

## **CHILD SAFE ENVIRONMENTS POLICY**

### **Reporting Children at Risk of Harm**

#### **Purpose of policy:**

This policy has been written to demonstrate the strong commitment of Adelaide Training and Employment Centre Inc (ATEC) management, employees, contractors and volunteers to ensure the safety, care and protection of all children accessing its services. We, ATEC will not tolerate incidents where a child is harmed or at risk of harm.

#### **Commitment to safety of young people:**

All young people who access ATEC services have a right to feel and be safe. The safety and wellbeing of all children and young people accessing our services will always be our first priority.

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, young people, visitors and individuals who access ATEC services and complies with the child safe environments provisions of the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017. Employees providing education services wholly or partly for children or young people are mandatory notifiers under the Child and Young People (Safety) act 2017. It is a legal requirement for a mandated notifier to report their suspicions if a young person is at risk of harm to the Department of Child Protection.

#### **Scope:**

This policy and supporting documents apply to all employees, learners, children and young people accessing ATEC's services. It is the responsibility of all individuals to comply with the Children and Young People (Safety Act) 2017.

#### **Young people's rights to safety and participation:**

ATEC management, employees and volunteers encourage young people to express their views, to make suggestions, and to 'have a say' especially on matters that directly affect young people and about those things that are important to them. We value diversity and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices.

Various ways of doing this would be use e-suggestion on our website, contact your Trainer, GT Field Officer or Case Manager, contact one of our Learner Support Services Officers or our Human Resource Manager. Where required we offer EAP to our learners, employees and their families.

Our GTO and RTO regularly email out surveys to our apprentices and learners requesting feedback in relation to their training and satisfaction.

Individuals with a grievance or complaint are encouraged to access ATEC Client Complaints Form (SUP-FRM-053) and Client Complaints Resolution Procedure (SUP-PRO-DOC-010) available on the ATEC website. We will listen to and act on any concerns and feedback young people, their parents, or their carers raise with us.

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#### **Code of conduct:**

All individuals who access ATEC services must adhere to the Child Safe Environments Code of Conduct (SUP-POL-029.1). The Code of Conduct contains detailed information outlining the rules and responsibilities of management, employees, learners, and contractors when working with children and young people and serves to reduce opportunities for risk if harm to occur.

#### **Recruitment of employees, contractors and volunteers:**

ATEC incorporates child safe screening practices including interviews and reference checks in the recruitment and selection (SUP-PRO-DOC-013.2) of employees, contractors and volunteers, including conducting Department of Human Services (DHS) Working with Children Checks to comply with the Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016. This is part of the Recruitment Policy (SUP-POL-021) and included in our Application for Employment.

Each Position Description specifically states the requirement for a current WWCC.

ATEC provides support and supervision through our handbooks, supervised training of our learners, monthly Professional Development days, regular performance reviews so people feel valued, respected and fairly treated. ATEC also provides training about how to make appropriate reports of risk of harm in accordance with the flow chart below.

The ATEC Child Safe Environments Code (SUP-POL-029.1) provides additional guidance for our people, all of whom acknowledge the requirements of the code. They are aware that a person does not necessarily exhaust his or her duty of care to a child by making a report to the Child Abuse Line (CARL) – they may still have a role in supporting the child or young person.

A person may also report any form of harm or risk of harm to the Chief Executive Officer for further support or to ensure that ATEC takes all reasonable steps to keep the child and others safe.

ATEC will support any of its people who make a mandated report to the Child Abuse Report Line.

ATEC also has a responsibility to its people to defend their right to confidentiality.

#### **Supervision, training, development and support provided for staff/volunteers**

ATEC is committed to its staff and their development. Management therefore encourages all staff to undertake further education, training and development activities.

A Working with Children Check is required from all employees and volunteers for working with children must be completed prior to commencement and renewed every 5 years.

