

# Care and Protection of Children and Young People

## Overview

This policy explains how we will work with families where there are concerns about the safety and protection of children or young people.

## Scope

This policy applies to all tenancies managed by the St George Community Housing and its subsidiaries (**we, our and us**).

## Definitions

### **Child**

A child is a person under 16 years of age.

### **Mandatory reporters**

Mandatory reporters are people who are required by law to report to Family and Community Services if they suspect that a child or young person is at risk of significant harm.

### **Risk of significant harm**

A child or young person is 'at risk of significant harm' if there are current concerns for their safety, welfare or well-being because of any of the following:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological harm
- Neglect
- Exposure to domestic violence
- Substance abuse by their parents/carers
- Concerns for the mental health of their parents/carers.

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## Young person

A young person is a person who is between 16 and 18 years of age.

## Guiding principles

We will:

- Make sure that the safety, welfare and well-being of children and young people are protected.
- Refer families and individuals that need help to agencies or services that can support them.
- Protect children and young people suspected to be at risk of significant harm by:
  - Looking for signs of abuse and neglect.
  - Reporting suspected cases of significant harm as required by law.
  - Giving appropriate and secure housing to children, young people and their families.

We support the principles of the [‘Keep Them Safe’](#) approach to child protection.

## Rights and responsibilities

### Children and young people

Children and young people have the right to:

- Be safe.
- Be respected and listened to.
- Be helped as needed.
- Be referred to other people who can help them if needed.

### Our role

As a community housing provider, we are a prescribed body under relevant laws.

As a prescribed body, we work in partnership with government and non-government agencies such as the Department of Family and Community Services (FACS), NSW Health and the Police to promote a safe and nurturing environment for children and young persons.

We will make sure that:

- Our employees who work with customers attend training and regular updates about mandatory reporting and are aware of their role and responsibilities as a mandatory reporter.
- Our employees can refer people to agencies or services that can help families and young people.

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- We have systems and procedures to help our employees to make reports, and to help children and young people who are at risk of significant harm.
  - We exchange information about the safety, welfare and well-being of a child or young person with other prescribed bodies as required and permitted by law.

### Relevant laws, regulations and standards

- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
- NSW Government: Keep Them Safe

### Related documents and resources

- Guide: Online Mandatory Reporter Guide
- Policy: Privacy
- Policy: End of Tenancy

### Policy Information

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