

The logo for CITC (Construction Industry Training Centre) features the letters 'CITC' in a bold, orange, sans-serif font.

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CITC 3.3 - Child Protection Policy

Outlines the CITC's responsibility to minors and the processes involved in reporting concerns.

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General Statement of Policy

The CITC is committed to promoting and enhancing the safety and welfare of any child who is under 18 years of age who is attending training at the CITC. All staff, trainers, contractors and subcontractors must act with propriety to protect the children in their care.

This policy highlights the need for understanding the complexity of child abuse and emphasises that staff, trainers, contractors and subcontractors must take action when child abuse is suspected.

The CITC recognises the legal obligations under the Children's Protection Act, 1993 insisting that all staff, trainers, contractors and subcontractors have a satisfactory South Australian Police Clearance prior to employment as well as relevant training and education. Additionally all training and administration personnel who are likely to directly deal with persons under 18 will be required to undertake Mandated Notifier Training and DCSI scanning every 3 years in lieu of the police check. Personnel will be selected based on the risk assessment completed bi-annually. Personnel who undertake similar screening and training externally to their role at CITC may receive recognition of this at the discretion of management.

The CITC operates under the Standards for RTOs 2015 and Commonwealth, State/Territory legislation and regulatory requirements, as recognition of its legal obligations as an educational institution to provide a high level of Vocational Education Training in a fair, efficient and effective manner. See CITC 10.12 - External Documents, Legislation, Regulations and Policies for details.

Key Definitions

Throughout this document:

- ◆ Abuse – refers to all aspects of abuse – neglect, physical, emotional and sexual.
- ◆ Child – refers to children, students and young people under 18 years of age.
- ◆ Trainers – refers to all employed trainers, contractors and subcontractors who teach and assess courses on behalf of the CITC.
- ◆ Staff – refers to all employed staff from fulltime management to casually employed administration assistants.
- ◆ Parent – refers to parent, guardian and caregiver.

This policy is based upon the following principles:

- ◆ The safety of children is the paramount consideration.
- ◆ Children are the most vulnerable members of our society.
- ◆ Children need to know and believe that they have the right to be safe at all times.
- ◆ Children are entitled to basic human rights regardless of special needs, cultural or socio-economic factors.
- ◆ Children are people in their own right deserving of respect, care and protection.
- ◆ Children are entitled to the support of a person to act as an advocate on their behalf.

It is an expectation of the CITC that all staff and trainers will act in a positive way to develop a safe environment for children in their care and will take the action required to fulfil their duty of care.

Key Responsibilities of Staff and Trainers

Responsibilities

- ◆ Exercise a duty of care to protect children and keep them safe.
- ◆ Be aware of the definitions of abuse and neglect as contained in the Children's Protection Act, 1993.
- ◆ Report suspicion of child abuse and neglect as required by the Children's Protection Act, 1993.
- ◆ Provide children with child protection and abuse prevention programs.

To fulfil these responsibilities the following activities are essential:

- ◆ Provide ongoing training and development for staff and trainers to enable them to fulfil their key responsibilities.
- ◆ Establish supportive procedures for fulfilling mandatory reporting obligations.
- ◆ Establish, monitor and review child protection policies and abuse prevention procedures.

Policy Outcomes

The CITC is committed to the following outcomes for the benefit of all children:

1. Ensure a safe environment, emotionally and physically for children at the CITC.
2. Staff and trainers are sensitive and responsive to changes in behaviour which may be indicative of abuse.
3. Staff and trainers understand their obligations and responsibilities as mandated notifiers.
4. Staff and trainers are aware of the mandatory reporting procedures for reporting child abuse or neglect.
5. Staff and trainers are aware of support mechanisms to assist them.
6. Staff and trainers participate in training and development.

Policy Responsibilities

All staff and trainers are accountable to the CEO who is responsible for:

1. Education of staff and trainers in the protection of children.
2. Ensuring access to counselling for staff and trainers who experience distress in dealing with child abuse.
3. Ensuring all staff and trainers understand roles and responsibilities in mandatory reporting procedures.
4. Ensuring the privacy and confidentiality of any matter of abuse or neglect.
5. Ensuring all staff and trainers are informed of all any changes to legislation in a timely manner.

