



CHILD SAFE ENVIRONMENTS POLICY

Purpose

Play Partners child safe environments policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of our organisation to the safety of children and young people, and to establishing and maintaining child safe and child friendly environments.

Statement of commitment to the safety and protection of children and young people

Play Partners Child Safe Environments Policy complies with the child safe provisions of the [Children and Young People \(Safety\) Act 2017 \(legislation.sa.gov.au\)](https://legislation.sa.gov.au) which has at its essence the rights of the child to adequate care and nurturing, physical protection, connection with both parents, appropriate food, and health care, as well as freedom from abuse and discrimination, on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, religion, disability, ethnicity or any other characteristics (UNICEF, 2006). Children who attend Play Partners are valued and respected and their safety is our priority. Play Partners embraces diversity and equity is upheld.

As part of Play Partners commitment to the safety and protection of Children and Young people with disability, all Play Partners staff are required to be effective communication partners and utilise assistive augmentative communication where required (The Australian Human Rights Commission, 1989).

This policy will provide clear guidance as to the roles and responsibilities for all engaged with Play Partners as we work together to uphold all 10 of the [National Principles for Child Safe Organisations\(humanrights.gov.au\)](https://humanrights.gov.au)

Scope

Play Partners Child Safe Environments Policy applies to all Play Partners employees, contractors, students and volunteers and any person engaged with Play Partners services.

Communication

Play Partners Child Safe Environments Policy is required to be read and signed as part of Play Partners staff induction program. A written copy of the policy is provided to all consumers at initial assessment. The Policy can be found on our website www.playpartnersclare.com

Participation of families, children, and young people

The Play Partners space is disability accessible and has been designed to be child, young person and disability friendly. Children find and experience safety in and through relationships. Play Partners values consistent, predictable, and safe relationships as the conduit through which therapeutic work occurs (Play Partners employee handbook, p 2). Play Partners staff are required to undertake training in attachment theory as well as trauma informed practise during their first year of employment with the organisation.

Each child has a unique story that is reflective of their care context, culture, community, and disability. To support the child means that a unique response to their story is imperative. Each response focuses on the individual needs of that child. Listening to a child's story is a privilege and is the mechanism through which we can develop an understanding of the child's world and experience in that world. Children with disability may require communication supports to have their voice heard and so Play Partners staff are supported to develop competencies to be an effective communication partner, regardless of their specific discipline speciality. For a child, behaviour is a form of communication. We look to understand the meaning behind the behaviour to understand what the child is communicating to us.

We understand that a child's culture can provide certainty and predictability for that child and that there may be social, economic, ceremonial, and other relationships within a culture that can be a resource for the child. As learners as we work to understand a child's experience of their culture and the resources it may provide. [Keeping our kids safe - SNAICC](#)

Play Partners clinicians are required to develop and maintain positive open respectful communication within the organisation, with families and with other providers of a child's care (Play Partners employee handbook, p 2). Multi-agency case conferences are facilitated and hosted by the Play Partners team to enable a collaborative approach to intervention. This supports the child by pooling knowledge to support goals and ensuring families and all agencies understand their roles and responsibilities in supporting the child.

Finding a balance between the protection needs of children and supporting their active involvement in decision making about issues that involve them is an important part of a clinician's role at Play Partners. The child's participation in their care provides opportunity for a power-with relationship as well as movement towards self-determination and autonomy. It also promotes systemic thinking as we are required to consider the child's relationship with others, with their culture and with environments and systems that they live and move through.

In adolescence, self-determination and autonomy guide therapeutic intervention. Where there is significant communication difficulty or cognitive challenge, the therapist is required to be creative in how this is achieved. Photograph visual scheduling may provide opportunity for agency in the therapeutic space. It is important to recognise that some "risk-taking has inherent value in both achieving change and helping explore and understand the assessment and control of risk. Engaging adolescents in identification of potential risks and the measures needed to mitigate them will lead to more effective protection." (UNICEF, 2018) Identification and mitigation of risk may look different for children with disability but their involvement in this process is an essential part of the transition to adulthood.

