

Child Safe

Child Protection Program



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Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

All children and young people who access South West Music Regional Conservatorium (SWMRC) services or access our premises have a right to feel and be safe. We are committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people who access our services or visit our premises.

We have a zero tolerance for child abuse and other harm and are committed to acting in children and young people' best interests and keeping them safe from harm.

SWMRC regards its Child Protection Program responsibilities with the utmost importance and is committed to providing the necessary resources to ensure compliance with all relevant child protection laws and regulations and maintaining a child safe culture.

Each member of SWMRC community has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role that they play individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all that they do and every decision that they make.

Our Child Protection Program

This Child Protection Program is made up of policies, procedures, work systems, practices and guidelines designed to maintain a child safe environment and to embed an organisational culture of child safety within SWMRC.

It consists of the following elements:

- *Child Safe Adult Code of Conduct*
- *Child Safe Professional Boundaries Policy*
- *Child Safe Self-Harming Behaviours Policy*
- Procedures for Responding to Child Safety Incidents
- External Reporting Child Safety Incidents of Concerns: Mandatory Reporting, Failure to Disclose
- Raising Child Protection Concerns by Others
- Working With Children Checks
- Training and Supervision
- Definitions of Key indicators of Abuse and Other Harm

Procedures for Responding to Child Safety Incidents

The welfare and best interests of the child or young person are paramount.

All adults in SWMRC community have a shared responsibility for contributing to the safety and protection of children and young people.

All staff and volunteers are Mandatory Reporters.

SWM will take appropriate, prompt action in response to all child safety incidents or concerns, including suspicions, allegations or disclosures of abuse or other harm, that are reported internally by staff and volunteers or by students, parents/ carers or others.

You must report **all** child safety incidents or concerns internally to CEO as soon as it is reasonably possible.

If the concern is about the CEO contact the Chair of the SWMRC Board

The CEO can be contacted by phone on **0488212121** or by emailing

leone.knight@swmusic.org.au

The Chair can be contacted by phone on **0428587217** or by emailing chair@swmusic.org.au

Our CEO is your first port of call for most situations involving **child safety incidents or concerns**. They are able to assist in clarifying your reporting obligations and managing the next steps. They can also answer any questions that you may have with respect to our Child Safe Policy.

Where appropriate the CEO will discuss the matter with the child's parent/carer and/or school Principal. All matters that meet the required thresholds will be reported externally to the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) and/or the Police, depending on the information contained in the report.

Please be aware that consulting with CEO does not change any obligation you have as a Mandatory Reporter or Duty to Report to Police to report to an external authority.

Responding to an Emergency

You must act as soon as you witness a child safety incident or otherwise have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child or young person who receives SWMRC services or accesses SWMRC facilities has been harmed or is at immediate risk of being abused or otherwise harmed.

If the child or young person has been harmed or is at immediate risk of harm you must ensure their immediate safety by:

- separating alleged victims and others involved
- administering first aid if needed
- calling 000 for urgent medical assistance and/or Police assistance to address immediate health and safety concerns
- briefing the CEO to be the future liaison with the Police on the matter

Reporting a Child Safety Incident or Concern Internally

All staff and volunteers **must report** to the Chief Executive Officer:

- a breach of the Child Safe Codes of Conduct by a staff member or volunteer
- a staff member or volunteer placing any child or young person at risk of significant harm, regardless of whether or not the relevant child or young person access SWMRC services or facilities
- any allegations or convictions of which they become aware, of themselves or of any other staff member, which relate to External Reporting of Child Safety Incidents

Whenever there are concerns that a child or young person is in immediate danger the Police should be called on 000.

If you know or have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child or young person:

- has been abused or otherwise harmed; or
- is at risk of significant harm, for any reason,

you must report the matter to the CEO. This gives rise to an external reporting obligation a Mandatory Reporting obligation and Duty to Disclose.

If you suspect that a child or young person may be experiencing abuse or other harm or that their safety may be at risk, but you are unsure whether your concern rises to the levels required for external reporting to the relevant authority, you should immediately raise your concerns with CEO. They will be able to assist you in clarifying your concerns and managing the next steps

1) Report to Police

NSW law requires that any adult who:

- knows, believes or reasonably ought to know that a **child abuse offence** has been committed against another person; and
- knows, believes or reasonably ought to know that they have information that might be of material assistance in securing the apprehension of the offender or the prosecution or conviction of the offender for that offence,

must bring that information to the attention of a member of the NSW Police as soon as it is practicable to do so.

