

**Applicable to all children's and teenage gymnastics areas.
To all WAG children's and teenage coaches and staff**

This policy outlines WAG's commitment to child protection and recognises the important role and responsibility of all our staff in the protection of children. It includes our expectations when child abuse is reported or suspected by us.

Anyone involved in any children's gymnastics classes are expected to be familiar with this policy, its associated procedures and protocols and abide by them.

The Committee has an obligation to ensure the wellbeing of children in our care so they are safe, thrive, belong and achieve. We are committed to the prevention of child abuse and neglect and to the protection of all children. The safety and wellbeing of the child is a top priority within WAG's. Advice will be sought through appropriate agencies in all cases of suspected or alleged abuse.

In line with Children, Young Persons, and Their Families (Vulnerable Children) Amendment Act 2014, any person WAG's 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 must follow our procedures and should also report the matter to the local police.

Although ultimate accountability sits with the Committee, through their representative the Manager, the club encourages our staff and coaches to ensure that all child safety procedures are implemented and available to all children and families. We will also appoint a Child Protection Representative who will work alongside the committee. Therefore, the staff/coach must:

1. Develop appropriate procedures to meet child safety requirements as required and appropriate to WAG's.
2. Comply with relevant legislative requirements and responsibilities.
3. Make this policy available on the website or available on request
4. Ensure the interests and protection of the child are paramount in all circumstances
5. Recognise the rights of family/whanau to participate in the decision-making about their children
6. Ensure that all staff/coaches are able to identify the signs and symptoms of potential abuse and neglect, deal with disclosures by children and allegations against staff members and are able to take appropriate action in response
7. Support staff/coaches to work in accordance with this policy, to work with outside agencies and organisations to ensure child protection policies are understood and implemented
8. Promote a culture where staff/coaches feel confident they can constructively challenge poor practice or raise issues of concern without fear of reprisal
9. Consult, discuss and share relevant information, in line with our commitment to confidentiality and information sharing protocols, in a timely way regarding any concerns about an individual child with the Manager/Child Protection Representative
10. Seek advice as necessary from outside agencies on employment matters and other relevant agencies where child safety issues arise
11. Make available professional development, resources and/or advice to ensure all staff/coaches can carry out their roles in terms of this policy
12. Ensure that this policy forms part of the initial team member induction programme for each new staff/coach member

Review schedule: Within 3 years

Child Protection Representative

Compiled by:

on behalf of the Committee

Review Date: June 2019 (2 yearly) or after an incident.
Designated Persons in charge: Manager, Child protection Representative, Staff/Coaches

WAG's Child Protection Procedures

As at May 2017

Ministry Leaders Information Form



Policy summary

This policy outlines our commitment to child protection. It includes our protocols when child abuse is reported to or suspected by us.

All staff/coaches are expected to be familiar with and abide with this policy.

Purpose statement

- We have an obligation to ensure the wellbeing of children in our care and are committed to the prevention of child abuse and neglect and to the protection of all children. The safety and wellbeing of the child is our top priority when investigating suspected or alleged abuse.
- We support the roles of the New Zealand Police and Child, Youth and Family in the investigation of suspected abuse and will report suspected/alleged abuse to these agencies.
- We support families/whānau to protect their children.
- We provide a safe environment, free from physical, emotional, verbal or sexual abuse.

Policy principles

- The interest and protection of the child is paramount in all actions.
- We recognise rights of family/whānau to participate in decision-making about their children.
- We have a commitment to ensure that all Ministry team members are able to identify the signs and symptoms of potential abuse and neglect and are able to take appropriate action in response.
- We are committed to supporting all team members to work in accordance with this policy, to work with partner agencies/organisations to ensure these policies are consistent and high quality.
- We will always comply with relevant legislative responsibilities.
- We are committed to share information in a timely way and to discuss any concerns about an individual child with colleagues or the Person in Charge.
- We are committed to promote a culture where team members feel confident that they can constructively challenge poor practice or raise issues of concern without fear of reprisal.
- Confidentiality is essential for all parties involved, no gossip or inappropriate conversation.

Allegations or concerns about staff

All matters involving allegations against a staff member/coach need to be escalated to the Manager and Chair of the Committee

To ensure the child is kept safe, the Manager and Chair of the Committee may take steps to remove the staff member/coach against whom an allegation has been made from the environment.

