



	Policy Family PROGRAMMES
	Policy Name Child Protection Policy

Effective Date February 2022
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Approved By New Zealand Board of Directors
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Scope
This policy applies to Habitat For Humanity New Zealand (“HFHNZ”) personnel, affiliates personnel, and partner NGO personnel, both domestically and internationally.

This policy has been designed by Child Matters for Habitat for Humanity New Zealand and meets the legislative requirements of a child protection policy. No modifications are to be made to this policy without first obtaining specialist child protection advice from Child Matters, ensuring that any such modifications are in keeping with legislative requirements and in light of best practice knowledge. Child Matters takes no responsibility for any modifications made without, or contrary to, its advice.

HFHNZ

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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Statement of Commitment

Habitat for Humanity New Zealand values all children, and believes that wherever a child lives, and whatever their circumstances may be, they have a right to be protected and to be free from all forms of harm.

Section One Introduction

➤ Purpose

- 1.1 The most effective way to safeguard children is to have a comprehensive and effective Child Protection Policy.
- 1.2 The purpose of this policy is to promote the wellbeing of children and to ensure that all persons working for, with, or on behalf of Habitat for Humanity New Zealand (“HFHNZ”) operate in ways which protect children from all forms of harm.
- 1.3 HFHNZ acknowledges that interactions with children, families, and whānau are a part of the organisation’s work and therefore a Child Protection Policy is of the utmost importance. This Child Protection Policy confirms the commitment of HFHNZ to the protection of children and proceeds to:
 - outline the standards and principles by which all personnel will abide
 - define abuse
 - outline the action to be taken by personnel where any form of abuse or neglect is known or suspected
 - establish what action is required when allegations are made against personnel
 - outline expectations regarding personnel training
 - outline expected behaviour of personnel.

➤ Guiding Principles

- 1.4 HFHNZ asserts that abuse of children is unacceptable in all forms, and in all circumstances.

- 1.5 HFHNZ affirms that all children have equal rights to protection from abuse and exploitation regardless of their gender, race, religious or political beliefs, age, physical or mental health, sexual orientation, family or social background, culture, economic status or criminal background.
- 1.6 The decisions and actions of HFHNZ in response to any protection concern will be guided by the principle of *“the welfare and best interests of the child.”*
- 1.7 All services provided by HFHNZ for the safety and wellbeing of children adhere to the principles of partnership, protection and participation, and the rights and responsibilities accorded by Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
- 1.8 All services provided by HFHNZ for the safety and wellbeing of children have regard to mana tamaiti (tamariki) – the intrinsic value and inherent dignity derived from a child’s whakapapa and their belonging to a whānau, hapū, and iwi; ensuring the upholding, and protection, of Māori rights and interests, in accordance with the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989.

➤ **Scope**

- 1.9 This policy applies to all personnel, working both domestically and internationally.

➤ **Legislation and Policies**

- 1.10 This policy has been written with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in mind and in accordance with the following legislation and HFHNZ policies:
- Background Screening Policy, HFHNZ
 - Care of Children Act, 2004
 - Children’s Act, 2014
 - Child Complaints Process, HFHNZ
 - Child Labour Policy, HFHNZ
 - Complaints and Complaints Handling Policy, HFHNZ
 - Crimes Act, 1961
 - Education Act 1989
 - Employment Relations Act, 2000
 - Family Violence Act 2018
 - Health and Safety Act 1956
 - Health and Safety at Work Act 2015

- Health and Disability Act 2000
- Health and Disability Sector Standards Regulations, 2001
- Health Information Privacy Code, 1994
- Human Rights Act, 1993
- International Minors Policy, HFHNZ
- Oranga Tamariki Act, 1989
- Police Checking Policy, HFHNZ
- Privacy Act, 2020
- Safeguarding Policy, HFHNZ

➤ **Review**

- 1.11 This policy will be reviewed annually and updated regularly, to ensure it is kept up to date with changes that may have been made to legislation, related policies and procedures, and in light of operational experience.
- 1.12 The overall responsibility for this policy rests with the HFHNZ Group CEO and the Child Protection Officers.

➤ **Definitions**

- 1.13 For the purposes of this Policy the following definitions apply:

“Child” means any person under the age of 18 years

“Child Abuse” can involve ongoing, repeated or persistent abuse, or may arise from a single incident. Child abuse may take many forms but it can be categorised into four different types:

- i. Physical Abuse
- ii. Sexual Abuse
- iii. Emotional Abuse
- iv. Neglect

“Child Protection File” is a secure file on sharepoint which holds records of children who are considered to be suffering, or who are considered to be at risk of suffering, or likely to suffer, abuse or neglect. The child protection file includes information around those child protection concerns, including but not limited to:

- A record of facts, including observations, with time and date
- What was said and by whom, using the person’s words

- What action has been taken, by whom and when
- All decisions, including if the concern does not require notifying the relevant statutory authority or the Police, with the reasons clearly identified and explained.

The child protection file must be kept up to date and its contents must remain confidential other than to Child Protection Officers, and authorised enquirers. It must be held securely and separately from other HFHNZ records.

“Child Protection Officer” is a person within HFHNZ who is responsible for the safeguarding of children. This person is responsible for ensuring that child protection is a key focus within HFHNZ both at a strategic level and on a day to day basis.

As at the date of this Policy the Child Protection Officers for HFHNZ are:

Jen Johnstone

Carina Dickson

“Emotional Abuse” is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effect on the child’s self-esteem and emotional development. This can include a pattern of rejecting, degrading, ignoring, isolating, corrupting, exploiting or terrorising a child. It may also include age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children and their social competence undermined or eroded over time. A child can also experience emotional abuse by being exposed to a dysfunctional environment which includes seeing or hearing the ill treatment of others, including but not limited to being exposed to family violence.

“Family Violence” can take many forms and may include, but is not limited to, actual physical violence (to a person, pet or property), threats of physical violence (to a person, pet or property), psychological, economic or sexual abuse. Children are always affected either emotionally or physically where there is family violence even if they are not personally injured or physically present.

“Habitat Ethics and Accountability Line” is the anonymous incident reporting system of HFHNZ. The Habitat Ethics and Accountability Line is accessible 24 hours at heal.habitat.org or by calling: 0800 002 341 (within New Zealand)/ +1 (720) 514-4400 (outside of New Zealand).

“Neglect” is characterised as the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological need. This can occur through direct and deliberate action or by omission or deliberate inaction to care for and/or protect the child. It may also include neglect of a child’s basic or emotional needs.

“Oranga Tamariki - Ministry for Children” formally known as Child Youth and Family. Oranga Tamariki is a Government Ministry dedicated to supporting children in New Zealand whose wellbeing is at significant risk of harm now, or in the future.

“Personnel” refers to any person working for, at, or with HFHNZ, both domestically and internationally, and includes, but is not limited to, directors, employees, consultants, contractors, partner NGO’s, volunteers, interns and students, whether working on a full time, part time, casual, or temporary basis. For the purposes of this policy, “personnel” extends to HFHNZ affiliates.