Failure to make a report to Police is a criminal offence known as 'Failure to Report'.

If you have any concern that a staff member, volunteer or contractor has committed a child abuse offence, you **must** immediately report your concerns to the NSW Police, unless you have a reasonable excuse for not reporting

In addition, you **must** report the matter to the CEO. If the allegations are about the CEO, you must instead report internally to the Chair of the SWMRC Board.

You must also follow the appropriate Mandatory Reporting procedures listed below.

2) Mandatory Reporting to the NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ)

Under NSW law you are legally required to make a report to the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) if – during the course of your work – you:

- have reasonable grounds to suspect
- that a child (aged under 16) is, or a particular group of children are, at risk of significant harm.

The following people at SWMRC are Mandatory Reporters:

- anyone who in the course of their professional work or other paid employment delivers, education, wholly or partly to children or children's services
- anyone who holds a management position in an organisation and whose duties include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of education wholly or partly to children, or children's services,
- This includes staff and volunteers.

Where a Mandatory Reporter has concerns that a child or young person has been or is at risk of being abused or otherwise harmed, the Mandatory Reporter Guide (MRG) must be used to determine if those concerns reach the Risk of Significant Harm (ROSH) threshold.

The Mandatory Reporter Guide (MRG) can be accessed here:

<https://reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/s/mrg>

If your concerns do reach the Risk of Significant Harm threshold, a report must be made as soon as practicable after you consider that you have the required reasonable grounds to suspect the significant risk of harm.

A Mandatory Reporter is personally responsible for making a report even if you have discussed the matter with the CEO, and they do not agree that a report must be made.

Additional reports must be made on each occasion where you become aware of any further reasonable grounds for the belief.

To make a Mandatory Report to DCJ, contact DCJ by calling 132 111

Raising Concerns by Students and Others

Children and young people who receive SWMRC's services or access SWMRC's facilities are provided with information about ways to raise child safety incidents or concerns about or at SWMRC. These include informal and formal ways, and anonymously.

Parents/carers, family members and other community members who have child safety concerns or who suspect that a child or young person who is accessing SWMRC services or facilities may be subject to abuse or other harm can contact:

- SWMRC's CEO Leone Knight by phoning 0488212121 or emailing Leone.knight@swmusic.org.au or
- Or if the concern relates to the CEO the Chair of the SWMRC Board Cheryl Fuller by phoning on 0428587217 or by emailing chair@swmusic.org.au

Working With Children Checks (WWCC)

It is SWMRC policy that all staff, direct contact volunteers and direct contact contractors must hold a valid WWCC before commencing work.

Each individual is responsible for applying for, and renewing, his or her own WWCC. SWMRC as an employer, cannot apply on behalf of a worker.

WWCCs are valid for five years unless cancelled or suspended prior to the expiry date.

To apply for a WWCC, renew your WWCC, or update your details visit [Service NSW](#).

Prior to appointment, staff who require a Working with Children Check must present current documentation to SWMRC so that it may be recorded on the Working with Children Check Register.

You must notify CEO immediately of any change in your status in relation to your Working with Children Check. You must also notify SWMRC immediately if you are charged with any offence which relates to child abuse.

Any breach of this Policy is considered to be serious misconduct and may lead to dismissal.

Further Information on WWCC

The Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 (the Act) and the Child Protection (Working with Children) Regulation 2013 aim to protect children and young people from harm by ensuring that people who work with, or care for, them have their suitability to do so checked by a government body.

People who are assessed as posing an unjustifiable risk to the safety of children and young people will fail the Working with Children Check (WWCC) and the Act prohibits these people from working or volunteering with children and young people. The Act imposes penalties for organisations and individuals that do not comply with the Act.

Subject to exemptions, any **worker** who engages in **child-related work** that involves:

- direct contact (physical or face-to-face contact) with a child or children (aged under 18),
- which contact is a usual part of and more than incidental to the work,

must undergo a WWCC. It is an offence for a worker who is not subject to one of the exemptions to work with children without a valid WWCC. It is also illegal for SWMRC to engage a worker in child-related work that does not hold a valid WWCC. Further information on workers who are exempt is located at NSW [Office of the Children's Guardian](#).

Training and Supervision

SWMRC only engages people who are suitable to work with children and young people at South West Music and has developed and implemented child-safe human resources practices accordingly.

