



# CAMHS Protection Of Children & Young Persons Procedure

Procedure Number  
WCDHB-MHS-0031

Version Nos:  
4

## 1. Purpose

This Procedure is performed as a means of protecting the safety and well being of children and young persons who are in the care of the West Coast District Health Board (WCDHB) Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS).

## 2. Application/Responsibilities

This Procedure is to be followed by all WCDHB CAMHS and MHS staff members.

## 3. Definitions

For the purposes of this Procedure:

**Child** is taken to mean a boy or girl under the age of 14 years

**Young Person** is taken to mean a boy or girl over the age of 14 years but under the age of 17 years

**Abuse** is taken to mean violation of a child/young person's emotional, psychological, spiritual, sexual and physical wellbeing as well as any treatment by which a child's development is delayed or completely suppressed by mental, emotional or physical suffering.

**Suspicion of Abuse** is taken to mean any concern for a child/young person's well being based on evidence obtained from staff observation of signs of abuse, situations of risk or reports from others.

## 4. Responsibilities

For the purposes of this Procedure:

**All CAMHS Staff members** are required to report any concerns that they have about the possibility that a child/young person may have been abused to their immediate Clinical Manager or senior colleague.

## 5. Resources Required

This Procedure requires no specific resources.

## 6. Process

- 1.00 WCDHB supports the belief that children and young persons are entitled to develop physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually in an environment that is free from harm.
- 1.01 The safety of the child/young person is to take priority over all other concerns including privacy.
- 1.02 It is a mandatory requirement that all CAMHS and MHS staff report any concerns that they have about the possibility that a child/young person may have been abused to their immediate Clinical Manager or senior colleague, and then Child, Youth and Family Service (CYFS).



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- 1.03 All evidence of abuse of a child/young person or indicators of a risk of abuse is to be fully and accurately recorded in the child/young person's clinical record.
- 1.04 If a child/young person discloses abuse to a CAMHS staff member, all information volunteered by the child/young person should be fully and accurately recorded. NO in-depth interviewing of the child/young person is to be attempted.
- 1.05 The CAMHS staff member and their Clinical Manager are to discuss the situation, and if necessary, with other staff members to determine if this is a case of abuse.
- 1.06 If it is decided that this is a possible abuse situation, the staff member is to discuss with Family/Whanau if appropriate, and jointly make a notification to CYFS. If the family/whanau are not willing, or able to do this, CAMHS or MHS staff will make the notification. In situations of serious child abuse, particularly if they are life threatening, the Police need to be informed as soon as possible alongside CYFS.
- 1.07 As soon as is possible consideration should be given to making contact with a supportive parent/caregiver or other supportive family/whanau member, as identified by the child/young person.
- 1.08 In principle, parents/caregivers should be informed at the earliest possible time about the referral to CYFS. However, this should be done with consideration to the immediate safety of the child/young person, the impact on the family and the identification of the suspected abuser.
- 1.09 The cultural safety of all concerned individuals must be carefully considered in cases of suspected abuse, and assistance must be sought.
- 1.10 After notification of the suspected abuse has been reported to CYFS/Police, staff members are to provide any and all assistance as and when required.

### **7. Precautions And Considerations**

- ➔ The safety of the child/young person is to take priority over all other concerns
- ➔ It is a mandatory requirement that all CAMHS and MHS staff report any concerns regarding abuse
- ➔ In situations of serious child abuse, particular if they are life threatening, the Police are to be notified.

### **8. References**

Healthlink South The Protection Of Children And Young Persons Policy  
Good Health Wanganui Child Abuse Policy



- WCDHB MHS Risk Assessment And Management Policy
- WCDHB Disclosure Of Health Information (To Other Agencies) Procedure
- WCDHB Family Violence Management Policy
- WCDHB Child Protection Procedure

**10. Guidelines**

**CHILDREN, YOUNG PERSONS, AND THEIR FAMILIES ACT (1989)**

**Section 15** Any person who believes that any child or young person has been, or is likely to be, harmed (whether physically, emotionally, or sexually), ill-treated, abused, neglected, or deprived may report the matter to a Social Worker or a member of the Police.

**Section 16** No civil, criminal, or disciplinary proceedings shall lie against any person in respect of the disclosure or supply by that person pursuant to section 15 of this Act of information concerning a child or young person (whether or not that information also concerns any other person), unless the information was disclosed or supplied in bad faith.

**HEALTH ACT (1956)**

**Section 22c**

(1) Any person (being an agency that provides health services, or disability services, or both, or being a purchaser) may disclose health information:

(a) If that information:

- (i) Is required by any person specified in subsection (2) of this section; and
- (ii) Is required for the purpose set out in that subsection in relation to the person so specified;

(2) The persons and purposes referred to in subsection (1) (a) of this section are as follows:

- (c) A Social Worker or a Care and Protection Co-ordinator within the meaning of the Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989, for the purposes of exercising or performing any of that person's powers, duties, or functions under that Act:

<b>Revision History</b>	<b>Version:</b>	4
	<b>Developed By:</b>	Risk & Quality Mngr/CAMHS Mngr
	<b>Authorised By:</b>	GM – Mental Health
	<b>Date Authorised:</b>	July 2002
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