Notes and evidence will be noted by this group

The Manager or Chair will consult with Child, Youth and Family and/or the Police before taking any further actions.

Confidentiality and information sharing

All observations, after an investigation has been notified, shall be kept in writing but the file will be sealed for confidential reasons.

The Privacy Act 1993 and the Children, Young Persons, and their Families Act 1989 allow information to be shared to keep children safe when abuse or suspected abuse is reported or investigated.

Note that under sections 15 and 16 of the CYPF Act, any person who believes that a child has been, or is likely to be harmed physically, emotionally or sexually or ill-treated, abused, neglected or deprived may report the matter to Child, Youth and Family or the Police and, provided the report is made in good faith, no civil, criminal or disciplinary proceedings may be brought against them.

Recruitment and employment (safety checking)

In employing new staff or coaches we will assess by character and involvement.

Their reasons and motives for why they wish to coach/work at WAG's must be ascertained by the Manager.

We have a commitment to child protection by including screening procedures through police vetting over the age of 16 and where possible referee checks

Safety checks will be carried out, as required by the Vulnerable Children Act 2014.

Training

Internal training and working through this procedure will be done annually, ideally at the beginning of the year or when a new team member comes on board.

Supervision will be in place for younger leaders under the guidance of a more senior leader.

Do's and don'ts will be put in place in relation to the environment, duration and scope of that job/coaching role e.g overnight, being alone, opposite sex's and so on.

All staff members/coaches are required to be aware of child abuse and neglect identification and intervention training, especially in regards to understanding the importance of explaining, being calm and non emotional, supporting and being reasonable to both parties, being non judgemental and working through the process properly. This document covers that expectation.

WAGs will bring in external groups to help provide training if it is deemed necessary

Related documentation and review

Relevant Legislation

- Vulnerable Children Act 2014 [Vulnerable Children Act 2014](#)
- Children's Action Plan guideline Safer Organisations, Safer Children:
<http://www.childrensactionplan.govt.nz/assets/CAP-Uploads/childrens-workforce/Safer-Organisations-safer-children.pdf>
- Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act, 1989
- Care of Children Act 2004
- Domestic Violence Act 1995
- Privacy Act 1993
- Victims' Rights Act 2002
- <https://safeguardingchildren.org.nz/faq/>
- <http://www.childmatters.org.nz/42/learn-about-child-abuse/what-is-child-abuse>
- <http://www.woodlandstrust.org.nz/child-protection-policy.html#appendix-a>
- <https://www.mvcot.govt.nz/>

What constitutes abuse and neglect:

- a. **Physical abuse** – any acts that may result in the physical harm of a child or young person. It can be, but is not limited to: bruising, cutting, hitting, beating, biting, burning, causing abrasions, strangulation, suffocation, drowning, poisoning and fabricated or induced illness.
- b. **Sexual abuse** – any acts that involve forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. Sexual abuse can be, but is not limited to:
- Contact abuse: touching breasts, genital/anal fondling, masturbation, oral sex, penetrative or non-penetrative contact with the anus or genitals, encouraging the child to perform such acts on the perpetrator or another, involvement of the child in activities for the purposes of pornography or prostitution.
 - Non-contact abuse: exhibitionism, voyeurism, exposure to pornographic or sexual imagery, inappropriate photography or depictions of sexual or suggestive behaviours or comments.
- c. **Emotional abuse** – any act or omission that results in adverse or impaired psychological, social, intellectual and emotional functioning or development. This can include:
- Patterns of isolation, degradation, constant criticism or negative comparison to others. Isolating, corrupting, exploiting or terrorising a child can also be emotional abuse.
 - Exposure to family/whānau or intimate partner violence.
- d. **Neglect** – neglect is the most common form of abuse, and although the effects may not be as obvious as physical abuse, it is just as serious. Neglect can be:
- Physical (not providing the necessities of life, like a warm place, food and clothing).
 - Emotional (not providing comfort, attention and love).
 - Neglectful supervision (leaving children without someone safe looking after them).
 - Medical neglect (not taking care of health needs).
 - Educational neglect (allowing chronic truancy, failure to enrol in education or inattention to education needs).