SWMRC is committed to ensuring that newly recruited and existing staff, direct contact and regular volunteers and direct contact and regular contractors understand the importance of child safety, are aware of all relevant policies and procedures, and are able to minimise the risk of child abuse and other harm.

All staff, as well as direct contact volunteers and direct contact contractors receive child protection training, provided by SWMRC as part of the induction process, when they first commence their role at SWMRC

All staff, as well as direct contact volunteers and direct contact contractors **are** required to complete refresher training, provided by SWMRC on child safety issues at least annually.

All **Mandatory Reporters** also receive periodic refresher training to ensure ongoing understanding of their obligations.

All staff members, direct contact volunteers and direct contact contractors are supervised regularly to ensure their behaviour towards children and young people is appropriate and to monitor their compliance with SWMRC's Child Protection Program.

Where a staff member breaches any obligation, duty or responsibility within our Child Protection Program, SWMRC may take disciplinary action that may result in a range of measures including (depending on the severity of the breach):

- remedial education
- counselling
- increased supervision
- the restriction of duties
- appointment to an alternate role
- suspension or

in the case of serious breaches, termination of employment, contract or engagement.

In the case of volunteers and contractors appropriate action will include terminate of the contract or engagement. It may also include mandatory reporting to the Department of Communities and Justice and NSW Police.

Definitions and Key Indicators of Abuse

Section 23 of the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* (NSW) defines a child (aged under 16) or a young person (aged 16 or 17) to be “at risk of significant harm” if current concerns exist for the safety, welfare or wellbeing of the child or young person because:

- the child's or young person's basic physical or psychological needs are not being met or are at risk of not being met
- the parents or carers have not arranged and are unable or unwilling to arrange for the child or young person to receive necessary medical care
- the parents or carers have not arranged and are unable or unwilling to arrange for the child or young person to receive an education in accordance with the *Education Act 1990* (NSW);
- the child or young person has been, or is at risk of being, physically or sexually abused or ill-treated
- the child or young person is living in a household where there have been incidents of domestic violence and, as a consequence, the child or young person is at risk of serious physical or psychological harm
- a parent or other carer has behaved in such a way towards the child or young person that the child or young person has suffered or is at risk of suffering serious psychological harm.

Mandatory reporting of child abuse and other harm to the Department of Communities and Justice only applies to children (aged under 16).

Physical Abuse or Harm

Physical abuse or harm is a non-accidental physical injury or pattern of physical injuries to a child or young person caused by a parent/carer or any other person. It includes, but is not limited to, injuries which are caused by:

- hitting
- shaking
- throwing
- burning
- biting
- poisoning
- giving children alcohol, illegal drugs or inappropriate medication
- female genital mutilation.

Injuries can include bruising, lacerations or welts, burns, fractures or dislocation of joints. Physical abuse does not always leave visible marks or injuries. It is not how bad the mark or injury is, but rather the act itself that can cause injury or trauma to the child or young person.

Possible Physical Indicators of Physical Abuse or Harm

- unexplained bruises

- bruises or welts on facial areas and other areas of the body, including back, bottom, legs, arms or inner thighs
- any bruises or welts in unusual configurations, or those that look like the object used to make the injury, for example, fingerprints, handprints, buckles, iron or teeth
- drowsiness, vomiting, fits or pooling of blood in the eyes, which may suggest head injury
- burns that show the shape of the object used to make them, such as an iron, grill, cigarette, or burns from boiling water, oil or flames
- dislocations, sprains, twisting injuries
- fractures of the skull, jaw, nose or limbs, especially in younger children and especially when not consistent with the explanation offered
- cuts and grazes to the mouth, lips, gums, eye area, ears or external genitalia
- human bite marks
- bald patches where hair has been pulled out
- multiple injuries, old and new

Possible Behavioural Indicators of Physical Abuse or Harm

- inconsistent or unlikely explanation for an injury
- inability to remember the cause of an injury
- fear of specific people
- wearing clothes unsuitable for weather conditions (such as long-sleeved tops) to hide injuries
- wariness or fear of a parent/carer and reluctance to go home
- no reaction or little emotion displayed when hurt
- little or no fear when threatened
- habitual absences from SWMRC without explanations (the parent/carer may be keeping the child or young person away until signs of injury have disappeared)
- overly compliant, shy, withdrawn, passive and uncommunicative
- fearfulness when other children cry or shout
- unusually nervous or hyperactive, aggressive, disruptive and destructive to self and/or others
- excessively friendly with strangers
- regressive behaviour, such as bed wetting or soiling
- poor sleeping patterns, fear of dark, nightmares
- sadness and frequent crying
- drug or alcohol misuse
- poor memory and concentration
- suicide threats or attempts
- academic problems

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is when someone involves a child or young person in a sexual activity by using their power over them or taking advantage of their trust. Often children and young people are bribed or threatened physically or psychologically to make them participate in the activity.

