

# BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF NELSON

## CHILD SAFETY AND PROTECTION

<b>Policy</b>	Children and Young People participating in the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Nelson (BBBSN) programme will be safe and their well-being promoted by being protected from harm, or threat of harm and receive services and support in a safe environment.
<b>Aim of Policy</b>	To ensure that all children and young people participating in the BBBSN programme are protected from abuse and neglect.
<b>Statement of Commitment</b>	In all interactions with children, young people and their family/whanau staff will be guided by the principle that the welfare and interests of the child/ young person are the first and paramount consideration in accordance with the principles of Section 6 of the Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1989 and the Vulnerable Children's Act 2014.
<b>Guiding Principles</b>	<p>The safety and well-being of the child or young person participating in the BBBSN programme will take priority at all times.</p> <p>Where abuse or neglect is suspected, staff will act promptly to ensure the safety of the young person and immediately notify Child Youth and Family (CYF) via the 0508 FAMILY line.</p> <p>People against whom the allegation has been made will only be advised if deemed in the best interest of the child to ensure their safety.</p> <p>Families will be advised regarding any allegations or concerns raised involving the safety of their child which does not relate to allegations about themselves or close family members.</p>
<b>Process for managing concerns or suspicions of abuse</b>	Processes relating to the management of concerns or suspicions of abuse are covered in Mentor Handbooks.
<b>Volunteers and Staff Recruitment and Training</b>	<p>All Board, Staff and mentors are screened for safety to work with children/ young people prior to being accepted in to the organisation. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police vetting check</li> <li>• 3 referee checks</li> <li>• Any other enquiries into the background of the person as may be deemed necessary to ascertain their safety to work with children.</li> </ul> <p>All new staff and mentors are trained in child safety and protection prior to any contact with children on the programme. Training includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information on what is abuse / neglect and how to identify</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reporting of any suspected abuse (Report of Concern)</li> <li>• Protocols for ensuring the safety and protection of the child/young person</li> <li>• Fully understanding their obligation to act in the interests of the child</li> <li>• Know what steps to take to ensure the immediate safety of any child of concern</li> </ul> <p>No physical or emotional form of discipline is to be used by BBBS staff or volunteers.</p> <p>A written Code of Conduct for all staff and volunteers is in place and agreed as part of the induction process.</p> <p>Mentors are trained and given information on setting ground rules and behavioural limits with their mentees and strategies to manage these as required or when they arise.</p>
<b>Suspected Abuse</b>	<p>Where any form of abuse or neglect is suspected immediate action will be taken to ensure the safety of the child. In all cases, the matter will be discussed with the Programme Director and may be referred to CYF and/or NZ Police for full investigation in accordance with the Child Abuse Reporting Protocol under Section 15 of the CYFP Act 1989.</p> <p>Staff must discuss any child safety issues with the Programme Director. CYF notifications are discussed with the Programme Director as soon as possible.</p> <p>All staff will have regular peer supervision and meet with the Programme Director on a monthly basis.</p> <p>Outside supervision can be obtained as required.</p>
<b>Prevention</b>	<p>Prevention is achieved through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing a child safe environment</li> <li>• Information &amp; posters on safe child-rearing practices</li> <li>• Modelling of positive discipline of children by all staff and volunteers</li> <li>• Education programmes and support for parents in safe child-rearing practices</li> <li>• Developing a safety plan with clients</li> <li>• Ongoing training for staff and mentors</li> <li>• Maintaining BBBSN Board members knowledge and understanding</li> </ul>
<b>Child Abuse Reporting Protocol</b>	<p>Where any member of staff witness abuse, is concerned that a child is at risk of harm from abuse or neglect, or receives information from another person, such as a family member, that a child is at risk, the following protocol will be followed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The information is immediately passed on to the Programme Director. If unable to contact the Director advice will be sought from a duty social work at CYF or the Police.</li> <li>• The information should be assessed in order to ascertain whether the child is considered 'at risk'.</li> </ul> <p><u>If care and/or protection concerns are held then:</u></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urgent action should be taken by notification to CYF and/or Police as deemed appropriate</li> <li>• Confirmation of the notification must be retained on file as a record of the notification</li> <li>• A written account will be made of up-to-date and factual information, accurately recording what is observed/ heard</li> <li>• The staff member and Programme Director will consult with colleagues and/or supervisor</li> <li>• BBBSN will continue to provide input and support if appropriate</li> </ul> <p><u>If the child is safe:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More information will be gathered to assess the situation fully. An accurate, written account will be made of up-to-date and factual information of what was heard / observed. If the information is received from another party this must be clearly stated in the report.</li> <li>• The staff member and Programme Director will consult with colleagues and/or supervisor. Cultural advice should be sought where appropriate.</li> <li>• BBBSN will continue to provide input and support where appropriate.</li> <li>• CYF may still be notified at any stage.</li> <li>• Assess if it is appropriate to put in a temporary 'safety plan'.</li> </ul> <p>All recorded information regarding suspicions of neglect and/or abuse is to be handled with the utmost sensitivity and held in strictest confidence. Information is kept in secure storage.</p> <p><u>Children disclosing abuse:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen to the child and accept what they tell you</li> <li>• Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by talking about what has happened to them</li> <li>• Ask question if you need to clarify what has been said but avoid interviewing the child (it may prejudice future investigation). Once you are clear that the child is disclosing abuse, acknowledge what they have told you and seek help.</li> <li>• Avoid making comments / commitments to the child that create misunderstandings or false expectations.</li> <li>• Record details of the disclosure as soon as practicable</li> <li>• Follow Child Abuse Reporting Protocol.</li> </ul>
<b>Monitoring</b>	<p>The Programme Director is made aware of any reports or suspicions of child abuse or neglect.</p> <p>Action and follow-up of notifications is also discussed with the Programme Director.</p> <p>The Programme Director's Monthly Board Report will include any notifications made to CYF since the last report.</p>

