

Best Life individual Support Services

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This Policy and the Policies and Procedures and related documentation set out in section 1.5 below (Related Documentation) support Best Life Individual Support Services to apply child-safe practices consistent with the NDIS Practice Standards and relevant child protection legislation.

1.2 Policy Aims

Best Life Individual Support Services is committed to ensuring that all children and young people accessing supports are safe, respected, and protected from harm. The organisation promotes a culture where child safety is embedded in all service delivery and where concerns are identified and responded to promptly and appropriately.

1.3 NDIS Quality Indicators

In this regard, Best Life Individual Support Services aims to demonstrate:

- (a) A strong culture of child safety and zero tolerance for abuse, neglect, exploitation, or harm.
- (b) Children, families, carers, and advocates are informed, empowered, and supported to raise concerns.
- (c) Systems are in place to identify, assess, and reduce risks to children.
- (d) Workers are trained, supported, and compliant with child protection obligations including mandatory reporting.

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(e) Continuous improvement in safeguarding practices through monitoring, review, and feedback.

1.4 Scope

(a) This Policy applies to all services and supports delivered by Best Life Individual Support Services involving participants under 18 years of age.

(b) All Workers (permanent, casual, contractors, volunteers, and Key Management Personnel) must comply with this Policy.

(c) Relevant persons identified in procedures are responsible for implementation.

1.5 Related Documentation

This Policy should be read alongside the organisation's Incident Management, Complaints Management, Code of Conduct, Risk Management, and Recruitment Policies contained within the Policy Register.

2. Definitions

In this Policy:

Best Life Individual Support Services means Best Life Individual Support Services Pty Ltd ABN 94 652 210 930.

Client means a client of Best Life Individual Support Services (including an NDIS participant).

Child Abuse includes physical, sexual, emotional abuse, neglect, grooming, and exploitation

Child/Young Person means any individual under 18 years of age.

Mandatory Reporting means legal requirement to report suspected harm to relevant authorities.

Key Management Personnel means Alannah Ahmat and other key management personnel involved in Best Life Individual Support Services from time to time.

Legislation Register means the register of legislation, regulations, rules and guidelines maintained by Best Life Individual Support Services.

NDIS Commissioner Complaints Website means <https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/about/complaints>.

Policy Register means the register of policies of Best Life Individual Support Services.

Principal means Alannah Ahmat

Related Documentation has the meaning given to that term in section 1.1.

Senior Staff Member means any senior member of staff or Key Management Personnel at Best Life Individual Support Services other than the Principal.

Worker means a permanent, fixed term or casual member of staff, a contractor or volunteer employed or otherwise engaged by Best Life Individual Support Services and includes the Principal and Key Management Personnel.

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3. Policy Statement

Best Life Individual Support Services is committed to:

- (a) Providing a safe, inclusive, and child-focused environment;
- (b) Acting in the best interests of the child at all times;
- (c) Preventing, identifying, and responding to risks of harm;
- (d) Empowering children and families to speak up;
- (e) Ensuring all concerns are taken seriously and responded to promptly;
- (f) Embedding child safety into governance, leadership, and everyday practice;
- (g) Ensuring compliance with all relevant legislation and NDIS requirements.

4. Child Safe Code of Conduct

All Workers must:

- a) Treat children with dignity, respect, and fairness;
- b) Listen to children and take their views seriously;
- c) Maintain appropriate professional boundaries;
- d) Avoid being alone with a child unless necessary and authorised;
- e) Use appropriate language and behaviour at all times;
- f) Not engage in any form of physical punishment, discrimination, or inappropriate conduct;
- g) Not develop inappropriate or “special” relationships with children;
- h) Report any concerns, suspicions, or allegations immediately.

5. Recruitment, Screening and Training

5.1 Recruitment and Screening

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All Workers must:

- (a) Hold a valid Working With Children Check (WWCC);
- (b) Undergo National Police Checks;
- (c) Provide references and be assessed for suitability to work with children;
- (d) Be informed of child safety responsibilities prior to engagement.

5.2 Training

Workers will receive:

- (a) Induction Training on Child Safety and protection;
- (b) Ongoing training on recognising and responding to abuse;
- (c) Be informed of child safety responsibilities prior to engagement

6. Identifying and Managing Risks to Children

- (a) Risks to children will be identified through regular risk assessments;
- (b) Strategies will be implemented to minimise risks in service environments;
- (c) Appropriate supervision and staffing arrangements will be maintained;
- (d) Workers must report any identified risks immediately.

7. Reporting and Responding to Concerns

Procedure	Responsibility
7.1 Reporting Obligations All Workers must report immediately if they: a) Suspect a child is at risk of harm; b) Receive a disclosure of abuse; c) Witness inappropriate behaviour involving a child.	Worker witnessing the concerns
7.2 Internal Reporting Process (a) Report concerns to the Principal or Senior Staff Member immediately; (b) Record details accurately; (c) Ensure the child's immediate safety	Worker witnessing the concerns

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7.3 External Reporting Where required, reports will be made to: (a) Child Protection Authorities; (b) Police (if criminal activity is suspected); (c) NDIS Commission where applicable.	Worker witnessing the concerns, Key Management Personnel
7.4 Response Principles: All responses will: (a) Prioritise the safety and wellbeing of the child; (b) Be handled confidentially and respectfully; (c) Follow procedural fairness; (d) Ensure appropriate support is provided to the child and family.	Worker witnessing the concerns, Key Management Personnel

8. Empowerment of Children and Families

Best Life Individual Support Services will:

- (a) Provide accessible, age-appropriate information about rights and safety;
- (b) Encourage children to express views and concerns;
- (c) Support access to advocates;
- (d) Ensure children and families feel safe to raise issues without fear.

9. Privacy and Confidentiality

A child safety concerns will be handled in accordance with privacy laws. Information will only be shared where necessary to protect the child or meet legal obligations.

10. Record Keeping

- (a) All child safety concerns and actions will be documented;
- (b) Records will be stored securely and confidentially;
- (c) Access will be restricted to authorised personnel.

11. Continuous Improvement

- (a) Review this Policy annually;

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- (b) Learn from incidents and feedback;
- (c) Improve systems and practices;
- (d) Seek input from children, families, and stakeholders.

12. Breach of Policy

Failure to comply with this Policy may result in Disciplinary action, including termination and referral to authorities where required.

13. General

13.1 Relevant Legislation, Regulations, Rules and Guidelines

Legislation, Rules, Guidelines and Policies apply to this Policy and Related Documentation as set out in the Legislation Register.

13.2 Inconsistency

If and to the extent that the terms of this Policy are or would be inconsistent with the requirements of any applicable law, this Policy is deemed to be amended but only to the extent required to comply with the applicable law.

13.3 Policy Details

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