“Physical Abuse” is a non-accidental act that results in physical harm. This includes, but is not limited to, beating, hitting, shaking, burning, drowning, suffocating, biting, poisoning or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical abuse also involves the fabrication or inducing of illness.

“Sexual Abuse” is an act or acts that result in the sexual exploitation of a child, whether consensual or not. Sexual abuse can be committed by a relative, a trusted friend, an associate, or someone unknown to the child. Sexual abuse includes situations where the adult seeks to have the child touch them for a sexual purpose, and where they involve the child in pornographic activities or prostitution.

“Unsupervised access to children” refers to an individual being alone with one or more child(ren) at any time, for any length of time, whether physically or through the wider use of technology (e.g., contact through email/phone).

Section Two

Roles and Responsibilities of Personnel

- 2.1 The protection of children lies in increasing the awareness around child abuse and neglect. Personnel have a full and active part to play in protecting children from harm. It is the primary responsibility of personnel to be vigilant, have knowledge and awareness of the indicators of neglect and abuse, whether actual or potential, and to report any concerns, suspicions or allegations immediately.
- 2.2 All personnel must have an understanding of, and must adhere to, the HFHNZ Child Protection Policy.
- 2.3 All personnel must:
- i. be aware of, and alert to, potential indicators of abuse or neglect
 - ii. record a factual account of any concerns they have, or that are brought to their attention (*See Appendix Six: Reporting Form for Suspected Child Abuse*)
 - iii. appropriately seek advice and support from a HFHNZ Child Protection Officer who will then consult with the HFHNZ Group CEO and contact external agencies if appropriate
 - iv. work in co-operation with the parents, caregivers, families, and whānau unless this compromises the safety of the child.
- 2.4 The statutory responsibility to investigate allegations of abuse against children rests with Oranga Tamariki and the New Zealand Police or the equivalent overseas statutory agency. No personnel, including the Child Protection Officers or the Group CEO, are permitted or mandated to investigate allegations of abuse.

➤ **Role of the Child Protection Officers**

- 2.5 The HFHNZ Child Protection Officers are responsible for ensuring that child protection is a key focus within HFHNZ and that appropriate protocols, procedures, and training are in place.
- 2.6 The Child Protection Officers are responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy and providing advice and support for personnel with protection concerns.

2.7 The Child Protection Officers will be responsible for ensuring that:

- the needs and rights of children come first, as the safety and wellbeing of each child is the paramount consideration in all circumstances.
- the protection of children is a key focus within HFHNZ and that appropriate protocols, procedures and training are in place.
- the HFHNZ Child Protection Policy is effectively implemented throughout the organisation
- all personnel are familiar with the Child Protection Policy and its procedures
- all personnel receive appropriate training ensuring they are skilled, confident, competent and well supported in meeting their protection responsibilities
- all personnel are supported appropriately when dealing with protection concerns
- all cases of abuse, or suspected abuse, or allegations, are handled in a consistent and thorough manner
- cases of abuse, or suspected abuse, are reported to Oranga Tamariki or the NZ Police (or the equivalent statutory authority for overseas incidents)
- the “**Notification Index**”, as set out in Appendix Five of this policy, is completed and regularly reported to the HFHNZ Board
- there is no internal investigation without appropriate consultation and a decision whether a response from Oranga Tamariki or the Police (or the equivalent statutory authority for overseas incidents) is required.
- appropriate strategies for recording and reporting incidents of abuse, or suspected abuse, or allegations, are kept. All information relating to the cause

for concern, decisions and actions taken, including if the concern does not require notification to Oranga Tamariki or the NZ Police, (or the equivalent statutory authority for overseas incidents), must be recorded in writing and kept securely in a child protection file with the reasons clearly identified and explained

- a close link with the relevant local agencies is established and maintained
- they are recognised as a contact within HFHNZ for agencies to contact regarding concerns
- that all personnel are recruited and employed in accordance with the guidelines identified in the Child Protection Policy and the HFHNZ **“Background Screening Policy”, “Police Checking Policy” and the “General Employment Practices and Non Discrimination Policy ”**.
- they consult with fellow Child Protection Officers, the Group CEO, and/or the appropriate statutory agencies, for advice and support.

Section Three **Child Protection Procedures**

- 3.1 The procedures set out in section three of this policy provide HFHNZ personnel with guidelines to assist in identifying and responding appropriately to concerns of abuse and neglect, whether these concerns are their own or are the concerns of a third party, and to understand their role in keeping children safe.
- 3.2 The procedures set out below will help personnel with:
- the identification of abuse
 - handling disclosures from a child
 - reporting procedures

➤ **Identification of Abuse**

- 3.3 All personnel should be alert to, and aware of, the fact that abuse of a child can occur in many different settings and forms and may come to light in a variety of different ways. These can include, but are not limited to:
- Direct or indirect disclosure by the child;
 - Direct or indirect disclosure from someone known to the child;
 - Suspicions of abuse by those involved with the child;
 - Allegations and/or direct observations or signs displayed in the child's physical or emotional behaviour;
 - Direct witnessing of abuse.
- 3.4 The signs and indicators of abuse may not be immediately obvious or identifiable. **Appendix One** of this policy sets out a non-exhaustive list of signs and indicators to help identify abuse of children.
- 3.5 Anyone who is unsure about what might constitute child abuse should ask for advice and guidance from a Child Protection Officer. If a Child Protection Officer is unavailable for advice and guidance, then personnel should consult with the HFHNZ Group CEO.

➤ **Responding to Child Abuse/Suspected Child Abuse**

- 3.6 Personnel will respond to allegations of abuse in a manner which ensures that the child's safety is the first and paramount consideration.
- 3.7 When abuse of a child is suspected, disclosed or witnessed, everything must be done to ensure the ongoing safety of the child concerned, along with the ongoing safety of any other child who is in close connection to the alleged offender. In all cases, the child is the primary concern and all other concerns (including the guilt or innocence of the alleged offender) must be secondary. This does not mean that the alleged offender is to be considered guilty without due investigation, but that the safety of the child comes first.
- 3.8 In a situation where any personnel member believes that a child is in immediate danger, or in a situation where they believe that a third party is not prepared to secure the safety of the child by contacting a statutory service, the personnel member, in consultation with a Child

Protection Officer, will inform Oranga Tamariki and the Police of their concerns, (or the equivalent statutory authority for overseas incidents). Personnel will not collude to protect an adult or an organisation. Records of these Reports of Concern will be kept in a specific, secure, child protection file.

- 3.9 Protection procedures must be followed regardless of whether the alleged offender is a member of the public, a HFHNZ affiliate, a Partner NGO, or a member of the organisations personnel.
- 3.10 Personnel will not act alone about concerns of abuse but will consult with a Child Protection Officer, or the HFHNZ Group CEO.
- 3.11 All concerns and information will be recorded factually and held confidentially. All documentation relating to concerns and information will be held in the child protection file.
- 3.12 Refer to the “**Child Protection Procedure Flowchart**” below.

