

PARTICIPANT PRIVACY SAFETY AND DIGNITY

Scope

For staff and volunteers working with children, young people and people with a disability in MDNSW services and programs.

This document should be read with the [NDIS Code of conduct for Workers](#) and our [Incident Management System](#).

Person Centred Supports

MDNSW provides person-centred supports, working in collaboration with participants to develop services and supports that suit their individual goals and needs. Supports are provided based on the participants choices and preferences. We consult with the participant and their community from the development to the delivery of programs and throughout their involvement with us.

All team members/workers are required to treat participants with dignity and respect and always protect their privacy, particularly when providing personal care. Each participant should have access to supports that respect and protect their dignity and right to privacy.

Participant Choice and Independence

Workers will work within the participants plans that are developed with the participant and include their preferences for how supports are provided including their worker preferences for personal care supports. **Workers should always ask participants how they wish to be supported in each situation** before providing supports. Workers should always explain what is involved in a personal support and ask the participant's permission before providing it.

Personal supports may include healthcare supports or assisting with daily hygiene routines like toileting or showering or dressing. Asking permission places the choice and control with the participant and empowers them in the situation. Participants also have the right to refuse a support. If this happens, check with a supervisor for next steps.

MDNSW create an environment that is safe for children and people with a disability to raise their concerns, tell us how they would like things done, have their rights respected and feel empowered.

The aim is to support participants to:

- Assert their rights to feel safe
- Make decisions regarding their bodies and personal space
- Speak up – tell us what is ok and what isn't
- Raise complaints independently or seek support to make a complaint

Support networks

It is important for participants, including children and young people, to know they have people who are there to help them if they encounter an abuser. Providing participants with a network of people who will support them is an important aspect of protective behaviours.

MDNSW works with the child or young person's family, carers and other members of their support network to ensure there is a circle of support for the child or young person.

Prevention of Abuse

MDNSW conducts rigorous recruitment and screening policies and procedures to ensure it engages the right people to provide safe supports.

The screening process includes requirements for proof of identity, NDIS Worker Screening Checks, and Working with Children's Checks.

Workers receive extensive training in providing safe supports.

All workers carry ID or wear lanyards with their ID.

Recognising and reporting signs of abuse

All people with disability including children have the right to access services and supports free from violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination.

MDNSW staff are trained to recognise and report abuse.

Refer to the Incident Management System, Appendix 2 for identifying signs of abuse. If you are concerned or unsure about the wellbeing of a participant, report your concerns to a supervisor immediately.

Training includes [Child Safe Training.pptx](#), [Abuse Neglect & Exploitation training.pptx](#) and [What-is-Abuse-Neglect-and-Exploitation.pdf \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)

Personal Privacy and Dignity

MDNSW provides some services of a highly personal nature, such as showering, dressing and other personal care services in our short-stay programs. It is important to provide participants, including children, with as much privacy as possible to protect their personal dignity.

Watch this video for valuable insights into how people with lived experience feel about receiving personal care supports: <https://youtu.be/YOHvS9C897E>

Working one-to-one with children, young people and people with disabilities

The following summary of expectations applies to all situations where staff, support workers or volunteers are providing one-to-one support e.g.:

- Personal care, including dressing
- Toileting assistance
- Helping them into bed
- Showering

Make it respectful and person-centred

- Always show respect to the person you are supporting
- Always ask permission to provide the support
- Always talk through the process when providing the support

Make it 'public'

- Have another person busy in the room or nearby when providing supports to children

- Do not use personal email, phones, social media, apps or websites to communicate with participants, particularly children and young people (refer to our Social Media Policy)

Make it authorised

- Parents/participants should be informed and give consent to personal care supports (Application Form)
- Seek additional verbal consent from the participant each time before delivering the support
- The activity must be authorised by the team leader
- The activity is a legitimate part of your role

Make it professional

- Always be respectful and courteous
- As far as possible, provide supports during normal work hours
- Supports should be concise and not unnecessarily prolonged

Make it purposeful

- The activity addresses or is linked to an identified wellbeing and/or learning need of the participant.

And always report any concerns to a supervisor.