Play Partners code of conduct

- Play Partners recognises the inherent value of each person and treats each individual and their family with respect, dignity and in accordance with their values and right to self-determination. The culture, values and beliefs of the person and family are respected and upheld in the context of Play Partners Pty Ltd therapeutic intervention.
- Play Partners values safety, trust, choice, and collaboration with all consumers of their service. Play Partners acknowledges the increased prevalence of trauma in persons with a disability and trauma informed care is built into the Play Partners culture.
- Play Partners acknowledges the importance of clear, respectful, honest, and transparent communication between all staff and with all consumers/participants of the service. It is

Version 1

Uploaded to DHS website on 26th May 2022

Due for review by 26th May 2027

understood that communication is the key to a person feeling heard and understood. It also provides the foundation for a safe working space and consumer satisfaction with service delivery. Play Partners staff are required to encourage children and young people to 'have a say' on issues that are important to them. Play Partners staff are also required to respond quickly, fairly and transparently to any serious complaints made by a child, young person or their parent/guardian.

- Feedback and complaints inform part of Play Partners quality improvement process. This includes listening and responding appropriately to the views and concerns of children and young people.
- All employees and volunteers of our organisation are responsible for promoting and protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people by Abiding by Play Partners child safe environment's policy and taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and protection of children and young people. Being alert to children and young people who are, or may be at risk of harm, and reporting this quickly to the Child Abuse Report Line (13 14 78).
- All employees and volunteers of Play Partners are required to set clear boundaries about appropriate behaviour between yourself and the children and young people you work alongside – boundaries help everyone to understand their roles. It is expected that you will be a positive role model to children and young people, in all your conduct with them.

Employees and volunteers must not:

- Discriminate against any child or young person because of age, gender, cultural background, religion, ability, vulnerability, or sexuality.
- develop any 'special' relationships with children and young people that could be seen as favouritism.
- do things of a personal nature that a child or young person can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes

Breach of the Code of Conduct

Any Breach of this code of conduct could lead to instant dismissal or relevant disciplinary action.

Recruitment

Recruitment of Play Partners staff is the responsibility of the Director. Position Descriptions are provided to all potential employees and face to face interview, referee checks and the offer to peer shadow existing staff is undertaken prior to offer of employment. All Play Partners staff are required to hold current, not prohibited Working with Children Check (WWCC) as well as NDIS worker screening. In relation to WWCCs we will immediately contact the Department of Human Services Screening Unit when we become aware of certain information regarding any person involved with our organisation, including any serious criminal offence, child protection information, or disciplinary or misconduct information.

All staff are required to complete a full day of Through Their Eyes – child safe environments training at commencement of employment and a refresher course every 3 years. Current registration in the employee's specific discipline is required as well as evidence of professional development hours in line with registration requirements. There is a six-month probationary period written into all employment contracts. The staff induction program includes requirement for staff signature indicating that the new staff member has read and will accept and act on the Play Partners child safe environments policy.

Version 1

Uploaded to DHS website on 26th May 2022

Due for review by 26th May 2027

Supervision, training and support for employees and volunteers

All Play Partners professionals are required to maintain current registration with their professional bodies. Registration requires CPD points to be completed. Play Partners supports relevant professional development by financing and providing time for this to occur. All Play Partners staff undertake regular clinical supervision in accordance with experience and need. Position descriptions, current employee checks and certifications, as well as evidence of completed staff induction program can be located on Play Partners Bright HR platform. Training and supervision is evidenced in Play Partners review register.

Reporting and responding to harm or risk of harm

All staff are mandated notifiers and required by law to report any reasonable belief that a child or young person is or may be at risk of harm. The person who identifies the harm is the person to make this report. [cse-mandatory-notification-information-booklet-2019-dhs-update.pdf](#) Child protection is everybody's responsibility and staff are supported to contact CARL (Child Abuse Report Line) 131478 or if a child or young person is at immediate risk, SA Police 000.

Any NDIS reportable incident is required to be reported to the NDIS commission according to NDIS guidelines.

If any report involves a staff member as the person causing harm to a child or young person, then an organisation incident form is required to be completed and the Director of Play Partners notified so that an internal investigation can be implemented immediately. The safety of the CYP is prioritised and the Director will work alongside the young person and their family to ensure their safety in the first instance. The Director will facilitate Play Partners complaints and incident reporting processes as well as any external reporting that may be required to relevant practitioner registration bodies for investigation. Serious misconduct by a staff member will result in instant dismissal.