Sexual abuse includes sexual activity or behaviour that is imposed, or is likely to be imposed, on a child or young person by another person. Sexual abuse or exploitation can be physical or verbal and can include the following:

Contact Behaviours

- kissing, touching or holding a child or young person in a sexual manner
- penetration of the vagina or anus by digital, penile, or any other object
- oral sexual contact
- coercing the child or young person to perform a sexual act on him/herself or anyone else

Non-Contact Behaviours

- talking in a sexually explicit manner to a child or young person
- making obscene remarks to a child or young person via any form of communication
- flashing/exposing to a child or young person
- having a child or young person pose or perform in a sexual manner
- voyeurism and invasion of privacy
- looking at child's or young person's genitals for sexual gratification
- exposure of the child or young person to sexually explicit material or acts (including pornographic material)
- communication of graphic sexual matters (including by social media or any other electronic means)

Sexual abuse also includes prostitution or exposure to circumstances where there is a risk that the child or young person may be sexually exploited.

Possible Physical Indicators of Sexual Abuse

- injury to the genital or rectal areas, such as bruising or bleeding
- vaginal or anal bleeding or discharge
- discomfort in urinating or defecating
- the presence of foreign bodies in vagina and/or rectum
- inflammation or infection of the genital area
- sexually transmitted diseases
- pregnancy, especially in very young adolescents
- bruising and other injury to breasts, buttocks or thighs
- anxiety related illnesses such as anorexia or bulimia
- frequent urinary tract infections

Possible Behavioural Indicators of Sexual Abuse

- the child or young person discloses sexual abuse
- the child or young person exhibits sexually harmful behaviour towards others (see Recognising and Responding to Sexual Behaviour in Children and Young People)
- persistent and age-inappropriate sexual behaviour, including excessive masturbation, masturbation with objects, rubbing genitals against adults, playing games that act out a sexually abusive event (see Recognising and Responding to Sexual Behaviour in Children and Young People)
- drawings or descriptions in stories that are sexually explicit and not age appropriate
- a fear of home, a specific place, a particular adult, or excessive fear of men or of women
- poor or deteriorating relationships with adults and peers
- poor self-care/personal hygiene
- regularly arriving early at SWMRC and leaving late
- complaining of headaches, stomach pains or nausea without physiological basis
- frequent rocking, sucking or biting
- sleeping difficulties
- reluctance to participate in physical or recreational activities
- regressive behaviour, such as bed wetting or speech loss
- the sudden accumulation of money or gifts
- unplanned absences or running away from home
- delinquent or aggressive behaviour
- depression
- self-injurious behaviour, including drug/alcohol abuse, prostitution, self-mutilation, or attempted suicide
- the sudden decline in academic performance, poor memory and concentration
- wearing of provocative clothing, or layers of clothes to hide injuries
- promiscuity

Grooming

Grooming refers to behaviours that manipulate and control a child or young person, their family and other support networks, or institutions, with the intent of gaining access to the child or young person for the purposes of engaging in sexually harmful behaviour, obtaining the child or young person's compliance, maintaining the child or young person's silence, and avoiding discovery of the sexual abuse.

Grooming behaviour can therefore refer to grooming of an adult with authority for a child or young person, to make it easier to procure the child or young person for sexual abuse or to ensure that, if the child or young person does disclose, that the adult does not believe the child or young person.

Grooming is defined as:

- the use of a variety of manipulative and controlling techniques
- with a vulnerable subject
- in a range of inter-personal and social settings
- in order to establish trust or normalise sexually harmful behaviour
- with the overall aim of facilitating exploitation and/or prohibiting disclosure of the harmful behaviour.

Grooming behaviour towards children and young people often involves a graduation from attention giving and non-sexual touching to increasingly more intimate and intrusive behaviour. Grooming usually involves a perpetrator establishing a trusting relationship with a child or young person and those associated with the child or young person's care and wellbeing, to create an environment in which sexual abuse can occur

Grooming behaviours are considered conduct which may place a child at risk of significant harm, which must be reported to DCJ by Mandatory Reporters.

