

Directions Health Services Limited

Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

Date: 29.10.2024

Directions Health Services is fully committed to the health and wellbeing of children and young people and to achieving positive outcomes for them. We are guided by the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and ensure that our **ICARE values—Integrity, Compassion, Acceptance, Respect, and Excellence**—are fully embedded in all the work we do with children and young people. In our commitment to child safety principles, we ensure that children and young people are safe and free from harm or abuse while in our duty of care.

Our T25 clinics and Youth Services programs, operating in both the ACT and NSW, are designed to provide holistic trauma informed support, offering:

- Drug and alcohol information and treatment
- Case management, advocacy, and practical support
- Medical advice and treatment
- Sexual and reproductive health information, testing, and treatment
- Peer support
- Mental health support
- Connections with other relevant services
- Family and carer support
- Referral to other services

Our Commitment to Children and Young People

At Directions Health Services, we are deeply committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people who interact with our organisation. We believe every child has the right to feel safe, respected, and valued, and we take active steps to provide a supportive and protective environment.

We will:

- Prioritise the physical, emotional and psychological safety of children and young people in all our programs and services.
- Listen to young people, acknowledging their rights, identities, cultures and experiences, and actively incorporate their feedback into our services.
- Provide child and youth friendly materials in accessible language and formats, including clear avenues for raising concerns and seeking help.

- Ensure timely access to quality primary health, counselling and support services that are free, non-judgmental and supportive.
- Inform and display posters outlining the roles and responsibilities of children and young people in promoting their peers' safety and wellbeing.
- Recognise that young people often possess the understanding necessary to make informed decisions about their own health and lives, considering their maturity when evaluating their competence.
- Provide trauma informed services that seek to address the holistic needs of young people, delivered in an appropriate way that is responsive to their current living circumstances.

Our Commitment to Parents, Carers, Families, and Their Communities

We understand the crucial role that parents, carers, families and communities play in creating and maintaining a safe environment for children. At Directions Health Services, we work in partnership with families, friends, schools and natural supports to ensure their voices are heard and their concerns addressed.

We will:

- Foster open and transparent communication with families and carers about the safety measures we have implemented.
- Provide clear information on our policies and commitments regarding child safety.
- Ensure families are aware of how to raise concerns or provide feedback.
- Encourage collaboration with parents and carers to promote a safe and nurturing environment for children.
- Offer support and education to families and communities to help them understand their roles in creating a child-safe environment.

Our Commitment to Being a Child-Safe Organisation

At Directions child safety practices are embedded in our work practices from planning and decision-making at a governance level, through to our daily operations. As a child-safe organisation, we are dedicated to creating a culture of safety and respect for children and young people.

We will:

- Regularly review and update our policies and procedures to stay aligned with child safety best practices and child safety legislation, including maintaining a dedicated Child Safe Policy and Child Safe Code of Conduct.
- Feature our Commitment to Child Safety in our annual report and on our website, ensuring prior consultation with our teams and young people.
- Prioritise child safety and wellbeing in our HR practices, from job advertisements and recruitment to reference checks, staff and volunteer inductions.
- Require staff and volunteers to understand the National Child Safety Principles and complete child safety training.

- Ensure that all staff working with children are fit and proper and hold a valid Working with Children card.
- Ensure that both the physical and digital environments for young people accessing our services are safe.
- Foster a culture of accountability where staff and community members feel empowered to voice any concerns regarding child safety.
- Continuously assess, address and mitigate potential risks to child safety across our services, programs, and facilities.
- Implement strong reporting mechanisms for any concerns or incidents related to child safety, making them easily accessible to all staff, families, and children.

Next Review Date: 29.10.2025