHYSICAL ABUSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has frequent or unexplained bruises or injuries e.g. broken bones, burns, scalds, scratches, bite marks.</li> <li>• The child tells you he or she is being hurt.</li> <li>• Have sudden or unexplained changes in mood or behaviour.</li> <li>• Fear of adults (particularly familiar adults).</li> <li>• Is startled or appears frightened when a Childcare worker/Educator moves suddenly or unexpectedly.</li> <li>• Difficulty in sleeping – nightmares.</li> </ul>
EMOTIONAL ABUSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has low self esteem</li> <li>• Becomes withdrawn or unresponsive</li> <li>• Has difficulty making friends or relating to their peers and/or adults.</li> <li>• Speech disorders.</li> <li>• Habitual self comforting behaviors not consistent with developmental age e.g. thumb sucking, rocking etc.</li> <li>• Is sometimes disruptive or aggressive towards adults or other children.</li> <li>• Extreme attention seeking.</li> <li>• Seems to lack trust in familiar adults.</li> </ul>
SEXUAL ABUSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has a great deal of knowledge about sex at a very young age, or has sexual behaviour that seems beyond his or her years.</li> <li>• Fear of having their nappy changed or being bathed.</li> <li>• Bleeding from the vagina or external genitalia or anus, or signs of pain or discomfort.</li> <li>• Self destructive behaviour.</li> <li>• Disclosure of involvement in sexual activity.</li> <li>• Sudden avoidance of familiar adults or places.</li> </ul>

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NEGLECT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dressed inappropriately for the weather</li> <li>• Poor standards of hygiene e.g. dirty child, dirty clothes, and unwashed hair.</li> <li>• Poor health, failure to thrive, loss of ‘skin bloom’, poor hair texture.</li> <li>• Delay in developmental milestones.</li> <li>• Always hungry.</li> <li>• Untreated physical problems.</li> </ul>
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**9. REFERENCES**

Acknowledgements (original author/source documents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) : <a href="http://www.acecqa.gov.au">http://www.acecqa.gov.au</a></li> <li>• Department of Education and Children’s Services (NT): <a href="http://www.education.nt.gov.au/">http://www.education.nt.gov.au/</a></li> </ul>
Related Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FACS001 – Crèche – crèche operation Policy</li> </ul>
Related Publications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Care and Protection of Children Act 2009</li> </ul>
Relevant Forms	

**10. DOCUMENT CONTROL**

Policy number	<b>FACS003</b>
Policy Owner	<b>Family and Community Services</b>
Endorsed by	<b>OCM</b>
Date approved	<b>26/06/2013</b>
Revisions	
Amendments	
Next revision due	<b>October 2015</b>

**11. CONTACT PERSON**

Contact person	<b>Manager Governance, Corporate Planning &amp; Compliance</b>
Contact number	<b>08 8972 9000</b>