➤ **Responding to Disclosures**

- 3.13 Disclosures of abuse may come directly from a child. It is important that personnel take what the child says seriously, and respond in a calm, caring and sensitive manner. This applies irrespective of the setting, or the personnel members own opinion on what is being said. If there is information disclosed regarding actual or suspected abuse personnel must:
- stay calm
 - listen and hear
 - give time to the child to say what they want
 - reassure them that they were right to tell
 - tell the child that they are being taken seriously and that they are not to blame
 - explain that they have to pass on what the child has told them as soon as they are aware that the child is making a disclosure
 - give an appropriate explanation to the child of what they can expect to happen next, having regard for the child’s age and mental capacity.
 - record in writing what was said as soon as possible, using the child’s own words where possible.
 - Report the concern to a Child Protection Officer.

Personnel must not:

- make the child repeat the story unnecessarily
- promise to keep secrets
- enquire in to the details of the alleged abuse
- ask leading questions

3.14 Under no circumstances should personnel attempt to conduct an investigation or deal with concerns of abuse themselves.

➤ **Reporting Procedures**

3.15 It is mandatory for all personnel to report concerns or allegations of abuse to a Child Protection Officer at the first possible opportunity to best ensure the safety of the child. If a Child Protection Officer is unavailable, then consultation should occur with the HFHNZ Group CEO. If an immediate response is required to ensure the child's safety, personnel should contact Oranga Tamariki or the NZ Police directly, (or the equivalent statutory authority and local police for overseas incidents).

3.16 All concerns or allegations of sexual abuse must be reported to Oranga Tamariki or the NZ Police (or the equivalent statutory authority for overseas incidents).

3.17 When reporting an incident personnel should:

- Inform a Child Protection Officer as soon as possible
- Record in writing all conversations and actions taken and keep these records securely in the specified child protection file

3.18 Effective documentation, including referrals and notifications, must include the following:

- A record of facts, including observations, with time and date
- What was said and by whom, using the person's words
- What action has been taken, by whom and when

- 3.19 All decisions, including if the concern does not require notifying the relevant statutory authority, must be recorded in writing and kept securely in the child protection file with the reasons clearly identified and explained.
- 3.20 **Appendix Six** of this policy contains a template to assist personnel and to provide guidance when reporting of concerns of child abuse.

➤ **Keeping Family and Whānau Informed and Involved**

- 3.21 Wherever possible, a child’s family and whānau should participate in the decisions affecting that child and the relationship between the child and their family and whānau should be maintained and strengthened.
- 3.22 Although the parent or caregiver of the child will usually be informed of concerns, there may be times when those with parental responsibility may not be initially informed. This may happen in circumstances when:
- the parent or caregiver is the alleged offender
 - it is possible that the child may be intimidated into silence
 - there is a strong likelihood that evidence will be destroyed
 - the child does not want their parent or caregiver involved and they are of an age, and of sufficient mental capacity, to be deemed competent to make that decision. Any decision not to inform the child’s parent or caregiver based solely on the child’s wish should only be made after careful consideration and in consultation with a Child Protection Officer and HFHNZ Group CEO.

➤ **Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

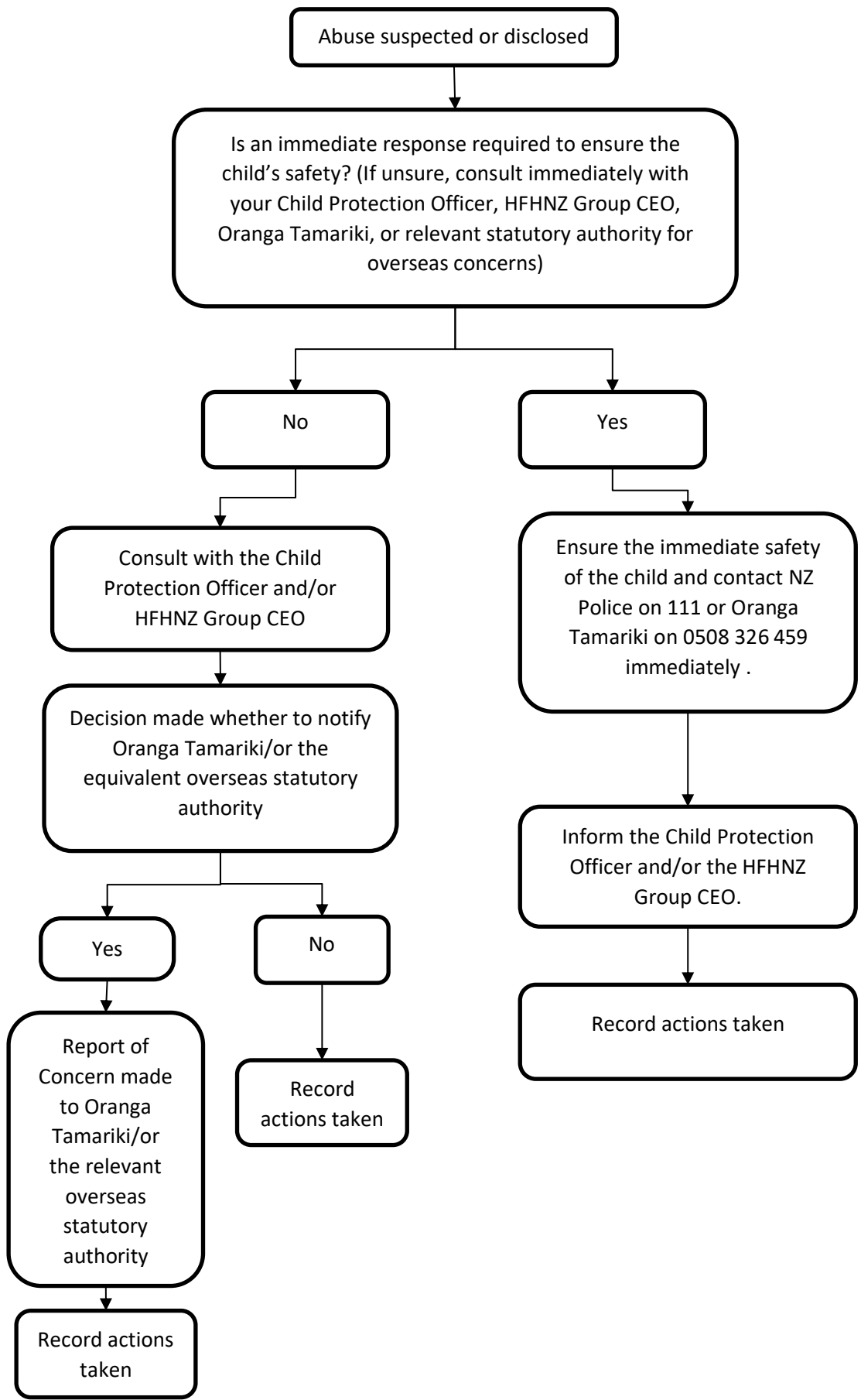
- 3.23 The safety of a child is paramount in all circumstances.
- 3.24 HFHNZ’s **“Whistle-Blower Policy”** expressly prohibits retaliation and protects individuals, including their anonymity and safety, who share, in good faith, concerns of misconduct.

