

CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING POLICY

REFERENCE:	TBG.v01 08/2020
OWNERSHIP:	Human Resources
AUTHORISED BY:	The Managing Director – The BUSY Group
REVIEW:	06/2021

PURPOSE

The BUSY Group (TBG) is committed to the safety and wellbeing of young people within our organisation and its programs. This policy is to inform all leaders, staff and volunteers of their obligations to act ethically towards children through their roles and responsibilities in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. It is also aimed at providing guidance on the processes and procedures that ensure the safety and wellbeing of young people across all programs.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to all people who conduct work for TBG in a paid or unpaid capacity and to all activities which involve, result in or relate to contact with children. This includes board members, staff, contractors, trainees and volunteers. It includes all of TBG's legal entities – BUSY At Work, ON-Q Human Resources Limited, Skill360 Australia Limited and The BUSY School.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The BUSY Group Board has ultimate responsibility for the detection and prevention of child abuse and is responsible for ensuring that appropriate and effective internal control systems are in place. The Board is also responsible for ensuring that appropriate policies and procedures and the Code of Conduct is in place.

The Executive Team is responsible for:

- Supporting the Child Protection Officer in dealing with and investigating reports of child abuse;
- Ensuring that all staff, contractors, and volunteers are aware of relevant laws, organisational policies and procedures, and the organisation's Code of Conduct;
- Ensuring that all staff, contractors and volunteers are aware of their obligation to observe the Code of Conduct (particularly as it relates to child safety);
- Providing support for staff, contractors and volunteers in undertaking their child protection responsibilities.

All managers must ensure that they:

- Promote child safety at all times;
- Assess the risk of child abuse within their area of control and eradicate or minimise any risk to the extent possible;
- Undertake the Child Safety and Wellbeing training and ensure completion by their staff;
- Educate staff about the prevention and detection of child abuse; and
- Facilitate the reporting of any inappropriate behaviour or suspected abusive activities.

Management should be familiar with the types of abuse that might occur within their area of responsibility and be alert for any indications of such conduct.

All staff / volunteers / contractors share the responsibility for the prevention and detection of child abuse, and must:

- Familiarise themselves with the relevant laws, the Code of Conduct, and TBG's policy and procedures in relation to child protection, and comply with all requirements;
- Undertake the Child Safety and Wellbeing training: Report any reasonable belief that a child's safety is at risk to the relevant authorities (such as the police and/or the state-based child protection service) and fulfil their obligations as mandatory reporters;
- Report any suspicion that a child's safety may be at risk to their supervisor (or, if their supervisor is involved in the suspicion, to a member of the Executive Team); and
- Provide an environment that is supportive of all children's emotional and physical safety and wellbeing.

DEFINITIONS

Child/Children – Refer to [this reference](#) for the legislative definitions of 'a child in need of protection', according to the relevant civil child protection legislation of each Australian jurisdiction.

Child harm or abuse – refers to any behaviour or treatment by parents, caregivers, other adults or older adolescents that results in the actual and/or likelihood of causing physical or emotional harm to a child or young person.

Mandatory reporting – refers to particular occupations that are mandated to report cases of suspected child abuse and neglect.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

[Child Protection Act 1999](#)

[Child Safe Organisations National Principles](#)

[Commonwealth Child Safe Framework](#)

[Child Family Community Australia - Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect guidelines](#)

RELATED ORGANISATIONAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Child Safety Statement of Commitment TBG

Code of Ethics and Conduct ON-Q

Code of Conduct TBG

Child Protection: Working with Children Policy ON-Q

Health and Safety Management System BAW

Feedback and Complaints Procedure TBG

Training, Development and Study Policy TBG

Information Technology and Telecommunications Procedure TBG

Cyber Security Incident and Data Breach Response Plan TBG

Privacy Policy TBG

THE NATIONAL PRICIPLES

PRINCIPLE 1: Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organizational leadership, governance and culture.

TBG is committed to child safety and wellbeing through all levels of the organisation and can be demonstrated through leadership, culture and governance in the following ways:

- The Board charter documents the commitments of the organisation and is tabled periodically.
- Staff and volunteers understand the importance of modelling a child safe culture taking concerns and complaints about child harm or abuse seriously and will act on them.
- TBG policies and documentation is transparent, inclusive and accountable. The Code of Conduct provides guidelines for staff and volunteers on expected behavioural standards and responsibilities including modelling behaviour pursuant to creating a child safe environment.
- Working with children specific risk assessment and management processes have been established and implemented across the organisation.
- TBG has made a public commitment to child safety and wellbeing through access to documents made available on the website and seeking feedback via customer survey and feedback registers.