CONDUCTING HOME VISITS

MDNSW conducts home visits if requested by the participant, as a component of our support coordination service. MDNSW support coordinators do not provide personal care to participants. Identifying abuse, neglect and exploitation is part of the role of MDNSW Support Coordinators, and training in recognising and reporting abuse is mandatory.

MDNSW is aware of the vulnerability of certain participant groups when conducting unsupervised home visits.

There measures in place to manage these risks including our Incident Management System, Risk Management framework, Complaints Feedback and Resolution policy, Complaints forms, complaints & feedback on website, Safe home visiting checklist and Participant Risk Assessments.

Staff must ensure they follow the [Safe Home Visiting Policy](#). The key principle is that a home visit should place no one at unreasonable risk and that identified minor risks are consciously managed. A summary of general expectations is provided below.

Inform

Home visits or transport arrangements must be authorised and documented by management and the site must have information about when and where visits are being undertaken, the expected outcomes and return times.

Prepare

All available information about the safety of the proposed visit must be considered and risks managed (See [Safe Home Visiting Checklist](#))

- Mobile phones must be taken, ID should be visible
- Inform parents of intended visit if the participant is under 18

- Confirm meetings with participants

Protect

- A colleague should accompany a staff member carrying out a home visit if there are any identified safety concerns
- Do not enter the house if parents of a child are not at home
- Speak with the participant where parents are present or clearly visible
- Document all visits in case notes
- Be aware of signs of abuse in vulnerable participant groups, including adults (see Incident Management System, Appendix 2)

Report

- If signs of violence, abuse (including sexual abuse), neglect or exploitation are evident, report it to the relevant authority - see [Reportable Incidents](#) for more information.

Appropriate physical contact by staff, support workers or volunteers to assist or encourage a child or young person

At times, staff and volunteers will be required to give practical assistance to a child or young person who is hurt or needs assistance or encouragement. Examples of appropriate physical contact are:

- administration of first aid
- supporting children and young people who have hurt themselves
- assisting with the toileting and personal care needs of a child or young person with a disability (an individual plan for children and young people with these needs must have been negotiated with parents. (See Camper Application Form)
- non-intrusive gestures to comfort a child or young person who is experiencing grief and loss or distress, such as a hand on the upper arm or upper back
- non-intrusive touch (eg congratulating a child or young person by shaking hands or a pat on the upper arm or back). Staff should remember the importance of accompanying such touch with positive and encouraging words.

Refer also to our [Child Safe Policy](#) and [Duty of Care and Dignity of Risk Policy](#), MDNSW's [Code of Conduct](#) and the [NDIS Code of conduct for Workers](#).

Legislation:

The *National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013* provides the legislative basis for the provision of services to people with a disability.

The *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act (1998)* governs the care and protection of children and young people in NSW. This legislation provides the framework for the development of any behaviour management policy pertaining to children and young persons in out-of-home care placement.

Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Regulation (2000).

The *Guardianship Act (1987)* plus *Guardianship Regulations (2005)* specify the conditions governing the appointment of Guardians who may be authorised to consent to treatment and restrictive management strategies for the management of challenging behaviour for people over the age of 16 years.

Other relevant legislation includes:

- *Anti-Discrimination Act (1977)*;
- *Mental Health Act (2007)*;
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act (2000)*, and;
- *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation (2001)*.

The National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline

- Freecall: 1800 880 052
- TTY: 1800 301 130
- National relay service: 1800 555 677
- Translating and interpreting service: 13 14 50
- Email: hotline@workfocus.com
- Web: www.disabilityhotline.net.au

More information:

<http://www.daru.org.au/wp/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/VPE-Discussion-Paper.pdf>

https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/784/SAFE_Series_userguide.pdf.aspx?Embed=Y

https://www.education.sa.gov.au/sites/g/files/net691/f/protective_practices_for_staff_in_their_interactions_with_children_and_young_people.pdf

Policy Review

Changes Made	Name and Role	Date of Review	Version #	Date Approved	Next Review Date
<i>Reviewed NDIS Practice Standards for updates, minor wording changes made</i>	<i>Keely Thompson – HR & Quality Coordinator</i>	<i>02/05/2022</i>	<i>V5</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>May 2023</i>