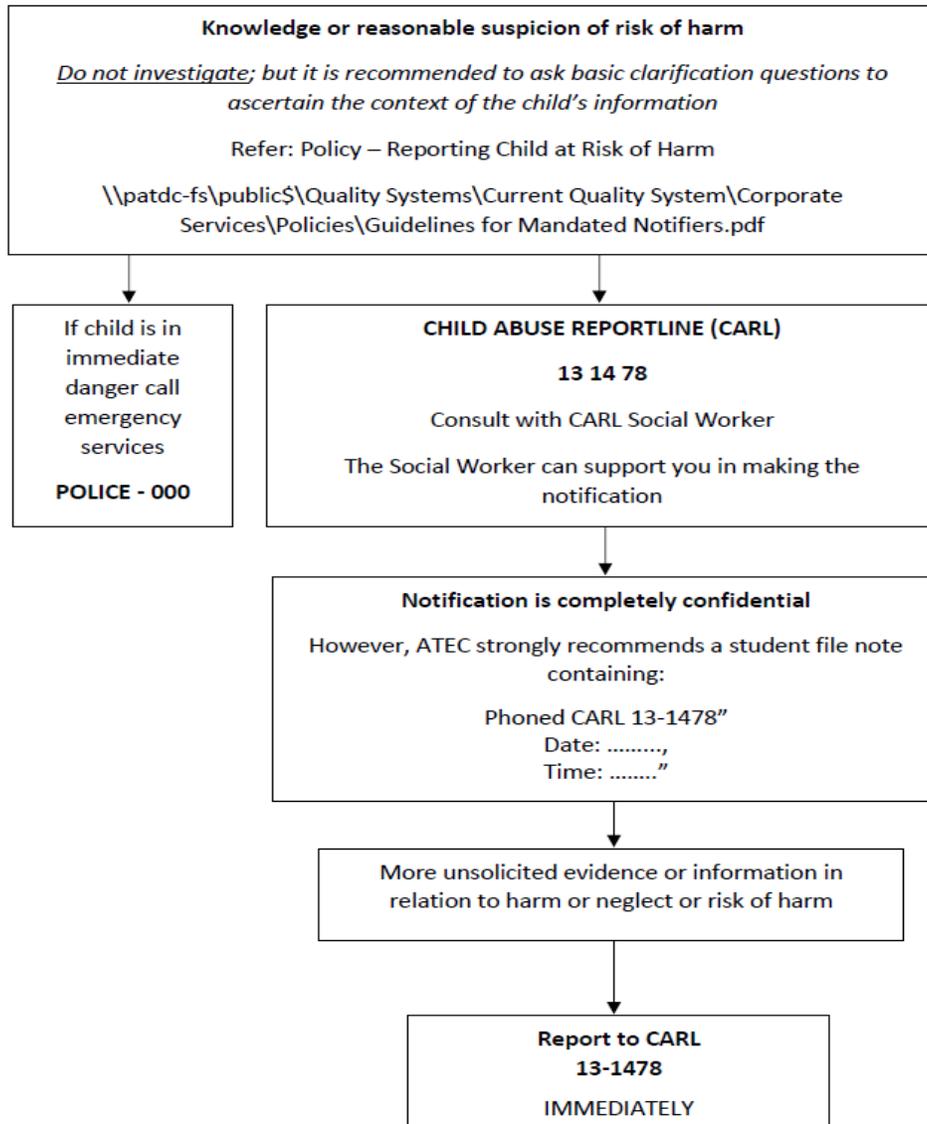
Staff must comply with supervision requirements outlined in the ATEC Child Safe Environments code.

#### **Reporting and responding to a reasonable belief that a child or young person is or may be at risk of harm**

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ATEC has a responsibility to promote and provide an environment in which children and young people are encouraged to speak up when they are uncomfortable or concerned. It is a condition of employment that all employees undertake the 'Through Their Eyes' training every three years and understand they are mandated reporters. All reporting and responses will be made a priority and will be treated confidentially.



Further information and guidance is available from the Department for Child Protection web site

<https://www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/reporting-child-abuse>

### Supporting children, young people and their families following a report

Posters containing information and assistance are put in prominent places around the workshops and classrooms. Flyers are also available to all young people which will direct them to Kids Helpline on 1800

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55 1800, Youth Helpline 1300 13 17 19 and Employee Assistance is available to all employees, learners and their families.

Direct assistance is available through Case Managers/Field Officers who refer a Learner Support Service Officer to support the young person. Refer to ATEC Risk Management Plan (SUP-POL-029.2) for indicators of harm in children and young people, reporting obligations and guidelines.