PRINCIPLE 2: Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

Currency of information and internal training is provided to staff and volunteers to ensure they understand the child right-based approaches and are skilled at engaging with young people. This includes the practices for seeking children's consent for relevant activities.

TBG staff and volunteers will ensure children and young people are educated about their rights and the organisations commitment to child safety and wellbeing through the content provided at each program induction.

A Statement of Commitment is located in each office and has been developed to uphold the promises the organisation has made to foster child safety. The Group welcomes and encourages feedback and input in decisions which affects children and young people and will seek this feedback periodically by customer survey and promotion of the feedback register housed within the BUSY At Work website. The BUSY Group is committed to regularly reviewing opportunities to gain feedback and participation from children and young people about decisions that affect them.

PRINCIPLE 3: Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.

TBG is committed to an inclusive and accessible environment for children and young people and will encourage and enable children and young people to have their rights respected, participate in decision-making and have their voices heard.

This will be achieved by the development of a Statement of Commitment which will be a public commitment to the principles for Child Safe Organisations and be developed in consultation with senior management, staff, volunteers and children and young people engaged with the group and its programs.

TBG have established policies and practices for seeking parental consent for relevant activities, the signing of program-based forms, and any promotional or marketing material.

Feedback will be sought regularly by families and communities through mechanisms such as feedback surveys, a dedicated feedback section on the website and through direct communication with staff.

PRINCIPLE 4: Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.

TBG has a commitment to inclusion and diversity and this is embedded throughout the organisation's culture and reflected in the values and policies such as ON-Q's - Participation and Inclusion policy, Equal Opportunities: Discrimination, Harassment & Bullying Policy, Freedom from Abuse Neglect & Exploitation Policy; Service Access Policy, and Client Rights Policy.

BUSY At Work launched the Accessibility Action Plan in 2014 aspiring to work together on bridging the physical, social, and organisational barriers between people with disability and the broader Australian community in building a more inclusive future. As part of the commitment to inclusion and diversity, staff have access to both mandatory and self-directed training through TBG academy, this includes Child Safety and Wellbeing.

PRINCIPLE 5: People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.

TBG is committed to recruiting, selecting, training and managing staff in such a way that limits risks to children. Advertisements and selection criteria demonstrate our commitment to child safety and an awareness of our social and legislative responsibilities. Specific working with children interview questions are asked as part of the screening process.

Staff and volunteers undertake a comprehensive recruitment and screening process including thorough reference checks prior to a letter of offer being made. Prior to commencement, a criminal history check as well as a valid Working with Children card are also mandatory. It is the group's responsibility to assess if a person is suitable to work with children. Once engaged, staff and volunteers must review and acknowledge their understanding of this Policy which is within the suite of documents provided at induction. It is the responsibility to assess if a person is suitable to work with children and to continue monitoring staff behaviour around children.

PRINCIPLE 6: Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.

As outlined in the Feedback and Complaints Procedure, The BUSY Group will ensure that service recipients and other external stakeholders have the right to provide feedback or raise any concerns, complaints or disputes that they may have in regard to the organisation (which includes children). Feedback and complaints are encouraged by the organisation and viewed as an opportunity to improve the support and service provided. Clients and stakeholders making a complaint will be treated fairly and respectfully, without negative consequences or retribution.

Information on how to provide feedback and make a complaint will be made available to all program participants (e.g. DES clients, TtW Participants) in appropriate formats (e.g. the Customer Feedback Procedure flowchart). Each person wishing to make a complaint can choose to whom, where, and in what manner they wish to do it (e.g. by phone, in person, by email, in writing).

When making a complaint the person will be given the opportunity to be involved and supported through the process and to have their family, carer or advocate involved also. TBG staff will work with the person to identify the desired goal and, where possible, resolve the complaint to the person's satisfaction.

Some staff and volunteers employed by TBG will be classified as mandatory reporters. The Management Team encourages staff to come forward and report instances possible abuse or neglect. As soon as an employee is aware, they should report any suspected incident to the delegated child protection officer following the steps outlined in this policy. This will be escalated to HR and a member of the Executive Management Team for investigation promptly and with sensitivity. In the event that mandatory reporting is required, the Child Family Community Australia [guidelines](#) will be followed.

PRINCIPLE 7: Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.

