

YMCA A Child Safe Organisation

Safeguarding Statement of Commitment

YMCA Auckland and Hamilton provides a variety of services to over 200,000 tamariki/children and rangatahi/youth, aged between 0-18 years annually. We take seriously our responsibility to deliver services for tamariki, rangatahi and their whānau/family, in caring, nurturing and safe environments.

Sadly Aotearoa/New Zealand has significantly high levels of child vulnerability, abuse and neglect. YMCA's vision is 'we build strong kids, strong families and strong communities'. So strong is our commitment to keeping our tamariki and rangatahi free from abuse and neglect, YMCA is committing to go above our legislative requirements and lead safeguarding best practice in all our undertakings.

We are now working in partnership with the Australian Childhood Foundation (ACF) undertaking their accredited Safeguarding Children Programme. Implementing the Seven Safeguarding Standards of Accreditation that will support YMCA in an ongoing way to:

- *Enhance and maintain a collective culture promoting the safety of tamariki and rangatahi;*
- *Review, design and implement specific safeguarding policies and procedures;*
- *Provide relevant safeguarding induction and training to all staff (includes volunteers and contractors);*
- *Engage the involvement of tamariki, rangatahi and their whānau in safeguarding practices;*
- *Implement a consistent set of endorsed operational standards at every level; and*
- *Identify and respond effectively to safeguarding concerns.*

Leading us on this journey and supporting YMCA in embedding a safeguarding culture in all our undertakings is our Safeguarding Committee (consisting of various YMCA business unit representatives) and our designated Safeguarding Manager (Kim Dickinson). YMCA view this as a continuous journey and one that will be taken collaboratively with our staff, stakeholders and customers.

Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility

We look forward to you joining and walking with us on this important journey



Peter Fergusson
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
YMCA Auckland



**Out there,
around here.**

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is YMCA working with Australia instead of New Zealand?

Sadly New Zealand lags behind other countries in safeguarding and child protection. We continue to be recognised by a UNICEF Innocenti Report Card (2003) exploring child maltreatment deaths in rich nations as being the 5th worst performing country, our levels of child maltreatment deaths are 4 to 6 times higher, than some other countries.

Although New Zealand has some legislation focused on organisational requirements, in reality when compared to other international YMCA's, these requirements are very basic. In addition, despite accredited safeguarding programmes being very popular and longstanding worldwide, this has yet to be directly offered within New Zealand.

YMCA are keen to see change in New Zealand and trust our undertakings will not only instil change for us but lead a path of change for others. It has been a blend of all these elements, along with ACF (Australian Childhood Foundation) having worked and continuing to work with our Australian YMCA's, that's influenced us choosing to register with ACF for accreditation. YMCA will be following the ACF Safeguarding Children programme however, both ACF and YMCA see this is a new venture and one that has to permit flexibility to and recognition of New Zealand culture. Therefore the safeguarding programme balances promoting best practice whilst being tailored to New Zealand's needs where applicable.

What does the accreditation process involve?

Effectively the accreditation is YMCA ensuring and proving it has and reflects a culture of safeguarding. Safeguarding our customers and staff, is not something new to us but is something we believe can be strengthened and evidenced further. It will involve reflecting a clearer ownership and adoption of safeguarding in all our business units and undertakings e.g. not just those directly child/young person facing. This will be captured within YMCA policies, procedures, ways of working, staff conduct, staff knowledge and skill sets, etc. Our engagement with stakeholders, parents/carers and children/young people will also develop. We trust there will be more involvement of our partners and undertakings being reflective of what others can expect from us but also what we require from others, in order to work in partnership.

How are YMCA going to involve stakeholders, children, young people and families?

Via our working relationships we will be able to share our undertakings with stakeholders, work together around safeguarding requirements, as well as where possible sharing our learnings. The specifics on 'how' are yet to be fully explored however, in addition to working relationships, we envisage utilising methods such as stakeholder networking and briefing events, newsletters, etc.

For children/young people we will be seeking the 'child's voice' through those children/young people involved with our services and whom wish to be involved. With Parents/Carers we are keen to establish a YMCA Parent/Carer Safeguarding Advisory Group to support us on our journey.

If you are interested in being part of this initiative please contact Kim Dickinson
(09 929 1521 or kim.dickinson@ymcauckland.org.nz).

*This is an ongoing journey and one
YMCA wish to do collaboratively with all
our staff, stakeholders and customers.*

