



Safeguarding Children and Young People

For Parents and Carers

Every person **matters**



All children and young people matter to MercyCare

Our commitment

MercyCare is committed to providing the safest environment possible for children and young people.

Children and young people's Rights

Children and young people have the right to:

- ✓ **BE** and **FEEL SAFE**
- ✓ Be **CARED** for
- ✓ Be **RESPECTED**
- ✓ **NO MATTER** what they do
- ✓ **NO MATTER** where they are

It is OK for young people to:

- ✓ **SAY NO** to an adult who **makes them feel unsafe or uncomfortable**
- ✓ **TELL A TRUSTED ADULT** they are **not feeling comfortable or safe**

As a parent or carer, you can help children and young people understand their rights.

We will:

- create and maintain a child safe culture
- ensure that all children and young people involved with MercyCare are visible, valued, and actively involved in our services
- protect children and young people from all forms of abuse, bullying and exploitation
- be alert to incidents of child abuse and neglect
- act quickly to respond and manage concerns about the safety of children and young people

A child safe culture for children and young people means:

- people care about and respect them
- they feel valued, listened to and heard
- no one discriminates against them
- they are not hurt physically or emotionally
- they know the rules about theirs and other people's behaviour
- they have choices about what they will and will not do
- they can have fun and be happy

Guidelines



All our people are expected to:

- Give positive guidance to children and young people about their behaviour and choices
- Stick to the boundaries of their role
- Use positive language and tone of voice in the presence of children and young people
- Supervise children and young people involved in our programs or services
- Be careful about electronic communication involving children or young people, including email, text messages, social media and websites
- Get permission before giving any gifts to a child or young person
- Follow clear guidelines about taking and using photographs of a child or young person
- Limit physical contact with children or young people to what is appropriate to our programs or services and their needs
- NOT use, possess, or supply alcohol or other drugs while working with young people

Guidelines for parents and carers

We ask you to support us by:

- Engaging in a positive and respectful manner
- NOT discriminating based on gender, ability, ethnicity and religion
- NOT threatening or acting in violent, abusive or confronting behaviours, including – physical, emotional or sexual behaviours.
- Advising us of any disability – health, safety or wellbeing – for the child or young person

Thank you





Responding to concerns

As a parent or carer, you can help children and young people speak up if something does not feel right.

If a child or young person tells you they are being harmed, feels unsafe or uncomfortable, or is worried about someone they know:

- be calm and supportive
- listen to what they say, be patient and let them use their own words
- reassure them it is right they told you and it's not their fault
- ask enough questions to plan how to keep them safe and decide what to do next without quizzing them for details
- respect that they may only want to share some details and acknowledge their bravery in speaking up
- don't make promises you can't keep and let them know you need to tell someone else to keep them safe

From the Commissioner for Children and Young People WA



How to report concerns



Please tell a MercyCare staff member if a child or young person in our care feels:

- unhappy with the way they are being treated
- worried about themselves or someone they know
- unsafe or uncomfortable
- have been threatened or harmed

You can also provide feedback through email, over the phone or on our website.

E: Feedback@mercycare.com.au

P: 08 9442 3444

W: mercycare.com.au/contact-us/feedback

How we respond to reports or allegations



If you tell us something is not right, we will:

- **LISTEN** to you
- Help you feel **SAFE**, **RESPECTED** and **TRUSTED**
- **ACT** quickly on your concerns
- **SUPPORT** you to navigate what is happening
- **OFFER** you choices about how you want to respond

Did you know?

Children and young people:

- are more likely to be harmed by someone they know and trust, than by a stranger.
- feel safer when people care about them and are available to talk about their problems
- feel safer when people include them and listen to them and explain the rules and their rights

Where to find out more

- Visit the Safeguarding Children page at [mercycare.com.au](https://www.mercycare.com.au)
- Ask to see our Safeguarding Children policy and procedure
- Ask to see our Child Abuse Reports and Allegation procedure

Further resources on Child Safety are available through the Commissioner for Children and Young People.

www.ccpyp.wa.gov.au

or Call Kids Helpline - 1800 551 800