- 3.25 Under the Privacy Act 2020, the giving of information to protect children is not a breach of confidentiality. Principle 11 of the Privacy Act, 2020, states that the sharing of personal information is allowed if "disclosure of the information is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious threat".
- 3.26 Under the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, if a personnel member raises a legitimate concern in good faith about suspected abuse of a child, which proves to be unfounded on investigation, no civil, criminal or disciplinary proceedings may be brought against that member of personnel.
- 3.27 Advice should be sought before any information about an allegation that identifies an individual is shared with anyone other than the Child Protection Officer, HFHNZ Group CEO, or Safeguarding Investigation Committee.
- 3.28 Should HFHNZ be contacted with a request for information or access to interview a child, consideration must be given to such things as:
- Confirming the identity and credentials of person requesting information
 - Notifying a Child Protection Officer or the HFHNZ Group CEO
 - Identifying the specific information required and the purpose
 - Checking that HFHNZ holds the information requested
 - Depending on the reason for the request, and risk to children as judged case by case, informing the family or whānau that information has been requested, by whom and seek permission. If this is a child protection issue, permission from the family or whānau is not required.
 - Documenting all steps in the process.

➤ **Relationships with Statutory and Specialist Agencies**

- 3.29 HFHNZ will maintain good working relationships with agencies that have the statutory powers and skills to intervene in cases of abuse of children. This includes maintaining a good working relationship with Oranga Tamariki and with the Police, and be familiar with the laws that serve to protect children from abuse. Personnel will consult with Oranga Tamariki, the Police, (or the equivalent statutory authority for overseas incidents), and with other appropriate agencies that have specialist knowledge to help protect children from abuse.

- 3.30 HFHNZ believes that in order to keep children safe, personnel who suspect or uncover abuse should not be tempted to deal with cases by themselves, but to report and seek help as necessary.
- 3.31 HFHNZ will maintain relationships with NGOs and organisations that provide services to children, families and whānau throughout the country.



Section Four

Safe Recruitment, Training, Support and Supervision

- 4.1 As part of HFHNZ’s commitment to child protection, HFHNZ will, at all times, apply rigorous recruitment, selection and screening processes which emphasise the importance of child protection, and which ensure that every personnel member is safe and suitable to be associated with an organisation committed to the protection of children, regardless of whether the position is paid, voluntary, permanent, part time or casual.
- 4.2 Robust safety checking is required for personnel who have may have unsupervised access to children and/or their information. Refer to **Appendix Seven: “Personnel Requirements”**, HFHNZ “Recruitment Process” document, for the minimum safety checking requirements.
- 4.3 All appointments will follow the requirements as set out in the HFHNZ Child Protection Policy and the **“Background Screening Policy”**, **“Police Checking Policy”** and the **“General Employment Practices and Non Discrimination Policy ”**.

➤ **Criminal History Check**

- 4.4 For all positions where a criminal history check is required to be carried out (*refer to Appendix Seven: “Personnel Requirements”*), all new offers of employment and employment agreements, will remain conditional on receiving satisfactory results from the criminal history check. Until such time as the criminal history checking process has been completed and the results have been received, all newly appointed personnel working with children will be supervised in their role and will not be permitted to work alone or carry out any alternative duties. Criminal history checking will take place at the point of recruitment and will be carried out every three (3) years thereafter.

➤ **Child Protection Training**

- 4.5 HFHNZ recognises the importance of personnel training when it comes to keeping children safe.

- 4.6 All personnel will be required to be familiar with, and adhere to, the HFHNZ Child Protection Policy.
- 4.7 HFHNZ will ensure that all personnel have adequate and appropriate information and training about child abuse in order to protect children and to recognise and respond when children are at risk. All new personnel will be required to be familiar with the organisation's policies on child protection, and to undertake training on child protection.
- 4.8 All personnel will be given a copy of this policy as part of the induction process. Personnel will be required to sign and acknowledge that this policy has been read and has been understood. Refer to **Appendix Four** of this policy.
- 4.9 All personnel will be required to be familiar, and comply, with the HFHNZ "**Child Protection Code of Conduct**" and the rules and guidelines as set out in the HFHNZ "**Personnel Handbook**" or equivalent. Personnel will be given a copy of these documents as part of the induction process.
- 4.10 Child Protection Officers will receive specialist training, completing a minimum of a one (1) week child protection training programme. Refresher training will be undertaken by Child Protection Officers a minimum of every three (3) years.

➤ **Support and Supervision**

- 4.11 It is recognised that working with cases involving abuse of children can have an impact on the wellbeing of personnel. Dealing with these situations can be challenging and has the potential to trigger all kinds of thoughts and feelings and therefore self-care is important. HFHNZ will ensure that personnel involved with protection cases, receive the necessary support.

Section Five

Safe Working Practices

- 5.1 All personnel have a responsibility to understand what constitutes appropriate behaviour in relation to children. All personnel have a responsibility to maintain appropriate standards of behaviour and to report lapses in these standards by others.
- 5.2 Personnel should always maintain a professional relationship when working with children, and their families and whānau and to avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others. Clear boundaries are important in maintaining professional behaviour and personnel must act in a way that is considered to be safe practice. This includes, but is not limited to:
- Avoiding situations where they are alone with a child;
 - Ensuring that they are visible to others when with a child;
 - Using an open door policy where possible;
 - Avoiding circumstances where their behaviour (both verbal and physical) may be misinterpreted as hostile, suggestive, inappropriate, offensive, or neglectful.
 - Not transporting a child alone at any time other than in an emergency situation
 - Not displaying images of children unless they have consent to do so from the child (where appropriate), and their parents or caregivers (See: 5.7 “Marketing Activities”).
- 5.3 Any sexual activity between an adult and a child will be regarded as a criminal offence and will always be a matter for disciplinary action and reported to the NZ Police and Oranga Tamariki (or the equivalent statutory authority for overseas incidents).

➤ **Physical Contact**

- 5.4 When physical contact is made with a child, this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Personnel should use their professional judgement at all times, observe and take note of the child’s reaction and feelings and use a level of contact and/or form of communication which is acceptable to the child for the minimum amount of time necessary.

➤ **Communication**

5.5 Communication with children, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phone, text messaging, emails, digital cameras, videos, web-cams, websites, social networking and blogs. Personnel should not share any personal information with a child. They should not request, or respond to, any personal information from the child other than that which might be appropriate as part of their professional role. Personnel should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.

