

Statement of Commitment

to the Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People

The Benevolent Society has a long history of working with children, young people and their families across a range of services including early childhood development and education; school and pre-school readiness; mental health and wellbeing; specialist family support, disability services; carer support and foster care.

The safety and wellbeing of our clients is paramount to our vision of all Australians living their best life. Our statement of commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people has been developed because we recognise that children and young people require special care to protect them from harm and we recognise the inherent power differences that exist between children, young people and adults, particularly those providing services to vulnerable children.

Our statement of commitment is the foundation for creating and maintaining a child safe and child friendly organisation. We are committed to upholding the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people that access our services. Every child and young person has the right to feel safe and be safe from physical, emotional, psychological, sexual and cultural abuse and neglect. Our statement of commitment has been developed to guide the decisions and actions of our employees, volunteers and carers who work, or come into contact, with children and young people.

Commitment Statement

Our organisation is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people and will endeavour to provide a safe and supportive service environment for children and young people by ensuring:

- We advocate the importance of child safety and wellbeing both internally and externally.
- We have effective child-focused policies and procedures in place for recruiting, selecting, training, and managing employees, volunteers, students and carers.
- We have robust systems and processes for preventing, identifying and responding to risks to the safety (including the prevention of all forms of harm, abuse and neglect) and wellbeing of people using services that are documented and clearly communicated to our employees, students, volunteers and carers.
- We regularly seek feedback and consult with children and young people to ensure their voices and wishes are heard and acted upon.
- We have systems for managing complaints and concerns that are accessible to children and young people and responsive to their needs.
- We review child protection policy documents to ensure they reflect current best practice, recommended guidelines and legislation.
- We have a code of conduct for employees, volunteers and carers that outlines expected standards of behaviour for interacting with all our clients, including children and young people in our service environments.
- We review our physical and on-line environments to promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

The following values reflect the culture that we are committed to promoting within our organisation:



Integrity

We are ethical, trustworthy and responsible. Those who come into contact with us will experience us as open, just and reliable.



Respect

We show regard and appreciation for all people from all walks of life and honour human difference and diversity.



Collaboration

We work jointly with others. We believe that together we can tackle the things that prevent communities and society from being caring and just.



Effectiveness

We are focused on, and accountable for, performance and outcomes. Our efforts are directed at reaching and fulfilling our Vision.



Optimism

We are hopeful that even the most complex issues can be solved and we work towards the best possible results for clients and their communities.

Guiding Principles

- We understand and acknowledge that keeping children and young people safe is a shared responsibility and we are committed to working with families and communities to keep children and young people safe.
- All children and young people have the right to feel safe and secure, to have opportunities to achieve their full potential, to actively participate in decisions about their lives and feel optimistic about their futures.
- The Board and Management will provide strong leadership and will exemplify The Benevolent Society's values in supporting the protection of children and young people from abuse and neglect.
- The Benevolent Society's policies and procedures are aligned with the organisation's vision and purpose. Our organisation's values of optimism, integrity, respect, collaboration and effectiveness underpin this policy.

Every child and young person has the right to feel safe and be safe from physical, emotional, psychological, sexual and cultural abuse and neglect

Responsibilities and Commitment Statement Owner

Executive Director, Child & Family

Consultation and approval

The following were consulted in the development of this policy:

- Child Safe Organisation Risk, Quality and Compliance project group
- Senior Leadership Team
- Queensland Area Management Team
- Risk, Quality and Compliance Committee

This Statement of Commitment was reviewed in October 2020 and was approved by the Executive Director, Child & Family. For further information in regards to our Risk Management Strategy for the safety and wellbeing of children and young people please contact Executive Director, Child, Youth and Family, Practice and Quality on 07 3170 4600.