SIGNS OF CHILD ABUSE

NEGLECT

- Failure to meet basic medical needs
- Failure to provide regular nutrition needs; and clean and adequate clothing
- Failure to send to the school when the child is at the school age and to ensure his attendance

PHYSICAL ABUSE

- Unexplained wounds and burns
- Child's apparent fear against family members or childcare workers

SEXUAL ABUSE

- Unexplained pain, swelling, redness, and bleeding in lips, mouth, and genital area
- Demonstration of sexual information above his/her peers through indirect speeches, words, phrases, and behaviors
- Playing sexual games on their own with other children and/or toys

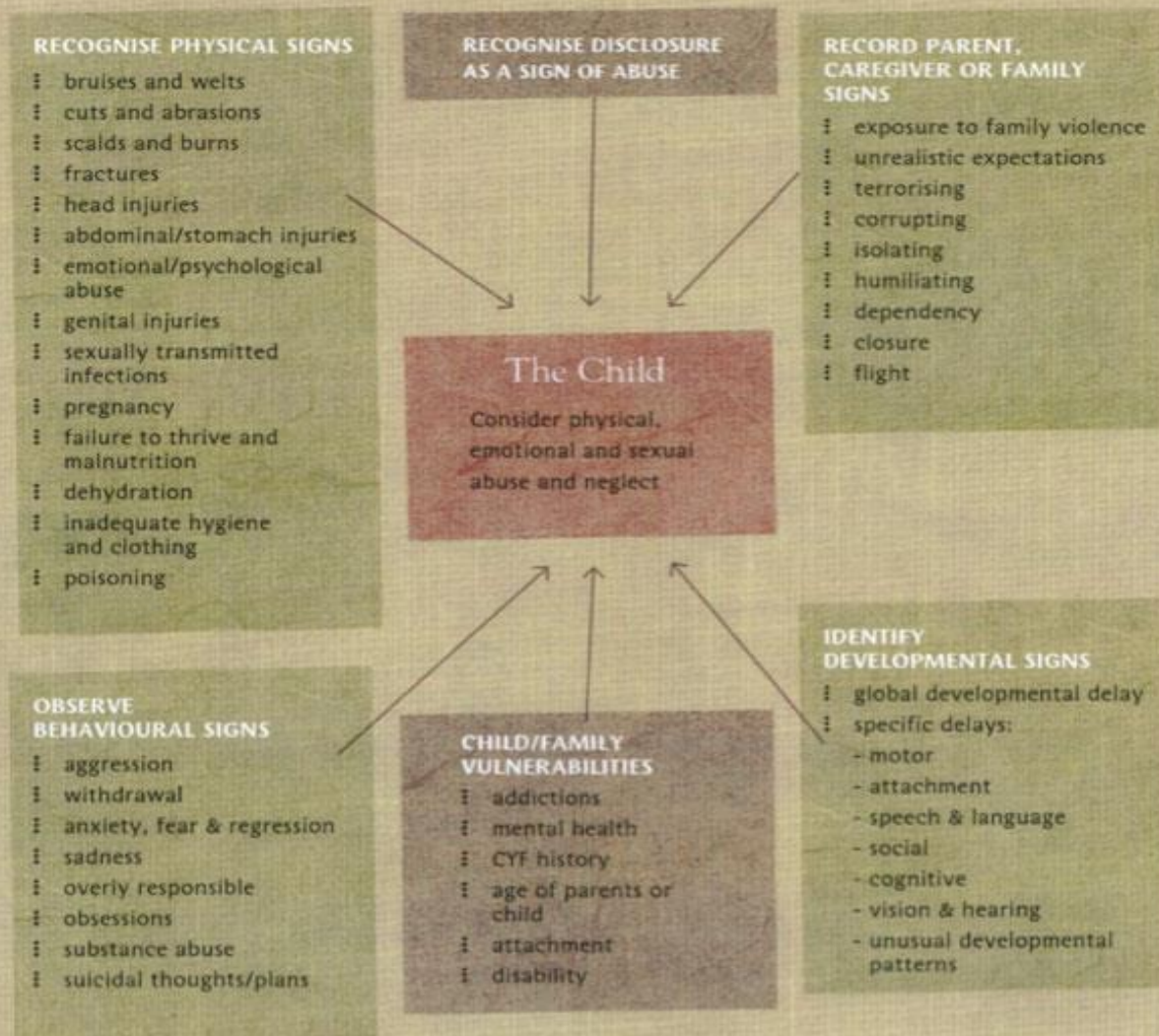
EMOTIONAL ABUSE

- Exhibition of extreme behaviors, transition from extreme anger to extreme tameness
- Decrease in self-respect and lack of confidence
- Delay or regression in physical, emotional, and social development