Staff and volunteers will be provided with training and development to ensure they have the skills and support to enable and foster a safe environment for children and young people. TBG is committed to ensure all staff have the expertise, skills and knowledge specific to the needs of children, their learning and safety.

Training staff in relation to risks to children, responsibilities, policies and procedures, external reporting obligations and the Code of Conduct is initially provided in induction and thereafter regularly via annual formal training events, informal updates at staff meetings and regular discussions between managers and their staff to refresh, expand skills and practice.

PRINCIPLE 8: Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.

TBG implements the following strategies to promote child safety and wellbeing in both our online and onsite environments:

- Risk Management Framework provides an effective mechanism to address risk related to child safety in activities and programs.
- All staff, contractors and volunteers undergo suitable criminal history and working with children screening.
- Incident report forms are completed by staff following First Aid incidents or near misses with children and other visitors, staff or contractors. These are coordinated through the Health, Safety and Quality Manager and reviewed to mitigate risk.
- TBG does not publish images or details of event or office visitors, families and children without the written permission of legal guardians and parents in print, online or on social media.
- Children under 18 years will not be identified by name, ensuring their privacy is respected. Discrete exceptions may be negotiated on a case by case basis with parents/carers and child.
- Staff and contractors should avoid situations where they are alone in an enclosed space with a client.
- When physical contact with a client is a necessary part of the program's delivery, staff and contractors must exercise caution to ensure that the contact is appropriate and acceptable. In that situation, staff must always advise the student of what they intend doing and seek their consent.

- IT Security is a top priority for the ITS team when providing access to IT&T resources for TBG staff, the company, and its clients. As such, to ensure a safe online environment, the procedures outlined in The Information Technology and Telecommunications procedure and the Cyber Security Incident and Data Breach Response Plan must be followed.
- Risks for both online and physical environments will be reviewed in conjunction with the associated policy updates
- Data retention – TBG keeps records in line with the program specific archival process guidelines.
- Access to data – data is stored in a secure location and access is granted on a least privileged basis. Access is reviewed regularly and modified as necessary.

PRINCIPLE 9: Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved.

The BUSY Group is committed to the continuous improvement and annual review of this policy through a variety of methods which may include surveys, interviews, questionnaires, audits, analysis, review of external materials, best practice, and review of internal records including relevant policies and procedures.

TBG will also record, monitor and report to the Senior Executive Team and others as appropriate any breaches of the strategy.

PRINCIPLE 10: Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

TBG's policies and procedures document the commitment of how the organisation is safe for children and young people and is committed to the annual review of this strategy.

The Child Safety and Wellbeing policy will be communicated publicly via the organisation's website through induction, reinforced to all staff bi-annually and regularly promoted through program meetings.

The Group will also record, monitor and report to the board and the Senior Executive Team bi-annually. Any breaches are reportable immediately and will be tabled at the following Executive and Board meetings.

In addition, TBG is committed to other various compliance and monitoring arrangements made under relevant policies and procedures.

NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES FOR ALLEGATIONS OF CHILD ABUSE

The BUSY Group acknowledges that issues regarding child abuse and the reporting of allegations of child abuse are highly sensitive, and should be dealt with in a confidential manner. These notification procedures are to ensure that confidentiality is maintained throughout the process and that consistent procedures for reporting are encouraged. The Group will be proactive in its role to protect young people and encourage an open environment that allows employees to be aware of their rights and responsibilities.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

All matters regarding allegations of child abuse are to be treated as confidential. The person designated as the child protection officer is the contact person for any incident involving allegations of child abuse. This is essential for confidentiality. Confidentiality protects all individuals involved:

- the alleged victim
- the alleged offender, and
- the person making the notification.

The BUSY Group Child Protection Officer can be contacted at:

Mobile: 0438 869 227

Email: childsafety@thebusygroup.com.au

REPORTING AND INVESTIGATION:

To deal appropriately with these issues and to ensure that the confidentiality of all parties involved is maintained, the delegated person named above has been assigned as the Group's child protection officer. Some incidents may seem minor; however, they may in fact reveal more serious concerns of misconduct or a pattern of behaviour that requires further scrutiny. If a staff member has reasonable grounds to suspect that a young person is at risk, the matter will be reported to the child protection officer.

The child protection officer is responsible for escalating any allegations of child abuse to HR and a member of the Executive Management Team for investigation. In the event that mandatory reporting is required, the Child Family Community Australia guidelines including relevant state and territory legislation will be followed and referred to the appropriate jurisdictional authorities.