#### **Reporting and responding to complaints and feedback in our organisation**

At ATEC, it is expected that respect, courtesy, and professionalism underpin our interactions with all people and this, together with our commitment to safety requires us to acknowledge our role in attempting to resolve the problems, disputes and grievances that arise in the workplace in a prompt, fair and non-aggressive manner.

Refer to the ATEC Complaints and Appeals Policy (SUP-POL-006) for further information.

#### **Risk Management**

To maintain a safe environment for children and young people, ATEC reviews its risks regularly and has a risk management plan in place to minimise and manage risk of harm.

Refer to the Risk Management Plan (SUP-POL-029.2) for further information regarding ATEC policy regarding accountabilities, strategies, notification checklist and reporting flow chart.

#### **Communication**

ATEC has a responsibility and commitment to thorough communication to ensure management, employees, volunteers, and learners are fully informed regarding the safety of children and young people.

All employees, learners and contractors are provided with an induction handbook upon undertaking any of ATEC's services, and the Child Safety Act is communicated verbally to the individual. Children and young people will be treated as per the requirements outlined in the Child Safe Code of Conduct (SUP-POL-029.1)

Employees can access relevant policies in the QES (Quality Management System) on the ATEC company Share Point. Access to Share Point will be made available during the induction process.

Children, young people and their families can access our child safe environment policy via ATEC's website. The Information is also included in all Induction Handbooks.

#### **Policy Review**

ATEC has developed management systems to ensure our quality objectives are achieved and that risks to the organisation are managed. The Management System certified to the Quality Systems Standard ISO9001:2015. It provides the policies and procedures that are to be followed for all areas of ATEC's

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business activities to ensure we meet our objectives, customer needs, contractual requirements, and business relevant external standards and legal requirements. Refer to ATEC Quality Policy (SUP-POL-002) for further information.

ATEC is committed to complying with the requirements of the Children & Young People (Safety) Act 2017 and will review CSE policies every five years, or if amendments are made as required. We will lodge a new compliance statement with the Department of Human Services each time our policy is reviewed and updated.

## DEFINITIONS

**Child (Young person)** – A child means a person under 18 years of age (Children and young people (safety) Act 2017).

**Child Abuse** – Children can be abused in different ways and child abuse includes a wide range of acts of omission and commission. The following is based on definitions in 'The South Australian Department for Child Protection' mandatory reporting guide.

**Physical Abuse** – is commonly characterized by physical injury resulting from practices such as hitting, punching, kicking (marks from belt buckles, fingers); shaking (particularly young babies); burning (irons, cigarettes), biting, pulling out hair; alcohol or other drug administration.

**Sexual Abuse** – occurs when someone in a position of power to the child uses his/her power to involve the child in sexual activity. Behaviour can include sexual suggestion; exhibitionism, mutual masturbation, oral sex; showing pornographic material e.g. DVDs, internet; using children in the production of pornographic material; penile or other penetration of the genital or anal region; child prostitution.

**Emotional Abuse** – tends to be a chronic behavioural pattern directed at a child whereby a child's self-esteem and social competence are undermined or eroded over time. Behaviours may include devaluing, ignoring, rejecting, corrupting, isolating, terrorising, chronic or extreme domestic violence in the children's presence.

**Neglect** – is characterized by the failure to provide for the child's basic needs. Behaviours may include inadequate supervision of young children for long periods of time; failure to provide adequate nutrition, clothing or personal hygiene; failure to provide needed or appropriate health care/medical treatment; disregard for potential hazards in the home; forcing the child to leave home early; allowing children to engage in chronic truancy.

**Criminal history assessment** - a decision about whether a person is suitable to work with children based on the person's criminal history (if any) and the assessed risk of harm to children who receive the service.

**Mandated notifier** – a person who is required by law to notify the Department of Child Protection if they suspect on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is, or may be, at risk of harm.

**Trainer** – any person over the age of 18 who is employed by ATEC and is responsible for the care and safety of children in a recognized training course delivered under the ATEC name.

**Young person** – term used instead of the word child, to describe a person under the age of 18.