![Identitywa - Sharing the journey]

Safeguarding Children and Young People | Policy

Document name	Safeguarding Children and Young People	CEO approved	*[signature]*
Category	People We Support		
Version	1	Approval date	August 2025
Implementation date	31 August 2025	Review date	August 2028

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline Identitywa Disability Services Limited (Identitywa) commitment to maintaining a culture of safety and wellbeing of all participants, with particular consideration to children and young people accessing our services (collectively referred to as **children** from here on).

Who is this policy for?

This Policy applies to all Identitywa workers and Board members.

Policy statement

Identitywa promotes and maintains a culture of safety at all levels of the organisation as reflected in our safeguarding commitment statement, policy documentation and quality assurance practices. Identitywa follows key aspects of being a child safe organisation through the prevention, identification, and elimination of potential risks.

Our workers are committed to creating environments which are safe for participants, in line with our Vision, Mission and Values. We take a preventative and proactive approach to the safety and wellbeing of participants and acknowledge that special consideration needs to be given to the safety of children accessing our services.

Principles

The key principles that support safeguarding across Identitywa are as follows:

- **Safeguarding culture** - Knowledge and understanding of safeguarding are fostered through internal communications, training, professional development, supervision, and support of workers.
- **Compliance** - Identitywa complies with our obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), child protection and working with children legislation, other relevant laws, regulations, standards and quality frameworks as they apply to our services, to ensure best possible child protection.
- **Safeguarding procedures and guidelines** - Identitywa's safeguarding documentation provide the protocols and procedures when working with participants and reflect Identitywa's zero tolerance approach to abuse (or suspected abuse). These documents must be read and understood by workers when they commence employment with Identitywa and followed during their employment.
- **Recruitment and suitability** - Identitywa applies rigorous recruitment, screening, and selection processes in accordance with our legal, regulatory and policy requirements. All prospective Identitywa workers must complete a formal background check including a

NDIS Worker Screening Check, as well as Working With Children Check (WWCC) and Department of Child Protection (DCP) Check where appliable.

- **Safe online environments** – Workers are educated about expectations of online behaviour and, where relevant, how to mitigate risks in online environments. The online environment is used in accordance with Identitywa's information technology and social media policies and procedures.
- **Privacy and consent** – Participants and their representative/s are informed about how their personal information will be managed and how their privacy rights will be respected. Photos, images, videos and/or other personal information related to children are used only with informed consent from the participant or their representative.
- **Choice and control** – Participants and their representative/s are informed about their rights and involved in all decisions which affect them. Workers are respectful of the family's cultural beliefs, needs and preferences.
- **Feedback and complaints** – Participants and their representative/s who access our services are provided with information on the feedback and complaints process in an appropriate and accessible format, including access to advocacy services.
- **Reporting** – Identitywa provides a safe environment for anyone to make a report concerning the safety or wellbeing of a participant, including a child. Workers are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and awareness to respond appropriately if they observe or allege that a participant is abused or neglected, as per Identitywa's mandatory reporting obligations.
- **Continuous improvement** – Identitywa is committed to strengthening, embedding and maintaining a safe culture through the continuous improvement process of assessment, action and reflection, including ongoing reviews of safeguarding complaints, policies and procedures.

Accessibility

If you are a participant or part of the participant's support network and speak a language other than English and you need an interpreter, you can contact the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) for free translation services. Dial 131 450 and ask your interpreter to call (08) 9474 3303 for you.

If you're deaf or find it hard to hear or speak to hearing people on the phone, call the National Relay Services (NRS) TTY 133 677.

How do we know we are getting it right?

This document is reviewed within the framework of Identitywa's quality assurance and continuous improvement process, in consultation with key stakeholders. Process performance and effectiveness are measured against Identitywa's standards, objectives, and practices as part of a scheduled review of this and other related documents based on the level of risk to participants and the organisation.

All Identitywa policies and procedures are measured against the NDIS Practice Standards and other applicable standards, such as the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards.