Identifying Grooming

Grooming can be very difficult to identify. Grooming includes a range of techniques, many of which are not explicitly sexual or directly abusive in themselves. Most techniques do not appear unusual or remarkable in isolation, but instead involve many discrete acts that, on their own, are not necessarily criminal or abusive.

Possible Grooming Behaviour by Adults associated with South West Music

- persuading a child or young person or group of children and young people that they have a special relationship
- asking a child or young person to keep the relationship to themselves
- inappropriately allowing a child or young person to overstep the rules
- testing boundaries, for example by undressing in front of a child or young person
- manoeuvring to get or insisting on uninterrupted time alone with a child or young person
- buying a child or young person gifts
- insisting on physical affection such as hugging, wrestling or tickling even when the child or young person clearly does not want it
- being overly interested in the sexual development of a child or young person
- taking or having a lot of photos of an unrelated child or young person
- engaging in inappropriate or excessive physical contact with a child or young person
- sharing alcohol or drugs with a child or young person
- making inappropriate comments about a child or young person's appearance or excessive flattery
- using inappropriate pet names for a child or young person
- making jokes or innuendo of a sexual nature with a child or young person

- making obscene gestures or using obscene language with a child or young person
- sending correspondence of a personal nature to a child or young person via any medium
- inviting, allowing, or encouraging children and young people to attend the staff member's home without parental/carer permission
- entering change rooms or toilets occupied by children and young people when supervision is not required or appropriate
- communicating with a child or young person's parent/step parent/carer, teacher, religious official or spiritual leader with the intention of facilitating the child or young person's involvement in sexual conduct;
- inappropriately extending a relationship with a child or young person outside of work
- photographing, audio recording, or filming children and young people via any medium without authorisation or having parental consent to do so

Indicators That a Child or Young Person May Be Subject to Grooming

- developing an unusually close relationship with an adult
- displaying significant mood changes, including hyperactive, sensitive, hostile, aggressive, impatient, resentful, anxious, withdrawn or depressed behaviour
- using 'street' or different language they learned from a new or older 'friend'
- having new jewellery, clothing, expensive items or large amounts of money that were gifts from a new or older 'friend'
- using a new mobile phone excessively to make calls, videos or send text messages to a new or older 'friend'
- being excessively secretive about their use of social media or online communications
- frequently staying out late or overnight with a new or older 'friend'
- being dishonest about where they have been or who they were with
- drug and alcohol use
- being picked up in a car by a new or older 'friend' from home or school or 'down the street'

Indicators That a Child of Young Person May Be Subject to Online Grooming:

- discovery of pornography on their computer or device
- receiving or making calls to unrecognised numbers
- increasing or excessive amount of time spent online
- increased secrecy in what they are doing online and efforts to try and hide what they are doing online
- evidence of people on their 'friends' list that are unknown and they have never met them offline

What is Not Grooming?

Certain behaviours or acts will not, in isolation, constitute grooming behaviour.

However, where there is a repeating pattern of indicative behaviour, or several incidents of indicative behaviour, it may constitute grooming behaviour.

Similarly, not all physical contact between a child or young person and a SWMRC staff member, Volunteer or Contractor, will be inappropriate and/or an indicator of possible grooming behaviour.

The following physical contact with children and young people is not grooming behaviour:

- administration of first aid
- supporting children and young people who have hurt themselves
- non-intrusive gestures to comfort a child or young person who is experiencing grief, loss or distress, such as a hand on the upper arm or upper back
- non-intrusive touching i.e., shaking a child or young person's hand or a pat on the back to congratulate a child or young person.

Serious Emotional or Psychological Harm

The infliction of emotional or psychological harm is one of the most common forms of child abuse and other harm. It can occur where the behaviour of an adult associated with the child or young person damages the confidence and self-esteem of the child or young person, resulting in serious emotional deprivation or trauma.

Although it is possible for 'one-off' incidents to cause serious emotional or psychological harm, in general it is the frequency, persistence and duration of the adult's behaviour that is instrumental in defining the consequences for the child or young person.

A range of behaviours can cause serious emotional or psychological harm to a child or young person. These may include:

- making excessive or degrading demands of a child or young person
- a pattern of hostile or degrading comments towards the child or young person
- excessive criticism
- withholding affection
- exposure to domestic violence
- intimidation or threatening behaviour.

The behaviours may convey to a child or young person that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate or rejected, or cause a child or young person to frequently feel frightened or in danger.

