Child Protection Policy

Introduction
At RGIT we have a responsibility to the children who come into contact with our staff and the families of those children to ensure that children are protected from any type of abuse. Although it is acknowledged that RGIT staff will not be dealing directly with children, it is certainly the case that they may come into contact with and deliver training and assessment services in close proximity to children. RGIT staff, students and other representatives have a legal, moral and ethical responsibility to protect these children and take actions where they believe there is a requirement to do so.

Scope and application
This policy is applicable to all RGIT staff, management, students and contractors.

Relevant legislation
Due to the nature of the services we may provide in delivering training locally/nationally, the following legislation is applicable in the Commonwealth, State and Territory jurisdictions in which we may operate:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commonwealth</th>
<th>Child Protection Act 1999</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New South Wales</td>
<td>The Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998</td>
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<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>Children, Youth and Families Act 2005</td>
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<td>The Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005</td>
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<td>Queensland</td>
<td>The Child Protection Act 1999</td>
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<td>Commission for Children and Young People Act 2000</td>
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<td>Western Australia</td>
<td>Children and Community Services Act 2004</td>
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<td>South Australia</td>
<td>Children’s Protection Act 1993</td>
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<td>Tasmania</td>
<td>Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997</td>
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<td>Australian Capital</td>
<td>Children and Young Persons Act 1999</td>
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<td>Territory</td>
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<td>Northern Territory</td>
<td>The Community Welfare Act 1987</td>
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Staff recruitment and screening
At RGIT any person convicted of a sex offence will not be permitted to either work or seek work in a position within us (refer to policy Staff Induction Policy) where that person’s duties will potentially involve direct contact with children and where that contact is unsupervised. We will ensure that all staff members comply with the appropriate screening requirements relevant to the State or Territory in which they work, such as the requirement to hold a working with children’s check. We will also ensure we have effective staff complaint management, investigation, disciplinary and reporting systems in relation to allegations of child abuse.

Child protection - behavioural guidelines
RGIT staff will:
- Treat every child with dignity and respect regardless of individual differences;
- Conduct themselves in a manner consistent with their position as a representative of our organisation;
- Immediately raise any concerns for the safety or wellbeing of a child in accordance with the our reporting procedures (see next section);
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- Listen to children, take their concerns seriously and allow them to have a say in the decisions that affect them; and
- Avoid being alone with children and ensure that other adults are present when working around children.

RGIT staff will not:
- Use prejudice, oppressive behaviour or language with children;
- Discriminate on the basis of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability or sexuality;
- Initiate unnecessary physical contact with children or do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves;
- Develop ‘special’ relationships with specific children for their own needs;
- Show favouritism through the provision of gifts or inappropriate attention; and
- Have contact with children outside of RGIT duties.

Sources of information
- Australian Childhood Foundation: www.childhood.org.au
- Kids Helpline: www.kidshelp.com.au
- National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN): www.napcan.org.au
- Stop Child Abuse: www.stopchildabuse.com.au

Child Protection Procedures

In some jurisdictions, but not all, it is a legal requirement for RGIT representatives to report child abuse or victimisation if it is observed or suspected. The following procedure and guidelines are to be applied.

How to recognise abuse in children

The following are the general indicators of child abuse and neglect that may be observed. It should be noted that the presence of one or more of these indicators does not by itself prove child abuse, but it may alert you to the possibility of child abuse.

- A child or young person tells you that he or she is being abused or hurt.
- You notice sudden or unexplained changes in mood or behaviour of a child or young person.
- You notice frequent or unexplained bruises or injuries on a child or young person.
- You see a child or young person with low self-esteem.
- You see a child or young person with poor hygiene.
- You notice that a child or young person becomes withdrawn or unresponsive.
- You notice a child or young person with a lot of exaggerated fears.
- You notice that a child or young person seems to lack trust in familiar adults.
- You notice that a child or young person has serious difficulties relating to peers and/or adults.
- You see a child or young person who is always angry or aggressive.
- You find out that a child or young person has difficulty sleeping and experiences nightmares.
- You notice a child or young person experience a change in eating patterns.

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1 www.stopchildabuse.com.au
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Responsibility: Operations and Compliance Manager
Last Reviewed: -
Initial response procedure (when child abuse is suspected)\(^2\)

- Make notes - record what you observe. Date and sign the entry.
- Talk to the child care representative and raise your concerns. Gain an acknowledgement that your concerns have been taken seriously and record their response. Follow-up with the child care representative no longer than 24 hours later to monitor how your concerns have been dealt with.
- If not satisfied with the child care representative’s response, consult your colleagues and get support and advice from supervisors. Compare notes and brainstorm possible strategies.
- Develop action plans based on procedures - familiarise yourself with the legislative procedures and processes within the relevant jurisdiction and follow these accordingly.

Reporting procedure\(^3\)

Call the appropriate child protection authorities. The child protection worker will ask you for certain information, including:

- Details - the child’s or young person’s name, age and where you encounter them.
- Indicators of harm - the reason for believing that the injury or behaviour is the result of abuse or neglect.
- Reason for reporting - the reason why the call is being made now.
- Safety assessment - assessment of immediate danger to the child or children.
- Description - description of the injury or behaviour observed.
- Child’s whereabouts - the current whereabouts of the child or young person if known.
- Cultural characteristics - any specific cultural or other details which will help to care for the child - for example, Aboriginality, interpreter or disability needs.

PLEASE NOTE - A NOTIFICATION SHOULD STILL BE MADE, EVEN IF YOU DON'T HAVE ALL THE INFORMATION LISTED ABOVE.

Important phone contacts

Tasmania - Child Protection Advice and Referral Service 1300 737 639
Victoria - Child Protection Crisis Line: 13 12 78
New South Wales - Department of Community Services Helpline: 13 21 11
Australian Capital Territory - Family Services: 02 6207 1069
South Australia - Child Abuse Report Line: 13 14 78
Western Australia - Family Helpline: 08 9223 1100
Queensland - Community Child Health Service: 07 3862 2333
Northern Territory - Child Abuse Reporting Hotline: 1800 700 250


\(^3\) Ibid.