Definitions

Child

For the purpose of this policy, the term 'Child" is taken to refer to **both** 'Child' and 'Younger Person' and refers to a person under 18 years of age, and in the absence of positive evidence to age, means a person who is apparently under 18 years of age.

We use the term 'child' to refer to younger children who do not have the maturity and understanding to make important decision for themselves.

'Young Person' refers to older or more experienced child who is more likely to be able to make decisions for themselves.

Child abuse

Child Abuse - there are different legal definitions of child abuse in Australia. This definition of Child Abuse is sourced from the Australian Institute of Family Studies2: Child abuse refers to any behaviour or treatment by parents, caregivers, other adults or older adolescents that results in the actual and/or likelihood of causing physical or emotional harm to a child. Such behaviours may be intentional or unintentional and can include acts of omission (i.e., neglect) and commission. Child abuse and neglect is commonly divided into five subtypes:

- physical abuse
- emotional/psychological abuse
- neglect
- sexual abuse
- exposure to family violence.

This definition and five subtypes should be read alongside extended definitions provided in the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards, Edition 2.

Child exploitation

Child Exploitation means one or more of the following:

- Committing or coercing another person to commit an act or acts of **child abuse**
- Possessing, controlling producing distributing, obtaining, or transmitting Child Exploitation Material
- Committing or coercing another person to commit an act or acts of grooming or online grooming
- Using a minor for profit, labour, sexual gratification, or some other personal or financial advantage.

Child protection concern

Concern around the wellbeing of a child, based on the observation of indicators or information that may lead to a concern for:

- the care of the child
- the physical, emotional, psychological, and educational health and/or sexual development of the child
- the safety of the child.

Child protection means proactive workplace practices to protect children from harm and prevent child exploitation.

Participant

A person supported by Identitywa, such as a client, resident, or other recipient of services.

Safeguarding
Safeguarding is the action that an organisation or group takes to promote the welfare of children who spend time, participate in, or are impacted by their organisation or group - and protect them from harm.

Support Network
Family, friends, carers, and other people who have a supportive relationship with a participant.

Worker
A person who carries out work in any capacity for a person conducting a business, including work as:
- An employee, or Board member
- A contractor or sub-contractor/sole trader
- An employee of a contractor or sub-contractor or sole trader
- A student, trainee, apprentice, volunteer, or host.

Working with children
Involves being engaged in an activity with a child where the contact would reasonably be expected as a normal part of the activity and the contact is not incidental to the activity. Working includes volunteering and other unpaid work.

The legal and regulatory requirements we have to follow
Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986
Better Care, Better Services Standards
National Catholic Safeguarding Standards
NDIS Code of Conduct
National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Act 2013
NDIS (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018
NDIS (Incident Management and Reportable Incidents) Rules 2018
NDIS (Quality Indicators) Guidelines 2018
NDIS (Restrictive Practices and Behaviour Support) Rules 2018
NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators
Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UHRC) from UN Website

Other related documents
Advocacy Policy and Procedure
Complaints and Feedback Policy and Procedure
Consent Policy and Procedure
Duty of Care Policy
Identitywa Code of Conduct
Identitywa Safeguarding Commitment Statement
Internal Investigation Policy and Procedure
Missing Person Policy and Procedure
NDIS Worker Screening Policy and Procedure
Participant Incident and Accident Policy and Procedure
Privacy Policy and Procedure (& Easy Read)
Recruitment Policy and Procedure
Responding to Misconduct Policy and Procedure
Restrictive Practice Policy and Procedure
Rights Policy (& Easy Read)

Training Policy and Procedure
Safeguarding Children and Young People Procedure
Working with Children Check Policy and Procedure

Links to further information and support

For further information and documents relating to safeguarding refer to the Identitywa Safeguarding Commitment website.

https://www.identitywa.com.au/safeguarding/

Do you need to know more?

If you have any questions regarding policies, procedures, and reviews or if you would like to be involved in our policy development program, please contact the Quality and Compliance Team on (08) 9474 3303.