

CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING POLICY

Purpose and Scope

This policy states the Butterfly Foundation’s (Butterfly’s) commitment to provide a safe environment for children and young people under the age of 18 (children/child), with whom we have contact: This policy relates to our obligations under the Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 (NSW), the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (VIC), The Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act (Tas) 1997 and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

Responsibilities and delegations

This policy applies to	All employees, contractors, volunteers, children, parents, carers and other individuals involved at Butterfly.
Policy approval	Board
Review Period	2 years

Our Commitment to Child Safety

Butterfly supports, treats, and educates thousands of children every year. All children who come into contact with Butterfly have a right to feel and be safe. Butterfly is committed to the safety and well-being of all children accessing our services, and the welfare of the children in our care will always be a top priority. Butterfly aims to create a child-safe and child-friendly environment where all children are valued and feel safe.

Children’s Participation

This policy is intended to empower children who access Butterfly services or participate in our programs. We listen to their views and respect what they have to say. We listen to and act on any concerns children, their parents or carers, raise with us while accessing our services.

We promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and children with a disability. Employees of Butterfly value diversity and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices.

Families and Communities

Butterfly recognises the important role of families and involves parents and carers when making significant decisions about their child. Parents, families and communities are welcome to provide feedback at any time and are encouraged to raise any concerns they have with us.

Recruitment Practices

Butterfly takes all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children. We interview, conduct referee checks and require a valid Working with Children Check clearance and a National Police Check for all employees.

- A failure to obtain a Working with Children Check clearance or an unsatisfactory National Police Check may result in the offer of appointment being withdrawn and/or the employment contract being terminated.

- Employees must advise Butterfly of any change in their Working With Children Check or criminal record that occurs during the term of their employment.

Code of Conduct

One of the principles identified within our Code of Conduct is that *"We are committed to the safety and well-being of all children and young people accessing our services, and the welfare of children in our care will always be a top priority"*.

Risk Management

Butterfly takes steps to minimise the risks to children or young people due to the actions or omissions of staff, contractors, or other people within our organisation. We review our risks regularly to address any new or emerging risks in order to maintain a safe environment for children. Strategies we have implemented (in addition to those referenced in our Code of Conduct) to minimise and control risks to children include:

- All staff must have a valid Working with Children Check
- Staff must consider whether a parent or chaperone is required to be present when participating in a program or service
- Staff are made aware of and are responsive to the particular needs and vulnerabilities of children (such as age, language barriers, developmental capabilities, disability, mental health, trauma or abuse)
- Staff ensure that, where diagnosis or treatment requires an image or footage of a child or young person to be taken, the child, young person and their parents or carers (where applicable) clearly understand the way the image or footage will be used.
- Formal consent and approval must be obtained before any images or footage is taken of children.
- Staff ensure that client records, including images of children and young people, are securely managed and stored in accordance with practice policy and relevant legislative requirements.

Evaluation of these strategies and the development of additional strategies to minimise and control risks to children occurs as part of our ongoing risk management process.

Complaints and Reporting

All complaints associated with child safety concerns will be treated seriously, whether they are made by an adult or a child. All complaints will be responded to promptly and thoroughly. Complaints should be managed as in our Feedback and Complaints Policy.

Sometimes as part of the support and care we provide to children; our staff may become concerned about the child's safety within their household. All clinical staff are registered with AHPRA, AASW or PACFA, and thus follow legal and ethical guidelines set out for their discipline - e.g., mandatory reporting. Clients are informed of how we manage risk through our consent forms and client handbooks. If a non-clinical staff member becomes concerned about the safety of a child we are engaging with, they should raise this concern with their manager and the HR Manager.

We track all child protection reports through our risk management system and review them regular as per our Incident Management and Procedure Policy.

If there is concern for the immediate safety of a child, immediately call 000.

Support for Employees and Volunteers

The Butterfly Foundation seeks to attract and retain the best employees. We provide support and supervision (where applicable) so people feel valued, respected and fairly treated. We ensure that employees who work with children have ongoing management, support and training so that their performance is developed and enhanced to promote the establishment and maintenance of a child safe environment.

Incorporation of the Principles of the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021-2031

The Butterfly Foundation is committed to incorporating the principles of the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021-2031 into its Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy. Specifically, we will:

- Ensure that children's safety is our top priority. This means that we will put in place all reasonable measures to protect children from harm. We will also ensure that our policies, procedures, and programs are designed to promote child safety and well-being.
- Listen to children and young people. We will provide children with opportunities to have their voices heard and to participate in decision-making that affects them. We will also listen to the views of parents and carers and other stakeholders on how we can improve our child safety practices.
- Work with families and communities. We will work with families and communities to create a safe environment for all children. This includes working with parents and carers to develop and implement safety plans for their children, and supporting community organizations that work to protect children.
- Partner with other organizations. We will work with other organizations, including the government and the non-government sector, to protect children. This includes working to share information and resources, and to develop joint initiatives to promote child safety.
- We believe that all children have the right to grow up safe and supported. By incorporating the principles of the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021-2031 into our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, we are committed to creating a safe environment for all children who come into contact with our organization.

Communication

Butterfly will ensure that everyone to whom this policy applies is aware of and has had an opportunity to read the policy as part of their induction. Any amendments to the policy will be communicated to the whole organisation, and employees and volunteers will have ongoing access to the Child Safe policy.

Review

Butterfly will review all child safe practices and policies at least every 2 years. We will also ensure that we review findings from any incidents as part of our approach to continuous improvement of our child safety practices.

Document Control

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