Where the adult who undertakes this behaviour is a parent or carer of the child or young person, it is a ground for suspecting that the child or young person is at risk of significant harm, and – in the case of a child – must be reported to DCJ (see Mandatory Reporting to DCJ).

Other adults associated with a child or young person can also subject the child or young person to behaviours that may cause serious emotional or psychological harm.

Possible Physical Indicators of Serious Emotional or Psychological Harm:

- speech disorders
- delays in emotional, mental or even physical development
- physical signs of self-harming

Possible Behavioural Indicators of Serious Emotional or Psychological Harm:

- constant feelings of worthlessness about life and themselves
- unable to value others
- lack of trust in people
- lack of people skills necessary for daily functioning
- extreme attention-seeking behaviour
- obsessively eager to please or obey adults
- takes extreme risks, is markedly disruptive, bullying or aggressive
- highly self-critical, depressed or anxious
- suicide threats or attempts, or self-harming
- persistent running away from home
- anti-social, destructive behaviour
- low tolerance or frustration
- unexplained mood swings
- behaviours that are not age-appropriate, for example, overly adult (parenting of other children), or overly infantile (thumb sucking, rocking, wetting or soiling)
- fear of failure, overly high standards and excessive neatness
- violent drawings or writing
- isolation from other children and young people

Neglect

Neglect is the continued failure to provide a child or young person with the basic things needed for their growth and development, such as food, clothing, shelter, medical and dental care, education and adequate supervision. It includes a failure to meet a child or young person's physical and/or psychological needs.

Where the adult who fails to provide these basic necessities is a parent or carer of the child or young person, it is a ground for suspecting that the child or young person is at risk of significant harm, and – in the case of a child – must be reported to the Department of Communities and Justice (see Mandatory Reporting to DCJ).

Other adults associated with a child or young person can also neglect the child or young person.

Possible Physical Indicators of Neglect

- consistently dirty and unwashed
- consistently inappropriately dressed for weather conditions
- consistently without adequate supervision and at risk of injury or harm

- consistently hungry, tired and listless, falling asleep in class, or malnourished
- unattended health problems and lack of routine medical care
- inadequate shelter and unsafe or unsanitary conditions
- abandonment by parents/carers
- poor hygiene

Possible Behavioural Indicators of Neglect

- scavenging, begging or stealing food
- gorging when food is available
- inability to eat when extremely hungry
- alienated from peers, withdrawn, listless, pale, and thin
- aggressive behaviour
- delinquent acts, for example, vandalism, drug or alcohol abuse
- little positive interaction with parent/carer
- appearing miserable or irritable
- poor socialising habits
- poor evidence of bonding, or little stranger anxiety
- indiscriminate with affection
- poor, irregular or non-attendance at school
- staying at school for long hours
- self-destructive
- dropping out of school
- taking on an adult role of caring for a parent/carer
- misusing alcohol or drugs
- academic issues

Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is behaviour towards a family member that may include:

- physical violence or threats of violence
- verbal abuse, including threats
- emotional or psychological abuse
- sexual abuse
- financial and social abuse.

When dealing with children and young people it is important to remember that domestic violence extends to behaviour that causes a child or young person to hear, witness, or be exposed to the effects of domestic violence. A child or young person's exposure to domestic violence constitutes a risk of significant harm under the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1988* (NSW) and child abuse under the *Family Law Act 1975 (Cth)*.

Examples of situations that may constitute a child or young person being exposed to domestic violence include the child or young person:

- overhearing threats of death or personal injury by a member of the child or young person’s family towards another member of the child or young person’s family; or
- seeing or hearing an assault of a member of the child or young person’s family by another member of the child or young person’s family.

As domestic violence can result in one or more forms of child abuse and other harm (for example, neglect, physical or sexual abuse, or emotional or psychological harm) physical and behavioural indicators of these other types of abuse and harm may also be indicative of a family violence situation.

Possible Behavioural Indicators for Older Children and Young People

- moving away or running away from the family home
- entering a relationship early to escape the family home
- experiencing violence in their own dating relationship
- involvement in criminal activity
- alcohol and substance abuse.

Further Information:

[NSW Office of the Children’s Guardian](#)

Document Revision

Rev No.	Date	Section revised	Prepared by	Approved by
1.0	August	WWCC to be completed prior to employment	Leone Knight	Requested by DoE
2.0	October 2023	Whole Document		