



Silky Oaks Children's Haven

Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy





Requirement 1 – Statement of commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children and the protection of children from harm

Silky Oaks Children's Haven (Silky Oaks) is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children, young people and families who use our services and is dedicated to protecting them from harm and abuse by any persons associated with Silky Oaks.

Silky Oaks has zero tolerance to child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously. Workers have a duty of care to report disclosures or suspicions of harm. In regard to sexual offences against a child under the age of 16 years, or a child under age of 18 years with 'an impairment of the mind' (intellectual disability), workers are required to report the offence to the Queensland Police Services, unless there is a 'reasonable excuse'.

Silky Oaks will endeavour to provide a safe and supportive environment through:

- Ensuring that all workers treat children, young people and families with respect and understanding at all times.
- Ensuring that those who regularly deal with children, young people and families within the organisation undergo the Working with Children Check and hold a positive notice Blue Card (where exemptions do not apply).
- Ensuring compliance with the No Card, No Start law. This means that paid workers must have a blue card (no longer a pending application) before they can work with children.
- Ensuring the human and cultural rights of our workers, clients and the public when delivering and designing our services, developing policies and procedures, and managing risk and complaints.
- Ensuring safe recruitment and selection procedures are in place and regular training and education for all workers.
- Prohibiting any form of abuse against children, young people and families.
- Appropriate use of language.
- Carefully selecting, screening and monitoring people whose roles require them to have regular contact with children, young people and families.
- Ensuring the Silky Oaks Code of Conduct (P008) is promoted, enforced and reviewed.
- Providing clear procedures for raising concerns or complaints.
- Respecting cultural identity and dedicating to provide a high quality and culturally appropriate service to all children, young people and families.
- Providing an environment that supports the continuous improvement of processes, education and skill enhancement for the workers and management of Silky Oaks.
- A duty of care to take appropriate action to minimise the risk of harm and to take measures that are reasonable in all circumstances to protect clients and workers from risks of harm that are reasonably foreseen.
- Ensuring human and cultural rights of our workers, children, young people, families and the general public are considered when delivering and designing our services, developing policies and procedures, and managing risk and complaints..

References

- Organisational Purpose Policy (L001)
- Duty of Care Policy (L002)
- Feedback and Complaints Policy (L005)
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy (L006)



- Culturally Competent and Inclusive Practice Policy (L011)
- Human Resources Policy (L012)
- Client Practice Policy (L014)
- Strategic Plan (S007)
- Strategy Priority Action Plan (S011)
- Recruitment and Selection Procedure (P007)
- Code of Conduct (P008)
- Mandatory Training Procedure (P010) and Training Matrix (C035)
- Feedback and Complaints Procedure (P015)
- Handling Disclosures or Suspicions of Harm Procedure (P016, 041, 042)
- The Advocacy of Human Rights Procedure (P018)
- Human Resources Handbook (H003)
- Family Care and Support Handbook (H008)
- House Manager Handbook (H009)
- Residential Support Worker Handbook (H010)
- One Place Handbook (H011)
- Inspire – Therapy Program Handbook (H012)
- Inspire – Outreach Program Handbook (H013)
- [Laws relating to failing to report or protect children from sexual crimes](#)

Requirement 2 – Code of conduct for interacting with children and young people

Code of Conduct – Workers

All workers are bound by the Code of Conduct (P008) to ensure workers take appropriate measures to minimise risks to the safety and wellbeing of all stakeholders in all programs involving children, young people, and families in our services, fellow workers, volunteers, students and contractors.

The Code of Conduct is based on the following principles to:

- Set a good example of ethical conduct and encourage behaviour that is in line with the Code of Conduct.
- Treat all workers with respect and in an equitable manner.
- Ensure workers are aware of their responsibilities under the Code of Conduct, and policies and procedures.
- Ensure workers understand the standards of performance expected of them and that directions are reasonable.
- Provide fair and equitable access to learning and development opportunities for all workers.
- Committed to respecting, protecting and promoting human rights.

Code of Conduct for the Interaction with Children and Young People

Silky Oaks is committed to providing best practice services to meet the diverse range of family and individual needs in our community. Our flexible service will enable people within our target client groups to have equal access to all appropriate services' aimed at improving their wellbeing, development, resilience, safety and participation in our society

The Code of Conduct is based on:

- Ensuring codes of professional ethics are congruent with practice standards.
- Promoting collaborative relationships and partnerships between individuals, families, service providers and communities.



- Providing a holistic response and outcome for clients through constructive team work processes.
- Collaborating across programs and other services to ensure client needs are met.
- Maintaining an open door policy, pre and post service delivery within the organisation's capacity.
- Maintaining a client-focused approach and seek feedback to continuously improve service delivery.
- Ensuring record keeping and client files are completed in a professional and timely manner.
- Ensuring that feedback, complaints and appeals are resolved promptly, fairly, and effectively.
- Using the appropriate language when dealing with children, young people and families.
- Respecting, protecting and promoting human rights.

