

# safeguarding in practice at yourtown

Safeguarding is a term used to describe all the things an organisation can do to keep its clients safe from harm and abuse, particularly children, young people and adults at risk.

At **yourtown** everyone has a right to be safe and feel safe. All staff, contractors and organisations we work with have a responsibility to help safeguard children, young people and adults at risk.

This means that anyone under the age of 18, or those that are unable to care for themselves, should be protected from harm (including abuse or exploitation) when they come into contact with **yourtown**.

**yourtown** is committed to safety and does not tolerate inappropriate conduct. We have an any door is the right door approach to making a complaint which means you can talk to any member of staff in a way that makes you comfortable.

## **Safeguarding is an organisational requirement:**

In response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in 2017, Governments and other institutions started introducing frameworks and principles in relation to safeguarding that organisations, such as **yourtown**, must comply with.

### **The key frameworks are:**

- National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
- Commonwealth Child Safe Framework and
- National Catholic Safeguarding Standards

Each state and territory in Australia also have their own requirements, such as police checks, working with children checks and reporting requirements that must be followed.

To comply with these requirements **yourtown** has developed our Safeguarding in Practice – Policy and Procedures, including guidelines, resources and training.

These can be accessed at:

<https://www.yourtown.com.au/safeguarding>

All children and young people have rights as outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

**at yourtown you have the right:**

to ask for information

to participate on your own terms

to feel safe

to be informed of who to contact if you have concerns about your safety or the safety of your peers

to be safe from abuse, harm, neglect, and inadequate care





## keeping our clients safe:

To keep our clients safe **yourtown** has in place:

- Safeguarding Policies, Procedures and Guidelines in place that staff should follow to ensure young people are safe.
- Safeguarding Risk Assessments for each program that are reviewed on an annual basis
- Recruitment policies that ensure that staff are safe, and appropriately qualified
- Staff training that highlights the importance of safeguarding, developmentally appropriate support and that professional boundaries are maintained
- Ongoing staff support and supervision
- Pathways to engage with young people in the design of policies and procedures
- Opportunities for young people to advocate for themselves and their needs, including providing feedback or making complaints
- Guidelines to ensure that we respect and accommodate diverse needs
- Behavioural guidelines, including a no drug and alcohol policy and transport requirements
- Visitor induction processes to keep young people safe including privacy (e.g., no photos or video recording without consent) and confidentiality requirements when engaging with young people.
- Safeguarding requirements for organisations that we refer young people to or work with
- Requirements around reporting abuse, harm or misconduct

## managing complaints and feedback:

**yourtown** has specific guidelines for complaints and feedback in place. Complaints are issues or situations that are related to your or other people's safety, where as feedback is information that contains suggestions, compliments or general dissatisfaction.

All feedback and complaints will be taken seriously to make sure that we are providing the best possible support, programs that meet your needs and help to keep you safe. When providing feedback or making a complaint please provide as much detail as possible including: the situation, the outcome that you want, your contact details and how you want us to update you.

Feedback and complaints can be provided about staff, programs, resources, providers and other organisations we work with. You can make a complaint or provide feedback at anytime by:

- Talking to a member of staff directly or a manager
- Asking a person you know, another organisation or an advocate to contact us on your behalf
- Emailing [feedback@yourtown.com.au](mailto:feedback@yourtown.com.au), through the website or via social media
- Calling our head office on 1800 555 079 or through the main number at your site
- Sending a letter to GPO Box 2469, Brisbane QLD 4001 or
- Contacting Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800 or via chat at [www.kidshelpline.com.au](http://www.kidshelpline.com.au)



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## once you have made a complaint:

- The staff member will record the complaint and keep all details confidential where possible.
- You can make an anonymous complaint if you wish.
- We will provide you or someone you nominate, with support and regular updates
- The staff member will talk to their manager or the appropriate senior manager
- You will receive an acknowledgement within 3 business days
- An investigation will take place with a response provided within 15 days

**if you are unhappy with the outcome you can ask for it to be reviewed.**

## making sure you get the support that you need

### **We have a responsibility to protect you and other people from harm.**

This can be something either you do, or someone does to you that causes pain or harm, whether to yourself or another person. This can be to yours or someone else's body, be felt psychologically or impact emotional wellbeing. It could be intentional or unintentional. There are lots of reasons why this might happen, including physical, emotional or sexual abuse, neglect, or being exploited by others.

There are many requirements that guide our responses to reports of harm. To ensure we have safe environments we must have appropriate responses in place and follow the reporting requirements in different states and territories.

More information can be found here: <http://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/mandatory-reporting-child-abuse-and-neglect>

**yourtown** staff have a responsibility to keep children, young people, and adults safe from immediate harm. This responsibility involves providing a high standard of care. At **yourtown** there is no wrong door when talking about harm, abuse or neglect. It does not matter if the incident occurred at or outside of **yourtown**.

This means that when a staff member becomes aware of an incident that has caused or could cause harm to any person, they are required to report it to their Manager. This is to ensure they can decide the best course of action.



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## support process

if someone is in immediate danger we will call 000:

We are aware that making a disclosure can be difficult and we want to make sure that we provide you with appropriate support and that you are aware of what will happen next.

when a disclosure is made:

we will listen to you and treat the situation seriously

we will consult with our managers and expert advisors

we will ask questions around key information, names, dates and contact details

we will report the disclosure and if we can let you know what our next steps are

we will provide ongoing support and refer you to other support services

### Our internal reporting documents provide the following guidelines:

- If not involved program managers will be the first point of contact
- Support can be provided for those with a disability or cultural needs and should be offered by staff
- All forms of child abuse and neglect must be reported to police or relevant child protection authority
- Where the person is over 18, the child abuse or neglect that is disclosed will only be reported with agreement, unless a person under the age of 18 is at risk of harm.
- Online abuse can be reported to the esafety commissioner, unless it meets the mandatory reporting requirements
- All discussions about emergency responses will be reported as soon as possible and recorded within 48 hours.
- If you wish, we can support you to contact 000 or the appropriate authorities yourself

we may call emergency services or tell Child Protection



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