Reporting and responding to complaints and feedback

The Play Partners clinic space has been created as a child/disability friendly space that encourages children and their families to enter and move about the space freely when rooms are not occupied for therapy. This facilitates ready access to therapists and the director of Play Partner. Each therapy room has a large black board wall and children as well as their families/carers are encouraged to express their feelings, thoughts, and views, as desired on these boards. Chalk is provided for this purpose. Play Partners recognises that safe relationships and a safe space are the conduit for enabling the free expression of a child or young person's view of services that affect them, and feedback in sessions is facilitated. Formalised feedback is requested from the child as well as parent/carer at the end of group programs and during internal audit. All information gathered is discussed at staff meetings as an agenda item and informs changes to service delivery where possible and sustainable.

All complaints require consideration and written response from the director of Play Partners Pty Ltd. Where appropriate and possible service adaptations that improve the experience of all consumers will be implemented as a direct response to the complaint, compliment or feedback. If the complaint cannot be resolved directly and relates to your therapists' health, performance or conduct, please contact AHPRA to discuss on 1300 419 495 or visit www.ahpra.gov.au or Speech Pathology Australia on 1300 368835 or visit [Home \(speechpathologyaustralia.org.au\)](http://Home(speechpathologyaustralia.org.au)).

Version 1

Uploaded to DHS website on 26th May 2022

Due for review by 26th May 2027

Risk Management

Person Responsible	Katrina Wilkop	Date of Review	26 th May 2022
Approved by	Director	Date of next review	26 th May 2023
Date	26 th May 2022		
Organisation Name:	Play Partners Pty Ltd		
Purpose¹	To help maintain a safe environment for children and young people.		
Locations²	3 and 4/25 Old North Road Clare SA 5453		
Risk name and description		Actions to minimise risk	
Children/young people are physically touched by allied health staff to correct technique.		<p>Where physical contact is required, this is undertaken in a safe way by explaining why contact is required and what will happen and asking the child/young person for their permission (or their family if this is more appropriate) before proceeding.</p> <p>Recruitment processes including undertaking referee checks to ensure the suitability of persons before they are employed/volunteer with our organisation is completed.</p> <p>Working with Children Checks (WWCC) are undertaken to make sure that people working with children and young people are assessed as suitable. Those who are not suitable ('Prohibited' WWCC) cannot work with children and young people in our organisation.</p>	
Children/young people are transported between school and clinic		The organisation meets the requirements of the <i>Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017</i> (which mandates child safe environments) and the	

Version 1

Uploaded to DHS website on 26th May 2022

Due for review by 26th May 2027

	<p><i>Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016</i> (which mandates Working with Children Checks)</p> <p>All organisational staff (including employees and volunteers) are required to read the Child Safe Environments Policy, Code of Conduct and attend Through Their Eyes training full day at start of employment and then refresher every 3 years.</p> <p>Strategies are in place to make sure that child safety (through the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations) are embedded across the organisation</p> <p>Strategies to embed a child safe organisational culture are reviewed and updated regularly</p> <p>The child safe environments policy is reviewed annually or at least once every 5 years. When this happens a new child safe environments compliance statement is lodged with the Department of Human Services</p> <p>Support through training and supervision is provided to organisational staff through one-on-one clinical supervision as well as regular staff meetings to review practice and update procedures where appropriate.</p> <p>All staff are required to follow Play Partners transportation of children policy. This policy is reviewed every 12 months or if incident occurs.</p> <p>Transporting of children risk assessment and management plan needs to be completed for each child being transported. The risk assessment and management plan need to be reviewed every 12 months or if vehicle changes.</p>
<p>Children/young people are provided with unsupervised services</p>	<p>The organisation meets the requirements of the <i>Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017</i> (which mandates child safe environments) and the <i>Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016</i> (which mandates Working with Children Checks)</p> <p>All organisational staff (including employees and volunteers) are required to read the Child Safe Environments Policy, Code of Conduct and attend Through Their Eyes training full day at start of employment and then refresher every 3 years.</p> <p>Strategies are in place to make sure that child safety (through the National Principles for Child</p>

