

This policy reflects the strong commitment of everyone working at Signal Health Newton to child safety and to creating a child-safe, child-friendly environment across the practice and all its activities. It was developed with input from staff, management, and patients (including children and young people where possible).

Signal Health Newton is committed to providing a safe environment where every person is treated with respect and protected from harm. This policy complies with the legislative requirements of the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017*, the *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016*, and aligns with the *National Principles for Child Safe Organisations*.

## Commitment to the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

Signal Health Newton adopts and applies the following National Principles to promote child safety and wellbeing:

1. Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.
2. Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions, and are taken seriously.
3. Families and communities are informed and involved.
4. Equity is upheld, and diverse needs are respected.
5. Staff working with children are suitable and supported.
6. Child-focused responses to complaints and concerns.
7. Ongoing education and training for staff.
8. Safe physical and online environments.
9. Regular review and continuous improvement.
10. Clear policies and procedures on child safety.

A child safe organisation consciously and systematically:

- Puts children's safety and wellbeing at the centre of decision-making.
- Genuinely engages and values children.
- Minimises risks of harm and maximises opportunities to identify harm.
- Responds appropriately to concerns, disclosures, or suspicions.

## Who This Policy Applies To

This policy applies to:

- Employees (permanent and casual)
- Executives
- Work Experience and Student Learners

And also includes those who may come into contact with children and young people, such as:

- Subcontractors (health and non-health professionals)
- Other professionals operating from Signal Health Newton premises
- Indirect service providers (e.g. IT technicians accessing records)

## Signal Health Newton as a Child Safe and Friendly Setting

Every child has the right to feel and be safe. Signal Health Newton takes a preventative, proactive, and participatory approach to child wellbeing and protection. Everyone at our practice plays a role in keeping children safe.

## Communication of This Policy

- The Signal Health Newton Child Safe Policy is available on all computer workstations and in hard copy.
- New employees and medical providers receive a copy during induction and sign the Child Safe Code of Conduct Form.
- Updates are shared with staff and discussed in practice meetings.

## Children's Participation

Signal Health Newton respects and encourages the voices of children and young people. We:

- Listen and act on concerns raised.
- Provide age-appropriate explanations.
- Involve them in decision-making when appropriate.
- Do not tolerate discrimination of any kind.

## Recruitment and Child Safety

Signal Health Newton uses safe recruitment practices to ensure only suitable individuals work with children. These include:

- Interviews and reference checks.
- Mandatory DHS Working with Children Checks prior to starting.
- Signed acknowledgment of the Child Safe Policy and Code of Conduct.
- Annual performance appraisals and immediate reviews if concerns arise.

## Ongoing Education, Support, and Supervision

Staff have access to:

- Online and printed resources.
- The *National Principles for Child Safe Organisations*.
- DHS's *Safe Environments for Children and Young People* booklet.
- Training opportunities.

Where required, staff are supervised by the Practice Manager or Principal Doctor to ensure compliance with policies.

Staff are also encouraged to complete DHS-approved training available at:

[www.dhs.sa.gov.au/services/community-and-family-children/safe-environments-for-children-and-young-people-training](http://www.dhs.sa.gov.au/services/community-and-family-children/safe-environments-for-children-and-young-people-training)

## Digital Safety and Social Media Use

Staff must not take, share, or publish photos or personal information of children or young people without written parental or guardian consent. Personal social media interactions with patients under 18 are not permitted. All patient-related digital content must comply with privacy and child protection laws.

## Feedback from Children and Families

Signal Health Newton encourages children, young people, and their families to provide feedback or raise concerns. This can be done verbally, in writing, or through our feedback form available at reception or on our website. We are committed to listening, responding, and improving where needed.

## Mandatory Reporting

Signal Health Newton does not tolerate child abuse. Staff must report suspicions of harm to:

- Child Abuse Report Line on 13 14 78 (24/7)
- For less serious concerns, use the [eCARL online system](#)

Serious concerns must always be reported via phone.

Support is available for staff who report concerns. If an employee is suspected of causing harm, the Practice Manager will record the concern, assess interim safety measures, and consult with the appropriate authorities.

We may also support affected children and families by:

- Referring them to support services.
- Sharing relevant service information in our waiting area.
- Continuing to monitor their medical needs.

Signal Health Newton may also refer families to local services such as CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services), Relationships Australia SA, or other relevant community supports.

## Risk Management

Signal Health Newton regularly reviews and updates risk management strategies to protect children. These include:

- Signed acknowledgements of Child Safe Policies.
- Verified DHS Working with Children Checks.
- Clear communication tailored to a child's age and needs.
- Supervision and chaperone considerations.
- Accurate record-keeping for legal and guardianship documentation.
- Emergency contact and consent forms on file.
- Prompt and fair responses to concerns.

We ensure a physically and socially safe environment, free of hazards, and review strategies regularly as part of our risk management processes.

All electronic medical records and patient messaging systems at Signal Health Newton are secured in accordance with national privacy laws, with restricted access to safeguard children's information.

## Cultural Safety

Signal Health Newton is committed to creating a culturally safe environment for all children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. We value cultural identity and ensure our services are respectful and inclusive.

## Children and Parental Responsibility

Parents retain legal responsibility for their children until age 18, unless altered by court orders. Staff should:

- Enquire about parenting or legal orders at registration.
- Request and file a copy of any relevant orders.
- Review and update patient records as needed.

## Regular Review

Signal Health Newton conducts regular internal reviews of its child safety practices. These reviews assess actions taken, identify areas for improvement, and address any issues that arise. This process supports accountability and our ongoing commitment to maintaining a safe environment for children and young people.

## Supporting Policies and Procedures

This policy is supported by:

- Signal Health Newton Employee Handbook
- Privacy Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Employment Contract (includes Working with Children Check requirement)

## Acknowledgement

All relevant individuals are required to read and acknowledge this policy and sign the Child Safe Code of Conduct Form. Signed copies are retained by the Practice Manager. Digital and hard copies of this policy are available at all times at Signal Health Newton.