➤ **Marketing Activities**

5.6 HFHNZ will ensure the appropriate use of children’s images in all of its communications and marketing activities.

5.7 HFHNZ will ensure that:

- Any image of, or story relating to, a child shall not be printed, scanned or distributed without written consent from the child and their parents or guardians.
- All children will be appropriately dressed in images and concern for their dignity and respect will remain paramount at all times.
- An image will not be taken which could view the child in a sexually suggestive manner.
- An image or story will not include information which will identify the child.
- An image of or story relating to a child will portray a truthful account of their situation.

Section Six **Allegations Against Personnel**

6.1 HFHNZ has a duty of care to protect children and any failure to report a significant concern about a child is a breach of that child’s human rights. Any significant failure to adequately report potential safeguarding misconduct may be subject to discipline, including termination of employment.

- 6.2 Concerns may be raised regarding personnel and these concerns may be as a result of behaviour within the workplace, or of behaviour within their home environment.
- 6.3 Allegations, suspicions or complaints of abuse against personnel will be taken seriously and reported to a Child Protection Officer who, in consultation with the HFHNZ Group CEO, will deal with them immediately, sensitively and expediently within the procedures outlined in this policy. In the event that the allegation, suspicion or complaint has been made against a HFHNZ Child Protection Officer, this will be reported to the HFHNZ Group CEO directly.
- 6.4 Any concern of abuse of a child will follow the procedures outlined in this policy. In the event of an allegation of abuse by a member of personnel, a report of concern will be made to the Police and/or Oranga Tamariki, (or the equivalent statutory authority for overseas incidents).
- 6.5 In addition to following the child protection procedures outlined in this policy, any child protection concerns raised against personnel must be entered into the HFHNZ's confidential, anonymous reporting hotline - Habitat Ethics and Accountability Line reporting tool, within 48 hours. Reporting to HEAL would normally be undertaken by the HFHNZ Child Protection Officer.
- 6.6 When there are suspicions of abuse by a member of personnel, both the personnel member's and child's rights are to be attended to. This means that the safety of the child is of first concern, and that the personnel member must have access to legal and professional advice, in accordance with the Employment Relations Act.
- 6.7 Any personnel member against whom an allegation is made will be immediately stood down, on full pay, until all investigations and assessments have been complete.
- 6.8 In all protection cases, HFHNZ will co-operate fully with both Oranga Tamariki and the Police, (or the equivalent statutory authority for overseas incidents), in their investigations and assessments.
- 6.9 It is important that no internal investigation is undertaken, and no evidence gathered that might prejudice any criminal or Oranga Tamariki (or equivalent) investigation. If there is

insufficient evidence to pursue a criminal prosecution, then an internal disciplinary investigation may still be undertaken subject to internal disciplinary procedures.

6.10 A personnel member tendering his or her resignation, or ceasing to provide their services to HFHNZ, will not prevent an allegation of abuse against a child being followed up in accordance with these procedures.

6.11 All HFHNZ partner NGO's are required to share the findings of any external investigations with HFHNZ.

➤ **Internal Investigation of Allegations Against Personnel**

6.12 No internal investigation is to be undertaken, and no evidence is to be gathered, that might prejudice an official Police or Oranga Tamariki investigation, (or the investigations of the equivalent statutory authority for overseas incidents). Only once those investigations have concluded can any internal disciplinary investigations be undertaken.

6.13 Following the conclusion of any investigation by the relevant statutory authority, the Child Protection Officer and HFHNZ Group CEO will consult with the HFHNZ Safeguarding Investigation Committee to appoint a team to ensure that a formal investigation is made into the allegation. The investigation team may include any relevant internal personnel deemed relevant and determined on a case by case basis.

6.14 Following the outcome of the internal investigation, the following steps may be taken:

- Reinstatement of the accused;
- Dismissal of the accused;
- Offering support to the HFHNZ stakeholder involved;
- Facilitating ongoing support for the child and their family;
- Referral to appropriate agencies where required.

6.15 Confidentiality will be upheld at all times throughout this internal investigation process and only those specifically involved in the allegation, and the consequent investigation, will be aware of personal information of those involved. Information will be passed on strictly on a 'need to know' basis. The only exception to this is where the maintenance of confidentiality would further endanger a child.

6.16 All HFHNZ partner NGO's are required to share the findings of any internal investigations with HFHNZ.

➤ **Victim Support**

6.17 Upon receipt of an allegation against a member of personnel, HFHNZ will consider providing any or all of the following forms support for the victim, as appropriate depending on the nature of the allegations and the individual circumstances involved. This support will be provided regardless of any outcome of an investigation and may consist of, but is not limited to:

- Immediate material care:
 - Direct and/or funding support to provide for temporary needs such as trauma-informed medical care, food, clothing, or emergency and safe shelter as necessary.
- Psychosocial support:
 - Referrals and funding support to obtain appropriate psychosocial services through a local counselling organisation. Comparable services or alternative culturally sensitive psychosocial support will be made available to survivors through appropriate local service providers.
- Legal and advocacy support:
 - Support to obtain victim advocacy services or legal counselling in order to make an informed decision about whether to pursue legal recourse.

6.18 In considering any of the above forms of support, HFHNZ will consult with both the victim and with appropriate local specialists. All decisions related to victim assistance will be documented.

Appendix One

Indicators of Abuse

The indicators for child abuse and neglect fall into three general categories:

- **Physical indicators:** Injuries to a child that are severe, occur in a pattern or occur frequently. These injuries range from bruises to broken bones to burns or unusual lacerations and are often unexplained or inconsistent with the explanation given
- **Behavioural indicators:** The child's actions, attitudes, and emotions can indicate the possibility of abuse or neglect. Behavioural indicators alone are much less reliable than physical indicators, as a child's behaviour may be the result of a variety of other problems or conditions. When observing changes in behaviour, look for the frequency and pattern of the new behaviour, as well as a child's age and stage of development. For example, it is normal for younger children to be wary of adults, as they may have been taught not to talk to strangers. Look for a combination of physical and behavioural indicators.
- **Caregiver indicators:** Caregivers who abuse, neglect or exploit children are either unable or unwilling to provide care and protection in an appropriate way. Those who are unable to provide care and protection may be physically unable due to their own medical or health condition. They may be overly stressed, tired, or working under the influence of drugs or alcohol which limits their abilities. Caregivers who are unwilling to provide children with the appropriate level of care and protection are more aware that what they are doing is wrong but continue to act in that way. These caregivers may not view the child as someone who has feelings and emotions and often have the need to control others or have displaced aggression towards weaker persons.

The indicators alone do not prove child abuse or neglect. Likewise, the absence of indicators does not exclude the possibility that abuse is occurring. If you have any concerns about the wellbeing of a child, seek advice from your Child Protection Officers, HFHNZ Group CEO, or the relevant statutory authority.

