

1. Purpose

The Child Protection Policy provides a framework for all Men's Health Trust NZ related parties (board, management, staff, contractors, volunteers, and service delivery partners) to deliver services in line with the Children's Act 2014, and to uphold a shared responsibility to protect vulnerable children, including reporting any suspected abuse or neglect.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all related parties that includes staff, volunteers, contractors, service delivery providers, partners, management and governance members engaged in delivering services to children and young people.

3. Legal Framework

- **The Children's Act 2014:** This Act promotes the well-being and protection of children. It emphasises prioritizing the best interests of the child in all decisions and actions.
- **The Oranga Tamariki Act 1989:** This Act focuses on the care and protection of children, authorising the Ministry for Children (Oranga Tamariki) to act in the best interests of children and to intervene when necessary to ensure their safety.
- **The Treaty of Waitangi** – As a foundational document in New Zealand, it establishes the principles of partnership, protection, and participation, guiding our work with children.
- **Privacy Act 2020** – Safeguarding children's personal information.

4. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy and associated Good Practice Protocols:

- A child is any child or young person aged 17 years or under.
- Abuse is the harming (physically, emotionally, or sexually), ill-treatment, neglect, or deprivation of a child
- Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs, leading to adverse or impaired physical or emotional functioning or development.
- A child protection concern is any reasonable concern that a child may be at risk of abuse or neglect.
- All related parties are staff, volunteers, contractors, service delivery providers, partners, management and governance members

5. Principles of Child Protection

- The welfare of children is the primary concern.
- When considering whether notification to Oranga Tamariki or Police is appropriate a conservative approach will be taken with the foremost consideration being the welfare and safety of the child(ren).
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, ethnicity, socio-economic status, religious belief, and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from all forms of abuse or neglect.
- Child protection is everyone's responsibility.
- Children have the right to express views on all matters which affect them, should they wish to do so.
- The organisation will treat people, including children, with respect in all its activities.
- The organisation will adopt best practice in relation to working with children.

6. Policy Objectives

The aim of this policy is to promote good practice through:

- respecting and promoting the rights, wishes, and feelings of children;
- promoting and implementing appropriate procedures to safeguard the wellbeing of children and protect them from abuse or neglect;
- recruiting, training, supporting, and supervising staff, volunteers, and contractors to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children from abuse or neglect and to reduce risk to themselves;
- requiring staff, volunteers, and contractors to adopt and abide by the Child Protection Policy and procedures;
- responding to any child protection concerns, or any allegations of abuse or neglect of children in line with the policy and procedures as well as implementing, where appropriate, the relevant disciplinary and appeals procedures; and
- regularly monitoring and evaluating the implementation of this policy and procedures.

7. Procedures

7.1 Key Roles & Responsibilities for Implementation

- **CEO:** carries overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy with Men's Health Trust NZ. This includes ensuring that this policy is understood and adhered to by all related parties.
- **All related parties:** involved in the delivery of services to children and young people are required to understand and adhere to this policy, engage in training and report any concerns regarding child safety.

- **Children & Families:** Children and families are supported to understand this policy and actively participate in safeguarding, through a **Service User Guide** provided at onboarding. The guide is also available on our website: <https://www.menshealth.org.nz/serviceuserguide>
- **Policy hub:** All key policies are accessible via the Men's Health Trust NZ **Policy Hub** on our organisation's website, <https://www.menshealth.org.nz/policyhub>

7.2 Recruitment & Training

All related parties undergo appropriate background checks, including police vetting, and receive child protection training as part of onboarding. Ongoing annual and quarterly refresher training ensures they are equipped to recognise and respond to concerns of abuse or neglect.

7.3 Reporting

Any related parties who suspects, witnesses, or receives a disclosure of child abuse or neglect must report it immediately to the CEO who will then document the concern and, where appropriate, initiate a formal Report of Concern to Oranga Tamariki in line with the Children's Act 2014 and relevant legislation.

7.4 Confidentiality & Privacy

All reports and information concerning child protection will be handled with the utmost confidentiality. Information will only be shared with those who need to know to ensure the safety and protection of children.

7.5 Engagement with Families

Recognising the importance of families, we commit to engaging effectively with families to support the well-being of children. We will respect family roles and involve them in decisions regarding the care and protection of their children.

Policy Review Schedule

This policy will be reviewed annually, or more frequently if significant legislative or organisational changes occur, to ensure ongoing compliance and relevance. Below is the policy review schedule.

Version: 20-03-26 [The latest policy version is identified by the most recent review date]

Last Review Date: 20 March 2026. Reviewed by CEO

Board Approved Date: 23 March 2026

Next review date: By 31 March 2027, aligned with the Annual Plan cycle.

Any enquiries can be directed to:

Ina Michael, CEO - Men's Health Trust NZ

Email: ina@menshealthnz.org.nz

Mobile: 021 418 301