	<p>Safe Organisations) are embedded across the organisation</p> <p>Strategies to embed a child safe organisational culture are reviewed and updated regularly</p> <p>The child safe environments policy is reviewed annually or at least once every 5 years. When this happens a new child safe environments compliance statement is lodged with the Department of Human Services</p> <p>Support through training and supervision is provided to organisational staff through one-on-one clinical supervision as well as regular staff meetings to review practice and update procedures where appropriate.</p> <p>Working with Children Checks (WWCC) are undertaken to make sure that people working with children and young people are assessed as suitable. Those who are not suitable ('Prohibited' WWCC) cannot work with children and young people in our organisation.</p> <p>Where possible more than one adult and child are present during service delivery on and off site.</p> <p>Line of sight is a requirement where services are provided in education facilities.</p>
<p>The organisation conducts off-site activities with children/young people</p>	<p>Activity risk assessment completed prior to any off-site activities.</p> <p>Consent obtained from child, young person and parent prior to these activities taking place e.g. walk to shop</p> <p>Working with Children Checks (WWCC) are undertaken to make sure that people working with children and young people are assessed as suitable. Those who are not suitable ('Prohibited' WWCC) cannot work with children and young people in our organisation.</p> <p>Recruitment processes including undertaking referee checks to ensure the suitability of persons before they are employed with our organisation is completed.</p>
<p>Gross motor equipment in centre in particular monkey bars and swing set poses some risk to physical safety during play.</p>	<p>Ensure equipment meets Australian standards and is checked monthly.</p> <p>Staff and/or parent to always supervise child when using equipment</p>

Version 1

Uploaded to DHS website on 26th May 2022

Due for review by 26th May 2027

	<p>Instruct child in correct and safe use of equipment including the need for crash mats or gym mats underneath when climbing/swinging.</p> <p>Check equipment monthly and follow hazard reporting process and review if required.</p>
<p>Inappropriate behaviour of staff member towards child or young person.</p>	<p>The organisation meets the requirements of the <i>Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017</i> (which mandates child safe environments) and the <i>Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016</i> (which mandates Working with Children Checks)</p> <p>All organisational staff (including employees and volunteers) are required to read the Child Safe Environments Policy, Code of Conduct and attend Through Their Eyes training full day at start of employment and then refresher every 3 years.</p> <p>Strategies are in place to make sure that child safety (through the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations) are embedded across the organisation</p> <p>Strategies to embed a child safe organisational culture are reviewed and updated regularly</p> <p>The child safe environments policy is reviewed annually or at least once every 5 years. When this happens a new child safe environments compliance statement is lodged with the Department of Human Services</p> <p>Support through training and supervision is provided to organisational staff through one-on-one clinical supervision as well as regular staff meetings to review practice and update procedures where appropriate.</p> <p>Working with Children Checks (WWCC) are undertaken to make sure that people working with children and young people are assessed as suitable. Those who are not suitable ('Prohibited' WWCC) cannot work with children and young people in our organisation.</p> <p>Recruitment processes including undertaking referee checks to ensure the suitability of persons before they are employed/volunteer with our organisation is completed.</p>
<p>Images of young people are used for clinical review.</p>	<p>Consent for visual recording for clinical purposes is discussed and obtained at initial assessment as a part of client consent.</p>

Version 1

Uploaded to DHS website on 26th May 2022

Due for review by 26th May 2027

Images of young people are used on our website.	Media consent form is completed by young person or parent/guardian in this instance.
---	--

Related Policies and Procedure

Play Partners Code of Conduct
Participant Safety Policy
Incident Management Policy
Complaints and Feedback Process
Play Partners Trauma Informed practice framework

Policy Review

Play Partners Child Safe Environments Policy will be reviewed at a minimum once every 5 years as required by the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017.

The Play Partners Child Safe Environments Policy will be reviewed when:

- there are new or additional risks identified for children or young people which may require a change in the Policy.
- there is a critical incident where a child or young person has experienced harm through involvement with Play Partners
- concerns are raised by anyone involved with Play Partners that concern child safety in the organisation.
- Annually as per policy and procedure document review schedule

Play Partners will lodge a new compliance statement with DHS each time the Child Safe Environments Policy is updated.

Version 1

Uploaded to DHS website on 26th May 2022

Due for review by 26th May 2027