➤ Emotional Abuse Indicators

- Physical Indicators
 - Bed wetting or bed soiling with no medical cause
 - Frequent psychosomatic complaints (e.g. headaches, nausea, abdominal pains)
 - Non-organic failure to thrive
 - Pale, emaciated
 - Prolonged vomiting and/or diarrhoea
 - Malnutrition
 - Dressed differently to other children in the family
- Behavioural Indicators:
 - Severe developmental lags with obvious physical cause

- Depression, anxiety, withdrawal or aggression
 - Self-destructive behaviour. This can include self-harm, suicide, alcohol and drug abuse
 - Overly compliant
 - Extreme attention seeking behaviours or extreme inhibition
 - Running away from home, avoiding attending at school
 - Nightmares, poor sleeping patterns
 - Anti-social behaviours
 - Lack of self esteem
 - Obsessive behaviours
 - Eating disorders
- Caregiver Indicators:
 - Labels the child as inferior or publicly humiliates the child (e.g. name calling)
 - Treats the child differently from siblings or peers in ways that suggest dislike for the child
 - Actively refuses to help the child
 - Constantly threatens the child with physical harm or death
 - Locks the child in a closet or room for extended periods of time
 - Teaches or reinforces criminal behaviour
 - Withholds physical and verbal affection
 - Keeps the child at home in role of servant or surrogate parent
 - Has unrealistic expectations of child
 - Involves child in adult issues such as separation or disputes over child's care
 - Exposes child to situations of arguing and violence in the home

➤ **Neglect Indicators**

- Physical Indicators:
 - Dressed inappropriately for the season or the weather
 - Often extremely dirty and unwashed
 - Severe nappy rash or other persistent skin disorders
 - Inadequately supervised or left unattended frequently or for long periods
 - May be left in the care of an inappropriate adult
 - Does not receive adequate medical or dental care
 - Malnourished - this can be both underweight and overweight
 - Lacks adequate shelter
 - Non-organic failure to thrive

- Behavioural Indicators:

- Severe developmental lags without an obvious physical cause
 - Lack of attachment to parents/caregivers
 - Indiscriminate attachment to other adults
 - Poor school attendance and performance
 - Demanding of affection and attention
 - Engages in risk taking behaviour such as drug and alcohol abuse
 - May steal food
 - Poor social skills
 - No understanding of basic hygiene
- Caregiver Indicators:
 - Puts own need ahead of child's
 - Fails to provide child's basic needs
 - Demonstrates little or no interest in child's life - does not attend school activities, social events
 - Leaves the child alone or inappropriately supervised
 - Drug and alcohol use
 - Depression

➤ **Physical Abuse Indicators**

- Physical Indicators:
 - Bruises, welts, cuts and abrasions
 - Burns - small circular burns, immersion burns, rope burns etc
 - Fractures and dislocations - skull, facial bones, spinal fractures etc
 - Multiple fractures at different stages of healing
 - Fractures in very young children
- Behavioural Indicators:
 - Inconsistent or vague explanations regarding injuries
 - Wary of adults or a particular person
 - Vacant stare or frozen watchfulness
 - Cringing or flinching if touches unexpectedly
 - May be extremely compliant and eager to please
 - Dresses inappropriately to hide bruising or injuries
 - Runs away from home or is afraid to go home
 - May regress (e.g. bedwetting)
 - May indicate general sadness
 - Could have vision or hearing delay
 - Is violent to other children or animals
- Caregiver Indicators:
 - Inconsistent or vague explanations regarding injuries
 - May appear unconcerned about child's wellbeing
 - May state the child is prone to injuries or lies about how they occur

- Delays in seeking medical attention
- May take the child to multiple medical appointments and seek medical treatment without an obvious need

➤ **Sexual Abuse Indicators**

- Physical Indicators:
 - Unusual or excessive itching or pain in the genital or anal area
 - Torn, stained or bloody underclothing
 - Bruises, lacerations, redness, swelling or bleeding in genital, vaginal or anal area
 - Blood in urine or stools
 - Sexually transmitted infections
 - Pregnancy
 - Discomfort in sitting or fidgeting as unable to sit comfortably
- Behavioural Indicators:
 - Age-inappropriate sexual play or language
 - Bizarre, sophisticated or unusual sexual knowledge
 - Refuses to go home, or to a specific person's home, for no apparent reason
 - Fear of a certain person
 - Depression, anxiety, withdrawal or aggression
 - Self-destructive behaviour. This can include self-harm, suicide, alcohol and drug abuse
 - Overly compliant
 - Extreme attention seeking behaviours or extreme inhibition
 - Dresses inappropriately to hide bruising or injuries
 - Eating disorders
 - Compulsive behaviours
- Caregiver Indicators:
 - May be unusually over-protective of the child
 - Accuses the child of being sexually provocative
 - Misuses alcohol or drugs
 - Invades the child's privacy (e.g. during dressing, in the bathroom)
 - May favour the victim over other children

➤ **Family Violence Indicators**

- Indicators in the Child:
 - Physical injuries consistent with the indicators of Physical Abuse
 - Absenteeism from school
 - Bullying or aggressive behaviour

- Complaints of headaches or stomach aches with no apparent medical reason
- Talking or describing violent behaviours
- Indicators in the Victim:
 - Physical Injuries including: bruising to chest and abdomen, injuries during pregnancy
 - Depression and/or anxiety
 - Inconsistent explanations for injuries
 - Fearful
 - Submissive
- Indicators in the Offender:
 - Isolates and controls partner and children
 - Threatens, criticises, intimidates, uses aggressive and physical abuse towards partner and children
 - Minimises and denies own behaviour, or blames victim for the perpetrators own behaviour

Appendix Two

Child Protection Overview

Responding to Abuse:

Abuse is "... the harming (whether physically, emotionally, sexually), ill-treatment, abuse, neglect, or deprivation of any child or young person"

Section 2, Oranga Tamariki Act 1989

Child abuse can involve ongoing, repeated or persistent abuse, or it may arise from a single incident. Child Abuse may take many forms but it can be categorised into four different types:

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Neglect

Child abuse can occur in many different settings and forms and may come to light in a variety of different ways. These can include, but are not limited to:

- Direct or indirect disclosure by the child or someone known to the child;
- Suspicions of abuse by those involved with the child;
- Allegations and/or direct observations or signs displayed in the child's physical or emotional behaviour;
- Direct witnessing of abuse.

When disclosures of abuse come directly from a child, it is important that you take what the child says seriously. This applies irrespective of the setting, or your own opinion on what is being said. When a child tells you what has been happening to them, or when you witness or suspect child abuse, it is important that you, as the adult, remain calm and confident.

- RESPOND:** Respond to the person (adult or child) – Believe what they tell you and/or what you see.
- SAFETY:** Ensure the safety of the child. Always take action in the short term to ensure the immediate safety of the child. This will mean contacting the NZ Police (**111**) and Oranga Tamariki (**0508 326 459**) if you think there is an immediate risk to the child. (*Contact should be made with the equivalent statutory authority for overseas incidents).
- RECORD:** Record immediately all initial statements, observations and concerns to avoid misinterpretations or confusion at a later date.
- CONSULT:** Do not make decisions alone. Consult with your Child Protection Policy and your Child Protection Officers. If a Child Protection Officer is unavailable, consultation is to occur with the HFHNZ Group CEO. Oranga Tamariki is always available to give advice.
- REPORT:** Decide to act on your concerns. If you have told the person you believe is responsible for taking action and they do not act, take further action yourself.
- SUPPORT:** Seek support for yourself. Responding to a child protection issue can be stressful.