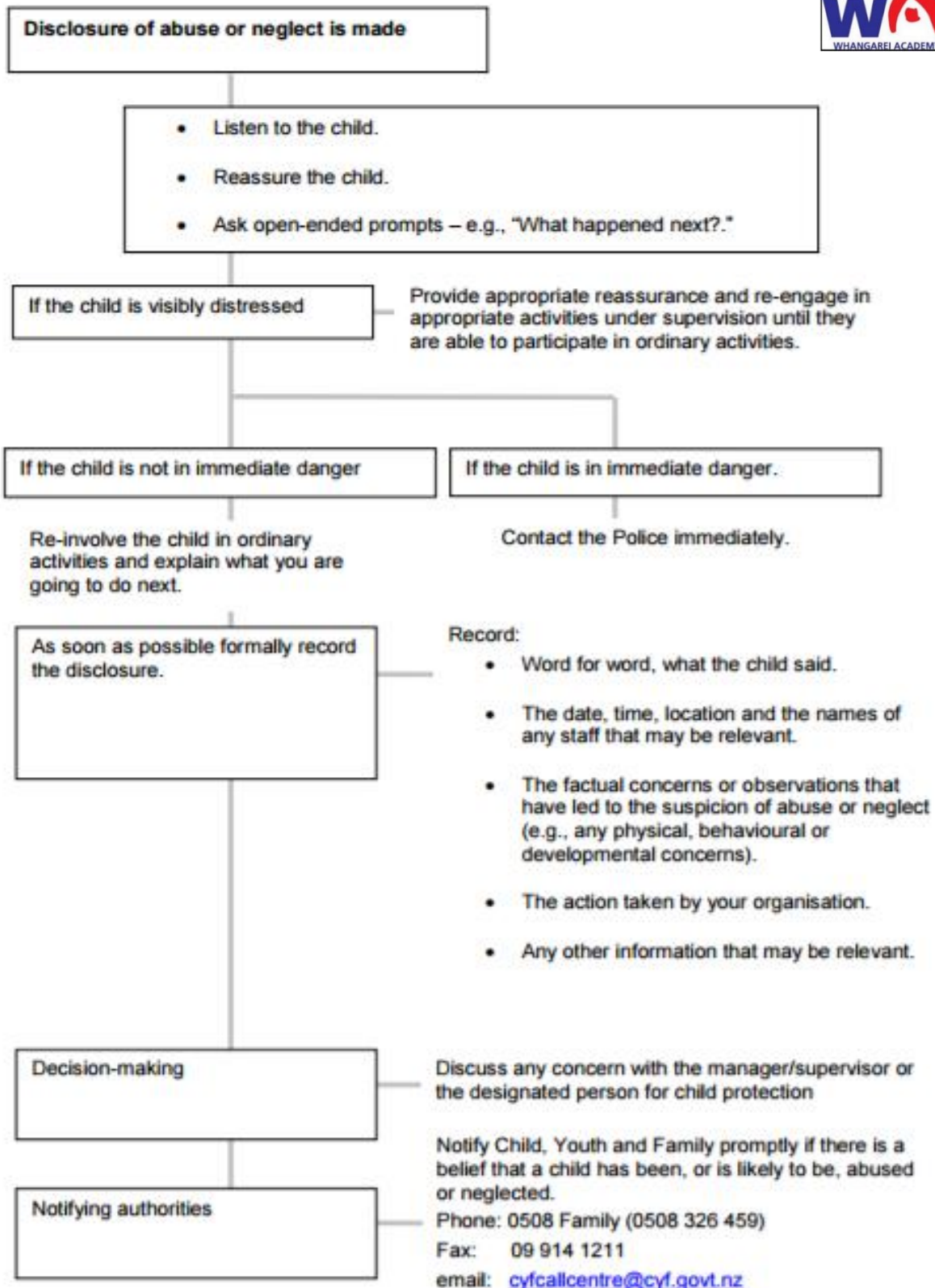
Signs of abuse and neglect

The physical and behavioural signs, symptoms and history listed below, may indicate abuse or neglect. However they are not specific to abuse or neglect. In certain situations, contexts and combinations they may indicate other conditions. All signs must be examined in the total context of the child or young person's situation.