It is the aim of Silky Oaks to ensure that children, young people and families who engage in our services receive the following:

- Emotional support and practical assistance that enhances their health and wellbeing.
- Opportunities through service provisions to build and maintain safe and healthy relationships with peers, family and significant others.
- Facilitation of increased self-worth through participation in activities, education, learning opportunities and social inclusion.
- The right of the client to participate and make choices about the services they receive.

Reference

- Duty of Care Policy (L002)
- Feedback and Complaints Policy (L005)
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy (L006)
- Culturally Competent and Inclusive Practice Policy(L011)
- Human Resources Policy (L012)
- Client Practice Policy (L014)
- Recruitment and Selection Procedure (P007)
- Code of Conduct (P008)
- Mandatory Training Procedure (P010) and Training Matrix (C035)
- Feedback and Complaints Procedure (P015)
- Handling Disclosures or Suspicions of Harm Procedure (P016, P041, P042)
- The Advocacy of Human Rights Procedure (P018)
- Human Resources Handbook (H003)
- Family Care and Support Handbook (H008)
- House Manager Handbook (H009)
- Residential Support Worker Handbook (H010)
- One Place Handbook (H011)
- Inspire – Therapy Program Handbook (H012)
- Inspire – Outreach Program Handbook (H013)

Requirement 3 – Written procedures for recruiting, selecting, training and managing workers and volunteers

To assist with effective child protection strategies, Silky Oaks is committed to recruiting, selecting, training and managing workers in such a way that limits risks to children, young people and families. In particular, Silky Oaks will:



- Ensure that the recruitment and selection procedures act to reduce the risk of harm to children and young people from workers via:
 - Accurate role expectations through clearly defined Position Descriptions (PDs),
 - Compliance with the Blue Card system No Card, No Start Law. No Card, No Start means that paid workers must have a blue card (no longer a pending application) before they can work with children.
 - Advertising vacancies with a clear statement about the organisation's commitment to the Blue Card screening, a positive screening outcome from a suitability check as a licenced care service (LCS2) where applicable, reference checks, and identification verification.
 - A selection process that includes assessing the application via an interview process and referee checks and any other required suitability checks (as identified above) based on the accurate PDs.
 - A probationary period of employment, which allows Silky Oaks to further assess the suitability of the new employee and to act as a check on the selection process.
- Ensuring that training, coaching and management procedures act to reduce the risk of harm to children and young people from employees via:
 - Management processes that are consistent, fair and supportive.
 - Learning and development processes that proactively identify performance gaps early so that workers are provided the tools needed to improve work performance.
 - Supportive processes (such as mentoring, mediation, conflict resolution, coaching, additional training and external support and counselling services) for workers when they are experiencing challenges.
 - An induction program which thoroughly addresses the organisations policies and procedures, particularly the expectation to provide a safe and supportive environment for the children and employees.
 - Training new and existing workers on an ongoing basis to enhance skills and knowledge and reduce exposure to risk.
 - Thorough and accurate validation and recording of qualifications, training and skills provided to workers prior to commencing employment and throughout the employment journey.
 - Conducting meaningful exit interviews to ensure continuous improvement opportunities are identified to assist with identifying broader issues/trends of concern that may impact on the safety and wellbeing of all stakeholders.

Reference

- Human Resources Policy (L012)
- Recruitment and Selection Procedure (P007)
- Code of Conduct (P008)
- Mandatory Training Procedure (P010) and Training Matrix (C035)
- The Advocacy of Human Rights Procedure (P018)
- Performance Management Procedure (P020)
- Human Resources Handbook (H003)
- Volunteer Handbook (H006)
- Position Descriptions for all job roles

Requirement 4 – Handling disclosures or suspicions of harm

Silky Oaks has zero tolerance towards harm and abuse to clients, including children and young people, related parties and workers.



Harm is defined as 'any detrimental effect of a significant nature on a person's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing'. Harm can result from physical abuse, psychological or emotional abuse, neglect, or sexual abuse or exploitation.

Silky Oaks workers have a duty of care to ensure that any client, child or young person placed in the care of Silky Oaks is cared for in a way that meets the organisations mission, vision and core values and complies with the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women's Statement of Standards and other legislative requirements. This is done by observing and recording the actions of those who might be at risk, and reporting your concerns immediately to the line manager or program manager. An investigation into a disclosure or suspicion will be undertaken, escalated and reported as required.

There will be no ramifications or repercussions for a worker who reports harm.

