



# Abuse, Neglect and Assault Policy

## Policy

Staff are educated in their responsibilities for preventing, detecting, reporting, and responding to allegations, reports, suspicions of abuse, assault, or neglect.

## Definitions

**Abuse** is any behaviour or pattern of behaviour by a person/s with whom a client has a relationship implying trust, which results in harm to the client.

**Psychological (emotional) abuse** is behaviour which causes mental or emotional suffering or fear. Examples include demeaning name calling, treating as a child, insulting, frightening, humiliating, intimidating, threatening, isolating.

**Physical abuse** is the infliction of physical pain, injury, force, or physical coercion. Examples include slapping, bruising, sexually molesting, physically restraining, pushing and shoving, physical or chemical restraint.

**Sexual abuse** includes sexual exploitation or sexual harassment.

**Financial abuse** includes the illegal or improper use of a client's property, finances, and other assets, without the informed consent of the client.

**Neglect** is the failure to provide, or allow others to provide, a client with the basic necessities of life. Examples include abandonment, inappropriate use of medication, inadequate provision of nourishing food, clothing, shelter, or personal care.

**Assault** is any act which intentionally or recklessly causes another person to fear immediate and unlawful violence.

Not all forms of abuse are encountered equally, and clients may be subjected to more than one form of abuse at a time.

## Procedure

### Abuse, Neglect and Assault philosophy

Centre for Play Therapy has zero tolerance for abuse, assault, and neglect of all clients. All witnessed abuse, assault, neglect or where abuse, assault, neglect is suspected as a result of complaint, observation or statements from any persons must be reported.



Centre for Play Therapy delivery strategies recognise that clients with challenging behaviours, non-verbal communication or who have communication difficulties may be more vulnerable to abuse, assault, or neglect.

Clients are provided with assistance which is culturally and linguistically appropriate.

Intervention is focused on the victim who is offered an independent advocate of their choice.

Clients or their relatives have the choice of contacting the Police, NDIS Quality and Safe Guards Commission, the Department of Communities or other advocate at any time.

It is a requirement for mandatory reporters, to report allegations or suspicions of sexual and physical assault within 24 hours to the police and the Department of Child Safety. It is a requirement of Centre for Play Therapy staff to report on all allegations, disclosures and or suspicions of all types of abuse in line with Department of Child Safety reporting requirements. For further support and guidance around what to report and when, Centre for Play Therapy staff can access their relevant Regional Manager, COO or the CEO/Director.

Directors have the authority to suspend staff during investigation of client abuse allegations.

Investigations into the alleged abuse, assault, neglect are undertaken as a matter of utmost priority.

Awareness of the needs of the clients prevents intentional and unintentional neglect of those needs.

Clients have a right to make decisions regarding their life and lifestyle free from intimidation and undue influence.

### **Expected outcomes**

- Reports and incidents of abuse, assault and neglect are recognised and dealt with expeditiously.
- Clients are treated with respect and dignity.

### **Related documentation**

- [Disability Services Act 2006](#)
- [C4PT Feedback and Complaints Policy](#)
- [Child Protection Flow Chart](#)
- [Child Protection Notification Form](#)