



# Te Tamawai Trust

## Child Protection Policy

*Stronger People, Stronger Communities*

### Our intent

Safety and protection from abuse, exploitation and neglect is central to our kaupapa and is everyone's business. When a young person is being hurt, at risk of harm or where they are hurting someone else, inaction is not an option.

When dealing with child protection concerns we will implement our practice principles, this and related policies and support families appropriately.

### Definitions

"Abuse" refers to **child abuse**.

"Child abuse" means the harming (whether physically, emotionally, or sexually), ill-treatment, abuse, neglect, or deprivation of a child or rangatahi. It includes:

- Physical violence
- Sexual violence
- Neglect
- Emotional abuse

See [here](#) for more about the different types of child abuse.

“Settlement agreement” refers to an agreement that allows a kaimahi to resign without disciplinary action being taken.

### Responsibilities

#### Management will:

- ensure team members who work with rangatahi are trained to implement this policy (eg trained in signs of abuse, reporting and process for responding to child protection concerns)
- follow up on abuse concerns
- address systemic deficits that could contribute to abuse or non-detection of abuse
- lead an organisational culture that:
  - models respect for dignity and rights to safety and equality
  - promotes zero tolerance for abuse
  - promotes early intervention and reporting of abuse by young people, staff and volunteers.
- if necessary, designate a staff member, with sufficient training and experience to lead child protection issues in Te Tamawai Trust.

#### Staff/kaimahi and volunteers will:

- understand and comply with this policy and organisational processes for reporting and responding to abuse concerns
- act professionally at all times and desist from any abusive or harmful action against rangatahi
- communicate this policy to those we work with
- report abuse concerns and any deficit in knowledge, systems or processes that could contribute to abuse or prevent detection of abuse.

#### The Child Protection delegate(s) will:

- advise and support staff to implement this policy

- ensure they maintain their knowledge and skills in child protection
- fulfill such other responsibilities agreed with management.

### Practice Principles

These principles must be applied in our practice:

- The safety, wellbeing and best interests of a child/rangatahi are paramount.
- Young people have a right to participate in decisions that concern them unless this is unsafe or impracticable.
- Reporting serious harm and risk to appropriate authorities is more important than maintaining confidentiality about it.
- Protection from abuse is a basic human right
- The well-being of a child or young person is integrally tied to the well-being of their whānau and support system.
- Families/whānau will be involved in decision-making about their tamariki where it is safe and in the best interests of tamariki.
- Recognition of and responses to abuse must be sensitive to developmental stage and age, impact of disability (eg cognitive disability), culture, gender and sexuality preferences.
- Concerns about harm, including allegations against kaimahi and volunteers, will be taken seriously and appropriately followed up.
- No one should act alone when following up on abuse concerns.

See [here](#) - for the principles and standards of the Te Aorerekura National Strategy to Eliminate Family Violence and Sexual Violence, applicable to specialist family violence services and generalist services who are in contact with people using or affected by family violence.

### Requirements

Staff training and checks

**Kaimahi/volunteers will be trained and able to identify and respond to common signs and indicators of abuse and neglect.**

### **Provide information**

**Information will be given in an accessible way to those we work with so that they understand:**

- **how to recognise abuse and raise and report concerns about abuse within Te Tamawai Trust**
- **how we prioritise the safety and best interests of tamariki/rangatahi**
- **our feedback and complaints policy**
- **when and why we will report concerns to Police, Oranga Tamariki.**

**If appropriate, whānau will be provided with information about child abuse, alternative discipline strategies and/or parenting support services and programmes.**

**Abuse against anyone in Te Tamawai Trust will not be tolerated. This will be promoted across Te Tamawai Trust.**

**Kaimahi/kaiawhina will be police vetted/ child safety checked if working regularly with rangatahi.**

### **Safe practice and early intervention**

**Kaimahi/volunteers must use safe practices with children/ rangatahi, follow our policies and access advice from internal and external colleagues about safe practice, as necessary.**

**Children/young people must not be physically punished, disciplined or treated in any way that is degrading, humiliating or likely to cause fear or anxiety. Alternative methods must be used to manage behaviour eg behaviour supports.**

**Kaimahi will be alert to and consult with management, or an appropriate colleague, if there are any signs a child or associated person is suffering or perpetrating abuse. This includes disclosures and incidents of coercion or control that together might indicate a pattern of abuse.**

**Kaimahi will report abuse concerns in accordance with our policies (eg **Responding to abuse, exploitation and neglect.**)**

### **Allegations against kaimahi**

**Allegations against staff about abuse must be immediately forwarded to management or to the next level up if an allegation is against management. The **Responding to allegations against team members** policy applied.**

### **System issues**

**Policies and practices will be periodically reviewed to identify and check for gaps, which may contribute to or mean risks of child abuse are undetected. Appropriate corrective action will be taken as necessary.**

### **Accountability**

**"Settlement agreements" will not be used if an abuse allegation is substantiated against a team member and the agreement would be contrary to protecting tamariki from abuse.**

### **Compliance**

**Social Sector Accreditation Standards Level 2, Community wellbeing 1.0-4.0; Client services & programmes 1.0-3.0, Health & Safety, 2.0**

**NZS 8134:2021 Our Rights 1.5**

**Children's Act 2014**

**Health and Disability Commissioner (Code of Health and Disability  
Services Consumers' Rights) Regulations 1996**

**Family Violence Act 2018**