

Child Safe Standard One

Building an organisational culture of child safety through effective leadership

Talking Turtles Speech Pathology Pty Ltd is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all participating and visiting children and young people at the clinic. Talking Turtles Speech Pathology Pty Ltd shares the Victorian Government's commitment to implementing the recommendations of the Betrayal of Trust report, and supports the new regulations surrounding child safety, underpinned by new Child Safe Standards.

Talking Turtles Speech Pathology Pty Ltd recognises that the Child Safe Standards are compulsory minimum standards for all category two organisations (such as speech pathology clinics), to ensure they are well prepared to protect children from abuse and neglect.

Talking Turtles Speech Pathology Pty Ltd recognises that we must act to protect children from abuse in our organisation, and build an environment where children feel respected, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential. This requires a culture of child safety to be embedded throughout our organisation so that child safety is part of everyone's everyday thinking and practice. Such a culture is achieved through proactive leadership in demonstrating the appropriate values, attitudes and behaviours of our organisation.

A child safe environment is the product of a range of strategies and initiatives. Our organisation will endeavour to foster a culture of openness, inclusiveness and awareness. We will endeavour to implement a culture that enables children and adults to know what to do if they observe, or are subject to, abuse or inappropriate behaviour.

Talking Turtles Speech Pathology Pty Ltd encourages all staff and volunteers to consider the safety of all children, and to recognise the importance of the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the safety of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability.

Talking Turtles Speech Pathology Pty Ltd intends to take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety issues. The safety and wellbeing of children in our organisation should be a paramount consideration when developing activities, policies and management practices.

Talking Turtles Speech Pathology Pty Ltd is committed to excellent leadership and governance, and to providing a consistent level of care that upholds child safety.

Leadership responsibilities

Talking Turtles Speech Pathology Pty Ltd leadership team (Leadership) is responsible for embedding a culture of child safety in our organisation. Leadership need to take the lead in protecting children from abuse, and must be made aware of child abuse allegations and risks, and take responsibility for ensuring an appropriate response.

We must ensure that all allegations of child abuse and child safety concerns are treated very seriously by our organisation. This includes complying with all legal requirements, including reporting suspicions of child abuse to police and/or child protection. If anyone believes that a child is at immediate risk of abuse, phone 000.

Identify and analyse risk of abuse

Talking Turtles Speech Pathology Pty Ltd must adopt an approach to prevent, detect and respond to child abuse risks. This includes a risk management strategy and policy that sets

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out how our organisation identifies, assesses, and takes steps to reduce or remove child abuse risks.

Develop a child safe policy

Talking Turtles Speech Pathology Pty Ltd has developed a Child Safe Policy <and/or> Statement of Commitment to Child Safety which outlines our commitment to promoting children's wellbeing and protecting children from abuse.

Develop codes of conduct

Talking Turtles Speech Pathology Pty Ltd recognises the requirement to development and implement a code of conduct which specifies the standards of conduct and care required when working and interacting with children.

Choose suitable employees and volunteers

Talking Turtles Speech Pathology Pty Ltd will endeavour to take all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children. This includes police record and identity checks, Working with Children Checks, face-to-face interviews and detailed reference checks from previous employers, including from the applicant's most recent line manager.

Support, train, supervise and enhance performance

Talking Turtles Speech Pathology Pty Ltd will endeavour to ensure that volunteers and employees who work with children have ongoing supervision, support and training so that their performance is developed and enhanced to help protect children from abuse. In particular, leadership, managers and the child safety officer need to understand their responsibilities.

A child safety officer is a person in our organisation who has knowledge of child safety issues and will act as a point of contact for others who have questions or concerns or want to report an allegation of abuse.

Promote inclusion

Talking Turtles Speech Pathology Pty Ltd is inclusive to all children and families. In particular, our organisation will uphold a culture that supports:

- the cultural safety for Aboriginal children, for example by working in partnership with Aboriginal people and Aboriginal community-controlled organisations
- the cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, for example by using inclusive language and images in policy documents and communications, such as the website and newsletters

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- the safety of children with a disability, for example by ensuring that our organisation is accessible to everyone and ensuring appropriate training and supervision of staff and volunteers working with children with a disability.

Empower and promote the participation of children in decision-making

Talking Turtles Speech Pathology Pty Ltd will promote the involvement and participation of children in developing and maintaining a child safe environment. For example, we will provide opportunities for children to express their views on our organisation's child safe policy and code of conduct, and then incorporate this feedback to improve our policies and practices. Ideas from children will be sought through suggestion boxes.

Our staff members are committed to listening to children and taking them seriously, particularly if they are disclosing abuse or concerns for their safety or the safety of other children.

Review

Talking Turtles Speech Pathology Pty Ltd will review our organisation's response to the Child Safe Standards every two years, commencing in January 2018.