All staff and trainers are responsible for:

1. Understanding their legal obligations under the Children's Protection Act, 1993.
2. Understanding the correct procedure when notifying suspicion of child abuse.
3. Reviewing their legal obligations at least annually to ensure currency.
4. Actively participate in any training and education offered for the handling of disclosures and notifications.
5. Ensuring the presentation of a South Australian Police Clearance upon employment at the CITC, DCSI Scanning and/or Mandated Notifier Training as designated by management for their job role. All three of these must be renewed every 3 years.

All staff and trainers including the CEO are responsible for:

1. Understand obligations by law to report child abuse if suspicion is based on reasonable grounds.
2. Understand obligations by law to report child abuse if the suspicion has been formed in the course of work and/or carrying out official duties.
3. Ensuring all children are treated with respect and dignity.
4. Child safety is addressed effectively.
5. Ensuring all children have access to child protection.
6. Actively encourage children to confide in them and give them the opportunity to do so.
7. Remain aware of behaviour changes that might indicate suspicion of abuse or neglect.

Legal Responsibilities & Confidentially

For all Staff and Trainers the following applies:

1. It is your personal responsibility to report suspected abuse and neglect – not the responsibility of the CITC or management.
2. Staff and trainers do not have to be able to prove that the abuse has occurred.
3. A statement must accompany your notification – which can be verbal – of the observations and factual information upon which the suspicion is based.
4. Staff and trainers are immune from civil liability for reporting suspicions in good faith – Section 12 (a), Children's Protection Act, 1993.
5. Staff and trainers are entitled to feedback about the way any notification is managed by the Family and Youth Services Department.
6. It is the intention of the act to keep the identity of a mandated notifier confidential.
7. Under the Act, your identity as the notifier will not be disclosed unless:
 - ◆ The disclosure is made in the course of 'official duties' to another person acting in the course of 'official duties'. For example police acting in the matter of a criminal prosecution may need to take a statement for a staff member or trainer who has made the notification.
 - ◆ The court deems the identity of the notifier is evidence.
 - ◆ Staff and trainers have consented to the release of your name.

8. It is not necessary to know the identity of the alleged perpetrator or the relationship to the child to make a notification.
9. All reasonable suspicions MUST be reported without delay.

CONTACT THE CHILD ABUSE REPORT LINE 13 14 78

Reasonable Grounds

Reasonable grounds to notify suspected abuse or neglect may include the following:

1. When a child tells you she/he has been abused.
2. When your own observations of a child's behaviour and/or injuries or your knowledge of children generally leads you to suspect abuse is occurring.
3. A child tells you she/he knows someone who has been abused but you suspect she/he is the one being abused.
4. When someone else tells you (perhaps a relative, friend, neighbour or sibling) who is a position to provide reliable information.

SA Information Sharing Guidelines

If the behaviour or language of an adult student leads you to be concerned about the safety of a child who is not a student at CITC.

If you are concerned regarding the potential treatment of a minor as outlined in the [Information Sharing Guidelines](#), you must see the CEO, the Scheduling/Office Manager or Operations Manager. Only they are allowed to further this action.

IF YOU ARE UNSURE – CONTACT THE CHILD ABUSE LINE FOR ADVICE

Assisting the Child

When a child tells you that she/he has been abused, she/he may be feeling scared, guilty, ashamed, angry and powerless. As a person you, in turn may feel a sense of outrage, disgust, sadness, anger and sometimes disbelief.

It is important to remain calm and in control and to reassure the child you will do your best to support and protect her/him.

You can show you care by:

- ◆ Listening carefully.
- ◆ Telling the child you believe her/him.
- ◆ If this is the first time a child has informed anyone, be aware of the emotional distress that child may be experiencing.
- ◆ Approach the child in a sensitive and caring manner.

Do NOT:

- ◆ Make promises you cannot keep.
- ◆ Push the child into giving details of the abuse.
- ◆ Conduct an investigation which may prejudice any subsequent legal investigation.
- ◆ Indiscriminately discuss the circumstances of the child with others not directly involved.
- ◆ Disbelieve the child.
- ◆ Fail to make a notification to the department.

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