	<p>A reporting form will be completed as soon as possible after any disclosure or observation leading to suspicions of abuse. They must be factual, concise and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Type of suspected abuse</li> <li>• Indicators – physical, emotional, behavioural etc.</li> <li>• Particular incidents of abuse –dates / times</li> <li>• Action taken including any medical attention</li> <li>• Proposed plan of action including safety of the child/young person</li> <li>• Details of the Report of Concern (RoC) or notification to CYF including date, time, who was spoken to etc.</li> <li>• Confirmation of the notification from CYF</li> </ul> <p><b>Ensure report is dated/ time of writing and signed</b></p>
<b>Unacceptability of Abuse</b>	<p>A range of resources related to child abuse and alternative strategies are available for mentees and their families as well as local agency contact information if they have concerns about their or someone else’s safety.</p> <p>If staff witness parents using inappropriate forms of discipline they can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intervene if safe to do so and appropriate.</li> <li>• Act to educate the parent on the unacceptability of physical/emotional forms of discipline</li> <li>• Provide information on alternative forms of behaviour management</li> <li>• Seek other support from appropriate agencies</li> <li>• If abuse is involved they must follow BBBSN Child Abuse Reporting Protocol.</li> </ul>
<b>Serious Allegations</b>	<p>For any allegation involving a board member, staff or volunteer of BBBSN the Board Chairperson must be notified. Nelson Police &amp; BBBSNZ must also be informed of the allegation. Any media must be directed to one of the above designated spokesperson. Local website and social media pages must be checked and any photos or references to the person or related to them removed immediately.</p>
<b>References</b>	<p>Child Abuse Reporting Protocol Abuse Prevention Flowchart Mentor Handbooks Mentor Training Manual</p>

Policy Reviewed – Every 3 years

Date Implemented	Date of Last Change	Next Review Date	Policy approved at
9 February 2016	April 2012	February 2019	

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_