- Is the child's behaviour a sign of abuse or neglect, or are there other things going on in the family that could affect them?
- How is the child's behaviour?
- How is the child's development?
- Has the child or family hinted at, or said that something is wrong?
- Are there signs of family violence?
- Do I sense the family is struggling, or the child is at risk in some way?

WAG's Disclosure of Abuse Procedure



Please make sure you contact our Manager who will work through and support you through this process.

Responding to a child when the child discloses abuse:

<p><i>Listen to the child</i></p>	<p>Disclosures by children are often subtle and need to be handled with particular care, including an awareness of the child's cultural identity and how that affects interpretation of their behaviour and language.</p> <p>*If you can take 2 mins to find this sheet to remember your role. E.g. have this on your phone.</p> <p>*Please ask the child if you can ask for someone else to listen in as well e.g. Staff (if they decline please proceed, with an ear for detail and ready to write notes later)</p>
<p><i>Reassure the child</i></p>	<p>Let the child know that they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are not in trouble. • Have done the right thing.
<p><i>Ask open- ended prompts – e.g., “What happened next?”</i></p>	<p>Do not interview the child (in other words, do not ask questions beyond open prompts).</p> <p>Do not make promises that can't be kept, e.g., “I will keep you safe now”.</p>
<p><i>If the child is visibly distressed</i></p>	<p>Provide appropriate reassurance and re-engage in appropriate activities under supervision until they are able to participate in ordinary activities.</p>
<p><i>If the child is not in immediate danger</i></p>	<p>Re-involve the child in ordinary activities and explain what you are going to do next</p>
<p><i>If the child is in immediate danger Contact the Police immediately</i></p>	<p>If the child is in immediate danger Contact the Police immediately</p>
<p><i>As soon as possible formally record the disclosure Record:</i></p>	<p>Record:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word for word, what the child said. • The date, time and who was present.

Recording and notifying Child, Youth and Family of suspected child abuse or neglect:

What process to follow	For example	Key considerations
Recording	Formally record: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anything said by the child. • The date, time, location and the names of any ministry leader that may be relevant. • The factual concerns or observations that have led to the suspicion of abuse or neglect (e.g., any physical, behavioural or developmental concerns). • The action taken by your organisation. • Any other information that may be relevant. 	<i>Relevant information can inform any future actions.</i>
Decision-making	Notify Manager asap that a disclosure has been made. Discuss any concern with Manager	<i>No decisions should be made in isolation Confidentiality is absolute to these 3 people at this stage.</i>
Notifying authorities	Notify Child, Youth and Family promptly if there is a belief that a child has been, or is likely to be abused or neglected. A phone call to the National Contact Centre is the preferred initial contact with Child, Youth and Family (see below) as this enables both parties to discuss the nature of the concerns and appropriate response options. Phone: 0508 Family (0508 326 459) Fax: 09 914 1211 email: cyfcallcentre@cyf.govt.nz	<i>Child, Youth and Family will</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Make the decision to inform the parents or caregivers, in consultation with our organisation.</i> • <i>Advise what, if any, immediate action may be appropriate, including referring the concern to the Police.</i>
Following the advice of Child, Youth and Family	Child, Youth and Family advice will include what, if any, immediate action may be appropriate, including referring the concern to the Police.	<i>Child, Youth and Family is responsible for looking into the situation to find out what may be happening, whether our organisation needs to work with the family/whānau or put them in touch with people in their community who can help</i>
Storing relevant information	Securely store: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The record of the concern. • A record of any related discussions (including copies of correspondence, where appropriate). • A record of any advice received • The action your organisation took, including any rationale. • This concern with any earlier concerns, if the notification is based on an accumulation of concerns (rather than a specific incident). 	<i>Records assist in identifying patterns.</i>