

# HEARING ASSOCIATION NEW ZEALAND INCORPORATED

INFORMATION SHEET NO \_\_\_\_\_

Updated August 2016

## Child Protection Policy

### **Rationale:**

At Hearing Association New Zealand we value children as unique and precious individuals. We also believe that children are vulnerable members of our society and need our protection. We believe that all members of society have a role to play in keeping children safe. We will always advocate for the needs and protection of children.

### **Objectives:**

To ensure all individuals involved in Hearing Association New Zealand are:

- Knowledgeable about identifying and protecting children from abuse, and aware they can and should report suspected abuse
- Aware of complaints/ reporting procedures.
- Aware of instances where liaison with other agencies may be required when suspicions of child abuse have been communicated.

Our Child Protection Policy applies to all individuals associated with our organisation regardless of whether they are paid employees or volunteers. It is effective from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2016.

### **Definition of child abuse:**

Child abuse means the harming (whether physically, emotionally or sexually), ill- treatment, abuse, neglect or deprivation of any child or young person.” Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act 1989 (section 2).

### **Training:**

Published literature such as *“Safer Organisations, Safe Children: Guidelines for Child Protection Policies to Build Safer Organisations”* by the Children’s Action Plan will be made available to all Member Associations of Hearing Association NZ, to distribute to their members, employees and volunteers. Information about protecting children will be available on our website.

Our process for ensuring that all staff, including contracted and voluntary personnel:

1. Understand and apply our Child Protection Policy is that they must read and sign the policy upon joining the association.
2. Recognise the signs of potential child abuse or neglect and respond consistent with our Child Protection Policy, is to read literature such as *“Safer Organisations, Safe Children: Guidelines for Child Protection Policies to Build Safer Organisations”* by the Children’s Action Plan.

## **Procedure:**

### **Responding to Suspected or Actual Child Abuse and Neglect**

When responding to suspicions of child abuse or neglect, individuals are strongly encouraged to

- Trust their instincts when they sense something is wrong in the life of a child.
- Spot the warning signs.
- Listen and take notice of what people say.
- Talk to other professionals who are involved in the life of the child you are concerned about.
- Talk to a line manager for support and guidance in making contact with Child, Youth and Family (CYFs).
- Take every action to protect the child of concern.

### **Reporting a Suspicion or Disclosure of Child Abuse:**

Ensure that child or young person is safe from immediate harm.

- Ensure that detailed notes are recorded which include physical/behavioural observations. Anything said by the child should be carefully documented (include date, time, who was present, sign name on document)
- Consult immediately Amanda Perry (Hearing Association New Zealand Contact Person) for advice and support.
- Amanda Perry will contact CYFS (0508 326 459) or the Police if the allegation is in regards to the conduct of a Hearing Association New Zealand associate. The reporting associate will be supported in making contact with CYF if the allegation relates to parents/caregivers of a child.
- If advised to do so, a CYF/Police referral form will be completed. Referral forms are available from the contact centre for CYF's and Police, either by fax or email.

### **Clarification of roles, responsibilities and professional practice around preventing and responding to suspected child abuse.**

#### **Associates of Hearing New Zealand:**

- If the child/ren is unsafe or at risk of harm, act immediately to secure their safety.
- Listen to the child/ren and reassure them that they did the right thing disclosing the abuse.
- Write down what the child/ren said. DO NOT formally interview the child/ren or take photos as this may interfere with the Police investigation.
- Record the details of events, conversations or context in which you were made aware of the concern.
- If the allegation regards an associate of the Hearing Association New Zealand, contact Amanda Perry.
- Get support for yourself.

**Person Responsible for Contacting CYF/Police:**

- Notify CYF
  - Contact Centre number is 0508 FAMILY (0508 326 459).
  - Fax number (09) 914 1211
  - Email CYF [CallCentre@cyf.govt.nz](mailto:CallCentre@cyf.govt.nz)
- Notify the Police
- During the notification process ask for an indication of the likely action to be taken and the agencies' time frames for completing this.
- Seek advise from CYF on what to tell the child/ren and what action (if any) to expect.
- Get support for yourself.

**The selection and employment of suitable staff and volunteers:**

Hearing Association New Zealand will always complete thorough background checks on individuals wishing to join our organisation who may have contact with children i.e. making school or community presentations. These checks will include a face-to-face interview, reference checks and police vetting.

Hearing Association New Zealand will not work in association with any individuals who have a record of offences against children.

**Policy review:**

This policy will be reviewed in the April of each year by the National Board with consultation sought from the Member Associations.

**Reviewed (Date)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Next Review Due (Date)** \_\_\_\_\_