

010 – CHILDREN AND OTHER VULNERABLE PERSONS PROTECTION POLICY STRATEGIC POLICY



POLICY TITLE:	010 – CHILDREN AND OTHER VULNERABLE PERSONS PROTECTION POLICY		
VERSION:	004	DATE EFFECTIVE:	01/06/2016
AUTHORISED BY:	Chairperson	DATE REVIEWED:	09/05/2022

PURPOSE

To create an environment which minimises risks to the safety and wellbeing of children and adults who have a disability who use or access the services of ARC Disability Services Inc. (ARC).

SCOPE

This policy must be adhered to by all persons associated with the organisation, including employees, volunteers, participants and family / carers. This policy must be adhered to at all times when a person is working, volunteering with or representing the organisation.

- Employees
- Volunteers
- Parents/carers
- Children & Adults who use the services of ARC
- Contractors, and
- Members

IMPLEMENTATION

ARC Disability Services Inc. (ARC) is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and adults with disabilities who use or access services. Our workers will treat all participants with respect and understanding at all times. To ensure children and adults with disabilities are kept safe from harm, employees and volunteers will adhere to the Policies and Procedures of ARC as listed below as per the requirements of the NDIS Quality and Safeguards framework and the Human Rights Act (2019)

PRINCIPLES

This code of practice is based on the following principles:

- A child is a person under the age of 18.
- A vulnerable person is a person who has limited capacity for self-protection due to the effects of their disability.
- An acknowledgement that children and vulnerable people can be victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.
- Abuse can have serious and long-term effects on all aspects of a person's health, development and well-being. Sustained abuse is likely to have a deep effect on a person's self-image, self-esteem and future life.
- The safety and welfare of the person is paramount and ARC will ensure to help prevent abuse and to act on any concerns.
- All children and persons with a disability have the right to live in safety and be protected from abuse and neglect.
- Children and people with a disability must be listened to, and any allegation or suspicion that they have been the victims of abuse or ill treatment will be taken seriously and responded to promptly and appropriately.
- This policy applies to all children and persons with a disability irrespective of their race, culture, religion or belief, language, gender, age, disability or sexual orientation.
- ARC will take all reasonable steps to ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working with children or people with a disability, through its recruitment practices, Worker Suitability Status and induction procedures.
- Those in a position of trust should have a clear understanding of the responsibilities this carries and should not abuse their position or put themselves in a position where allegations of abuse, whether justified or unfounded, could be made.
- All employees, volunteers and members of ARC have a duty to raise concerns, without prejudice to their own position, of behaviour by staff, managers, volunteers, students or others, which may be harmful to those in their care and will receive appropriate support when doing so.
- ARC is committed to providing on-going child protection and vulnerable person training for all those working with participants.

POLICY	Document No.: GOV03-FORM-01	Version No.: 1A
Release Date: 12 February 2020	Uncontrolled if Printed	Page 1 of 3

FORMS OF ABUSE

There are five main forms of abuse, although there are variations within these.

PHYSICAL ABUSE

This involves deliberate physical harm; it includes hitting, shaking, throwing, squeezing, burning and biting as well as giving alcohol, inappropriate drugs or poisonous substances. It also includes attempted suffocation or drowning.

SEXUAL ABUSE

This involves forcing or enticing a child or vulnerable person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening and involves the use of these persons by adults to meet their own sexual needs. This could include direct sexual activity, penetrative or non-penetrative acts, masturbation, taking indecent photos or videos or showing pornographic material or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

NEGLECT

This involves the failure to meet the child or vulnerable persons physical and/or psychological needs and is likely to result in the serious impairment of the individuals' health or development. It may involve a failure to provide food, warmth, clothing, love affection, attention and recognition or a failure to protect the individual from physical harm or danger or a failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

This involves the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child or adult with a disability such as to cause a severe and adverse effect on the individuals' emotional development. As well as a persistent lack of love and attention, this includes constant criticism, threats, taunting and words and actions that demean the individual. Within a support setting it may include the persistent putting down of the individuals' ability or work. It may involve conveying to the individual that they are worthless or unloved or inadequate. It may involve causing the individual to feel frightened or in danger or the exploitation or corruption of the individual. There is some level of emotional abuse in all types of abuse, but it can also occur alone.

BULLYING

This is deliberate, hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. Bullying can be verbal, written or physical.

RISK MANAGEMENT

ARC will implement and monitor specific risk management strategies as outlined in the Risk Management Strategy framework for children and adults with a disability.

ARC will ensure that all employment practices minimise risk by requiring current worker suitability blue cards from all employees, undertake an interview and a minimum of one reference check is required on all prospective employees.

ARC will ensure that all new employees receive a detailed induction which will include information on prevention of abuse and neglect, reporting procedures and expectations of staff.

All employees of ARC will receive regular supervision. Supervision will be an avenue to identify training and skill development requirements and to ensure that employees maintain the standards expected by ARC.

ARC will implement and maintain various registers and forms to be able to effectively monitor and manage the protection of children and adults with a disability with whom it provides a service.

ARC has a Code of Conduct which employees receive and sign on commencement of employment

ARC has a 24 hour on call service to which all employees have access to for support or advice for any concerns, queries or incidents in relation to the protection of a child or adult with a disability.

POLICY	Document No.: GOV03-FORM-01	Version No.: 1A
Release Date: 12 February 2020	Uncontrolled if Printed	Page 2 of 3

010 – CHILDREN AND OTHER VULNERABLE PERSONS PROTECTION POLICY STRATEGIC POLICY



ARC has access to a range of resources and information in relation to protection of a child or adult with a disability.

IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY

A copy of this policy will be provided to all employees.

MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE

ARC will record any incidents or concerns related to the protection of a child or adult with a disability and prepare appropriate reports or referrals as legally required. Confidentiality will be maintained at all times, and any concerns or patterns that emerge will be dealt with appropriately. Feedback will be sought from participants on all aspects of protection in relation to supports with children and adults with a disability. The Management and Coordination team also carries out unannounced visits on employees whilst at work at unspecified times and days ensuring compliance of the protection policy. Additionally, ARC works collaboratively with the Community Visitor Program within the Short Term Accommodation and Supported Independent Living services.

DATA PROTECTION

Any information regarding the protection of a child or adult with a disability will be stored in a secure place and there will be limited access to this information. Information relating to any disclosures will be documented on a Critical Incident form and submitted to the NDIA Quality and Safeguards Commission; the Commission for Children and young people and child guardian; or police as appropriate.

EVALUATION AND REVIEW

ARC will review and evaluate this policy and associated procedures and documentation on a biannual basis as part of the internal audit.

CONTACTS

NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission	1800 035 544
Department Child Safety	1300 684 062
Kids Helpline	1800 551 800
National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline	1800 880 052
Police	000
Crisis Care	1800 177 135

REFERENCES

NDIS Quality and Safeguards framework
Human Rights Act (2019)

AUTHORISATION

This Policy is approved and issued by:

Elizabeth Brown

Chairperson

POLICY	Document No.: GOV03-FORM-01	Version No.: 1A
Release Date: 12 February 2020	Uncontrolled if Printed	Page 3 of 3