



Date 29/1/2025

Child Protection Policy

Purpose: To protect children involved in or affected by Shield and Rebuild's services, in compliance with Australian child protection laws, including the **Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)** and relevant state and territory legislation.

Policy:

1. Working with Children Checks (WWCC):

- All staff and volunteers who have direct or indirect contact with children must possess a valid **Working with Children Check (WWCC)** as mandated by their respective state or territory.
- The WWCC must be verified before employment or volunteer engagement begins.
- Regular renewal of WWCC is required, and non-compliance will result in immediate suspension from child-related duties.

2. Mandatory Reporting:

- Any suspicion, disclosure, or reasonable belief of child abuse or neglect must be reported to the relevant child protection authority, such as **Child Protection Helpline (NSW), Department of Child Safety (QLD), or DHHS Child Protection (VIC)**.
- Staff and volunteers must report concerns immediately to their supervisor and directly to the relevant authorities as required by law.
- Failure to report known or suspected child abuse may result in legal consequences under **mandatory reporting laws**.

3. Child Safety Training:

- All staff and volunteers must complete **mandatory child protection training** annually.
- Training will cover recognizing signs of abuse, appropriate responses, reporting procedures, and creating child-safe environments.
- Additional training will be provided to staff working in specialized roles involving high-risk or vulnerable children.

4. Safe Interaction and Conduct:

- Shield and Rebuild maintains a strict **Child Safe Code of Conduct**, prohibiting inappropriate behavior, language, or physical contact with children.
- Staff must ensure all interactions with children occur in **open and observable settings**.
- Any breach of conduct will result in disciplinary action, including termination and legal referral if necessary.

5. Risk Assessment and Prevention:

- Regular **risk assessments** will be conducted in programs involving children to identify potential safety hazards.
- Child protection policies will be reviewed annually to align with updated laws and best practices.

6. Confidentiality and Record Keeping:

- Reports of suspected child abuse will be securely documented and retained as per **Australian data protection and privacy laws**.
- Confidentiality must be maintained, except when sharing information with authorities as required by law.



SHIELD & REBUILD
FUTURES SECURED HOPE RESTORED

7. Child-Centered Approach:

- Children's voices will be heard, and their rights respected.
- Shield and Rebuild will promote child participation in decision-making processes relevant to their safety and well-being.

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as per legislative changes to ensure compliance with Australian child protection laws and best practices.