Think “what if I’m right?” Not “what if I’m wrong?”

**Appendix Three
Contact List**

**Your Child Protection Officers
Are:**

Jen Johnstone

Phone: 021 171 8988

Carina Dickson

Phone: 021 242 7489

Your HFHNZ Group CEO is:

Alan Thorp

Additional Contacts:

**Ministry for Children - Oranga Tamariki (New Zealand)
0508 326 0459**

**New Zealand Police
111**

Child Matters
07 838 3370
Appendix Four
Child Protection Code of Conduct:

As a member of personnel, I **WILL**:

- Ensure that I am fully aware of, and adhere to, the HFHNZ Child Protection Policy
- Treat all children with respect at all times, regardless of their gender, race, religion, political beliefs, age, physical or mental health, sexual orientation, family and social background, and culture, economic status or criminal background.
- Promote an environment where children feel safe and comfortable in my care and contact.
- Act professionally and maintain appropriate boundaries at all times.
- Avoid circumstances where my behaviour (both verbal and physical) may be misinterpreted as hostile, suggestive, inappropriate, offensive, suggestive or neglectful.
- Always ensure that a minimum of two adults are present when with child, one of whom must have undertaken a full safety check. If it is not possible to have another adult present, I will ensure that I always operate an “open door” policy and that I am visible to others. Even in these circumstances, I understand that I will not be permitted to work alone with children in any circumstances unless I have undertaken a full safety check.
- Act swiftly to ensure that any perceived risk to a child is immediately reported in consultation with the Child Protection Officer.
- Inform the Child Protection Officer of breaches in safe working practices, regardless of whether this has resulted in the harm of a child.
- Not engage in any unwarranted or inappropriate touching of a child. I will only engage in touch if it can be done in a safe manner and while visible to other adults.
- Not transport a child alone in my vehicle, unless in an emergency situation.

- Ensure that all communications with children, by whatever methods, are transparent and open to scrutiny.

I certify that I have read, understood, and will comply, with the HFHNZ Child Protection Policy:

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

**Appendix Five
Notification Index:**

The register template below must be completed by the HFHNZ Child Protection Officers, held at HFHNZ and regularly reported to the HFHNZ Board.

Date of contact with CPO	CPO Name	Name and role of person in contact with CPO	Reason for contact	Actions taken	Any follow up needed

Appendix Six
Reporting Form for Suspected Child Abuse

- This form is to be fully completed **as soon as possible** after becoming aware of any observation, suspicion or disclosure of actual or suspected child abuse.
- Once completed, **send this report to the HFHNZ New Zealand Child Protection Officer and HFHNZ Group CEO.**
- Until further directions have been passed on by the Child Protection Officer and/or HFHNZ Group CEO, ensure that all the information listed below remains **CONFIDENTIAL**.

Part One: About You

Name:

.....

Your role with HFHNZ NZ:

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Details of any other organisation involved:

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Your relationship to the child or young person concerned:

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.....

Part Two: About the Child(ren)/Young Person(s)

Name(s):

.....

.....

.....

Gender/s:

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Age/s:

.....

Address:

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.....
.....

Who does this young person(s) live with?

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Section Three: Your Concerns

How did your concern arise? Was any form of abuse observed or suspected?

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Was an allegation made by the child? Did the child disclose abuse to you? If so, please record as accurately as possible what the child said, and what you said.

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Date, time and place of any incident(s):

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Describe the nature of your concern/allegation:

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Observations made by you of the child's state (mental, physical, emotional):

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Any other relevant information?

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Were other children either involved in the incident or aware of it?

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Who else have you discussed or reported this incident to? When and where did this occur?

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List any action that has been taken so far:

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-
- *I declare that, to the best of my knowledge, the information listed above is true and accurate.*
 - *I understand that it is my duty at all times to ensure that the rights of children are held paramount.*

Completed by:

.....
.....

Date:

.....
.....

Signature:

.....

Appendix Seven Personnel Requirements

Category 1: Supervisors, managers, board members and people who may have unsupervised access to children and/or children’s information. This includes staff, volunteers, board members, contractors and anyone else representing one of HFHNZ, HFHNZ affiliates and Partner NGOs.

Category 2: All employees who do not fit into category 1. This includes employees of HFHNZ, all HFHNZ affiliates and Partner NGOs.

Category 3: All personnel who do not fit into category 1 or category 2. This includes personnel representing HFHNZ, HFHNZ affiliates and Partner NGOs. Includes employees, contractors, volunteers, directors, interns, consultants.

Child protection requirements for each role type	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3
Awareness of child protection issues and that each person has a responsibility to uphold the rights of the child at all times, through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Induction/orientation, including promotion of the role of the Child Protection Officer and possible indicators of child abuse • Provision of specialist training where required • Regular discussion of child protection matters in meetings and line management. 	X	X	X
Given a copy of the HFHNZ Child Protection Policy*	X	X	X
Responsibility to report potential child protection misconduct.	X	X	X
Expected to be able to recognise and be alert for the signs of potential safeguarding misconduct, such as abuse or exploitation.	X	X	X
Read and sign the CP Code of Conduct*	X	X	X
Re-read the CP policy* on a periodic basis.	X	X	X
Reference checking procedures including confirmation of identity and at least two comprehensive reference and character checks prior to the offering of any position. These reference checks will involve asking specifically about child safety and will be documented and filed accordingly (<i>see Appendix Eight: Suggested Interview and Reference Check Questions</i>)	X	X	
An assessment of the risk the person would pose to the safety of children if employed or engaged in any HFHNZ programme which will be updated every three years (<i>See Appendix Nine: Risk Matrix Example for New and Existing Personnel</i>)	X		

Exploration through interview processes of child protection issues (see Appendix Eight: Suggested Interview and Reference Check Questions)	X		
Criminal History checks at the point of recruitment and every three years	X		

* or equivalent document for Partner Organisation personnel e.g. Partner Organisation personnel may read and sign the Child Protection policy for the Partner Organisation rather than HFHNZ's Child Protection policy

➤ Role Categories Table

*Note that this table covers Affiliates and HFHNZ National Support Centre personnel only. Partner NGOs should complete their own categorisations of roles in relation to Child Protection in order to understand which requirements apply to which personnel.