In reference to sexual abuse and to comply with new legislation, Silky Oaks expects all workers must report a sexual offence that they reasonably believe occurred to a child under the age of 16 year, or a child under age of 18 years with 'an impairment of the mind' (intellectual disability) to the Queensland Police Service (QPS), unless there is a 'reasonable excuse' not to report (eg if the offence has already been reported to appropriate authorities such as Child Safety Services).

Reference

- Organisational Purpose Policy (L001)
- Duty of Care Policy (L002)
- Client Practice Policy (L014)
- Critical Incident Management Procedure (P003)
- Handling of Disclosures or Suspicions of Harm Procedure (P016, P041, P042)
- The Advocacy of Human Rights Procedure (P018)
- [Laws relating to failing to report or protect children from sexual crimes](#)

Requirement 5 – Managing breaches of the risk management strategy

Silky Oaks is committed to ensuring all breaches to the Risk Management Strategy are handled in accordance with the following process:

An investigation may be required under the following situations:

- A complaint, feedback or grievance has been lodged against a worker/s.
- An allegation of a breach of standards of care or harm is reported against a worker/s.
- An allegation of a breach of policy, procedure, or lawful work instruction.
- An allegation of serious misconduct or other formal disciplinary matter is raised against a worker/s.

Should an investigation be necessary, Silky Oaks will:

- Where necessary, place the worker/s on a period paid suspension leave (depending on circumstances) whilst the investigation takes place
- Provide appropriate and timely updates to the worker/s involved in the investigation
- Provide the worker/s access to the external EAP provider
- Maintain strict confidentiality throughout all investigation processes
- Provide any other reasonable support mechanism within organisational resource constraints

Should an investigation be necessary, the worker/s will:

- Participate in required investigation processes



- Maintain strict confidentiality throughout all investigation processes
- Participate in mediation or other mutually agreed resolution activities

In some circumstances, events or activities may be notifiable to relevant authorities or departmental stakeholders. In the event of a confirmed breach to the risk management strategy, appropriate disciplinary action may result, including the termination of employment.

Reference

- Feedback and Complaints Policy (L005)
- Risk Management Policy (L007)
- Performance Management Procedure (P020)
- Risk Management Procedure (P028)
- Work Health and Safety Handbook (H002)
- Human Resources Handbook (H003)
- Family Care and Support Handbook (H008)
- House Manager Handbook (H009)
- Residential Support Worker Handbook (H010)
- One Place Handbook (H011)
- Inspire – Therapy Program Handbook (H012)
- Inspire – Outreach Program Handbook (H013)
- Risk Assessments for High Risk Activities and Special Events Work Instructions (W014)

Requirement 6 – Policies and procedures for managing compliance with the Blue Card System

The safety and wellbeing of children, young people and families in Silky Oaks is of paramount importance. Silky Oaks is committed to providing safe environments for all children, young people and families by developing and implementing robust policies and procedures.

As per our funding agreements, Silky Oaks has policies and procedures to ensure compliance with the blue card system under the following:

- *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000*
- *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulations 2011*
- *Civil Liability and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2019*
- *Child Protection Act 1999*
- *Child Protection Regulations 2011*
- Human Services Quality Standards
- [No Card, No Start Law](#)

Reference

- Human Resources Policy (L012)
- Governance Handbook (H001)
- Human Resources Handbook (H003)
- Recruitment and Selection Procedure (P007)
- Legislative Index List (S005)



Requirement 7 – Risk management plans for high risk activities and special events

Silky Oaks is committed to identifying risks, assessing risks, eliminating and minimising risk and the monitoring of risk to the safety of children on an ongoing basis.

Silky Oaks will utilise various risk management tools to assist in this process and will keep appropriate records of decisions made and actions taken in relation to risks to children.

Reference

- Risk Management Policy (L007)
- Client Practice Policy (L014)
- Work Health and Safety Policy (L009)
- Risk Management Procedure (P028)
- Work Health and Safety Handbook (H002)
- Risk Assessments for High Risk Activities and Special Events Work Instructions (W014)
- Hazard and Risk Register (R009)

Requirement 8 – Strategies for communication and support

Silky Oaks commit to making this Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy (hard copy and an electronic version) available to all workers that deal with children and young people within the organisation.

Silky Oaks is committed to provide training on safety and conduct in relation to risks to children and young people to all workers as part of their induction and refresher training annually. This training will be provided via formal training events and professional development, including informal updates at regular team meetings and discussions between management and workers.

Reference

- Silky Oaks website (PDF version available)
- Electronic copy on the public (P) drive
- Governance Handbook (H001)
- Human Resources Handbook (H003)
- Code of Conduct (P008)

Authorisation

This strategy was approved by the Chief Executive Officer on 2 September 2021. This new version supersedes any previous versions distributed.