

Child Safety Team

I asked her pardon for the cruel lesson, and to her great surprise, gave her the eighty rubles. She murmured her little "merci" several times and went out. I looked after her and thought: "How easy it is to crush the weak in this world." (Chekhov 2003:22)

Terms of Reference

The overall objective of the Child Protection Team (CPT) is to promote, protect and fulfil children's rights to protection from abuse, exploitation and violence as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and New Zealand law.

The CPT has three main objectives:

1. To provide a first point of support for anyone within the Service to speak to when there are concerns, however minor, about a child's safety or well-being;
2. To support a comprehensive and coordinated approach to Child Protection in the setting, including escalating processes for reporting where a child is at risk violence or abuse
3. To be aware of negative mechanisms that can militate against child protection and well-being.

The CPT is drawn from people working within the Service and has limited responsibilities. The membership usually rotates annually to encourage broad engagement with child protection. The main function of the CPT is to act as a **'go to'** for any adult in the Service or coming into the Service who has a concern about a child or about inappropriate practice within the Service itself that can impact negatively on child welfare.

The CPT also advocates for child protection, safe activities and a range of specific activities that promote child safety. They ensure that policy and guidance is written in plain English, and sets standards that are achievable and practical.

The CPT seeks to support prioritisation of child protection activities within the setting, to enhance effective programmes, and to ensure that quality standards are upheld by adults in addressing issues faced by children, including recognizing the different needs of boys and girls and the requirement of gender- and age-appropriate responses and services.

CPT Team Members will help adults:

- Understand how the Service responsibly appoints people to work with children;
- Develop and comply with a code of practice for child safety;
- Understand a range of important child protection issues;

- Think through the role of the CPT;
- Undertake training in Child Protection and other safety programs;
- Be aware of guidelines and advice for safe activities, hygiene and first aid.

Ethics and Principles

The work of the members of the CPT is guided by the following principles:

- The Best Interest of the Child shall be a primary consideration in all actions affecting children;
- Confidentiality: Ensuring that children, witnesses, and information sources are protected;
- Non-discrimination on the basis of nationality, race, religious belief, political views, sexual orientation, social or other status;
- Safety and security: prioritise the safety of the child, family, witnesses and service providers at all times;
- Child Participation: ensuring, to the extent possible, an age-appropriate consultation with children.

Protection

This policy relies on the Whistle Blowing Policy that makes it clear that staff can speak up without fear of harassment, victimisation (including informal pressure), discrimination or disadvantage. Any investigation into allegations of potential malpractice will not influence or be influenced by any disciplinary or other procedures that already affect the member of staff. There will be no 'come back' if a member of staff reasonably believes that they have made a disclosure in good faith.

Note

Inappropriate practice for adults working with children includes:

- inflicting verbal or physical punishment;
- isolating children;
- labelling children with derogatory words;
- shaming or comparing children;
- ignoring unacceptable behaviours in children.

Related policies

Child Protection Policy
Whistle Blowing Policy

Chekhov, Anton (2003) "A nincompoop" (written 1883) in Anton Pavlovich Chekhov, Ann Dunnigan and George Pahomov, Selected Stories: Anton Chekhov, Signet Classics, New York.