Affiliate personnel		
Role	Details	Category
Directors	No probable contact with children or other vulnerable people but ultimately accountable for behaviour of staff and vols	Category 1
General Managers	Low probability of contact with children or other vulnerable people but responsible for many staff and vols who may have such contact.	Category 1
ReStore Managers	Low probability of contact with children or other vulnerable people but responsible for many staff and vols who may have such contact, including potentially vulnerable staff.	Category 1
Restore staff and volunteers who may supervise and/or have unsupervised access to under-18 volunteers or other children	Staff or volunteers have direct contact with children, which may include supervision of under-18 volunteers. This contact with children is unsupervised at times.	Category 1
ReStore staff who have no unsupervised access to children, including under-18 volunteers	High probability that there may be some contact with children or other vulnerable people but low probability that children will be unaccompanied	Category 2
ReStore volunteers who have no unsupervised access to children, including under-18 volunteers	High probability that there may be some contact with children or other vulnerable people but low probability that children will be unaccompanied	Category 3
Accompanied ReStore drivers and helpers (requirement for second, category 1, person to be present)	High probability that child will be present in house during inspection. High probability of contact with vulnerable people.	Category 2 (employees) or Category 3 (volunteers)

Unaccompanied ReStore drivers and helpers (no requirement for second person to be present)	High probability that child will be present in house during inspection. High probability of contact with vulnerable people. Possibility of unsupervised contact	Category 1
Affiliate Programme Managers	High probability that there may be some contact with children or other vulnerable people but low probability that children will be unaccompanied	Category 1
Family Services staff	High probability of contact with children or other vulnerable people. Potential for contact with unaccompanied child	Category 1
Family Services vols	High probability of contact with children or other vulnerable people. Potential for contact with unaccompanied child	Category 1
House Construction staff, contractors and vols	Children aged 15 and over may be on site as vols. Low potential for unaccompanied child to be on site except as a vol. High probability of contact with vulnerable people.	Category 1
Home Repair/Minor Repair Programme staff, contractors and vols	High probability that child will be present in house during inspection. Potential for unaccompanied child to be in same space as staff and/or volunteer. High probability of contact with vulnerable people.	Category 1 (employees) or Category 1 (volunteers)
Curtain Bank, Build and Touch With Kindness (TWK) staff and volunteers who may conduct unaccompanied home visits	High probability that child will be present in-house during visit. Potential for unaccompanied child to be in same space as staff and/or volunteer.	Category 1
Curtain Bank staff and vols who never conduct unaccompanied home visits	High probability that child will be present in house during inspection. No probability of contact with unaccompanied child. High probability of contact with vulnerable people.	Category 2 (employees) or Category 3 (volunteers)
Office and Admin workers with access to children's information	No probable direct contact with children or other vulnerable people, but may have access to children's information.	Category 1

Office and Admin workers who have no access to any children's information	No probable direct contact with children or other vulnerable people or access to children's information.	Category 2 (employees) or Category 3 (volunteers)
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HFHNZ National Support Centre Personnel

Role	Details	Category
HFHNZ Board members	No probable contact with children or other vulnerable people but ultimately accountable for behaviour of staff and vols	Category 1
Group CEO	No probability of contact with children or other vulnerable people but ultimately accountable for behaviour of staff and vols	Category 1
Child Protection Officers	Low probability of direct contact with children or other vulnerable people but must have thorough knowledge of Child Protection and be part of an investigation and process determination team. Will have access to children's information.	Category 1
Child Protection Administrator	Low probability of contact with children or other vulnerable people but must have thorough knowledge and understanding of Child Protection procedures. Will have access to all sensitive CP info in the org	Category 1
HFHNZ Managers	High probability of contact with children or other vulnerable people. No potential for contact with unaccompanied child. Responsible for staff and vols who may have contact with children and vulnerable people.	Category 1
HFHNZ International Programmes and Global Village staff (excluding managers)	High probability of contact with children or other vulnerable people. Potential for contact with unaccompanied child	Category 1

Other HFHNZ Office staff, contractors and volunteers	Low probability of direct contact with children or other vulnerable people	Category 2 (employees) or Category 3 (volunteers)
Global village volunteers	High probability of contact with children or other vulnerable people. Low potential for contact with unaccompanied child	Category 1

Appendix Eight

Suggested Interview and Reference Check Questions

➤ Suggested interview questions

Question source: Children's Action Plan

In addition to standard interview questions, a candidate for a HFHNZ personnel role should also be asked questions to determine whether they are suitable to be in contact with children, such as the following:

- What rewarding experiences have you had working/interacting with children?
- For what reason/s do you think that you get along with children/that children like you?
- What are your thoughts on interacting with children in this role?
- What would you do if you encountered a child who was difficult or disruptive in this role?
- What would you do if a child hit you while you were undertaking this role?
- What would you do if a child wanted to hug you while you were undertaking this role?
- What would you do if, while in this role, you encountered two children fighting, engaging in sexual play or stealing property?
- What would you do if a child invited you to become involved in intimate behaviour?
- What would you do if a child threatened to make a false allegation of abuse about you?
- What would you do if you observed a partner family member disciplining a child in a way which you felt was abusive or excessive?
- What would you do if the child of a partner family member disclosed abuse and/or an unsafe living situation to you?
- Have any complaints ever been made about your professional practice? If so, how have you responded to these?
- For what reasons have you left your previous jobs (involving contact with children)?
- What kind of relationships do you hope to develop with children and families through your involvement with HFHNZ?
- What do you believe constitutes professional practice when working with children?

If any answer to these questions should be cause for concern, these concerns should be documented and followed up with the CPO and relevant leader, with reference to confidentiality as per the above policy statement.

If the person is appointed, answers to these questions should be recorded and filed in the person's personnel file.

➤ **Suggested reference check questions**

Question source: Children's Action Plan

In addition to standard reference check questions, a candidate for a HFHNZ personnel role should also be asked questions to determine whether the candidate is suitable to be in contact with children, such as the following:

- How long have you known the applicant and in what capacity?
- What strengths does/would [the person] bring to their interactions with children?
- Would you consider [the person] to be a positive role model for children?
- Please could you detail any interaction with children [the person] had in this role?
- Do you have any concerns about [the person's] safety to work with children?
- Has anything you observed of [the person] ever given you cause for concern were this role to involve them being in contact with children?
- From your knowledge of [the person], how do you think they would respond in a situation where they were under pressure with children?
- Do you have any recommendations about [the person]'s interactions with children in this role?
- Is there anything else you would like to say?

If any answer to these questions should be cause for concern, these concerns should be documented and followed up with the CPO and relevant leader, with reference to confidentiality as per the above policy statement.

If the person is appointed, answers to these questions should be recorded and filed in the person's personnel file.

Appendix Nine
Risk Matrix Example for New and Existing Personnel

Method of assessing risk	Results concerning	More information needed	Results indicate low risk	Notes
Identity confirmation (using ID and reference check)				
Results of Criminal History Check*				
Offence history (if known)				
Interview questions relating to suitability for working in contact with children*				
Reference questions relating to suitability for working in contact with children*				
For existing personnel, have they been observed acting appropriately in the presence of children and around the vulnerable				
For existing personnel, what child protection training have they attended				
For existing personnel, what level of supervision has been undertaken				
For existing personnel, have any complaints been received against them and, if so, what have been the nature of these complaints				
Overall assessment of risk				

* For those whose roles will involve unsupervised access to children, or supervision of others, a Criminal History check is mandatory.