

## Appendix D – Child Protection Policy

Updated 31-07-18

### **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

Disability Connect is committed to the prevention of abuse and to the wellbeing of children, young people, vulnerable adults and their families. The most effective way to safeguard children is to have a comprehensive and effective policy. This Policy is written under the principle that children and young people engaged with Disability Connect have a right to feel safe and comfortable in that contact.

The scope of this policy covers all children who interact with Disability Connect, whether visiting the office, our meetings or being present in the home during a visit. This includes children of clients we support.

'Child' refers to a young person under the age of 17yrs. The Children, Young Persons and their Families Act, 1989, defines child abuse as "...the harming (whether physically, emotionally, sexually), ill-treatment, abuse, neglect, or deprivation of any child or young person".

It is the responsibility of staff (including volunteers) to be vigilant, have knowledge and awareness of the indicators of neglect, potential or actual abuse and to report any concerns, suspicions or allegations of suspected abuse immediately and ensure that the concern is taken seriously and reported.

Disability Connect has an appointed Designated Person for Child Protection. This function is held by the CEO. All concerns of potential, suspected or alleged abuse must be brought to the attention of the Designated Person (DP) for Child Protection (CEO). If the CEO is unavailable then consultation should occur with a Disability Connect Social Worker. A decision will be made as to whether to seek further advice or notify Ministry for Children, Oranga Tamariki.

All appointments (permanent, fixed term, casual or volunteer) to positions that have direct and/or frequent contact with children or young people will be conditional on a safety check.

All staff will receive child protection training at the level appropriate to their role. All staff are expected to behave in manners that maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others.

Allegations, suspicions or complaints of abuse against staff, volunteers or representatives of other agencies must be taken seriously and reported to the CEO who will deal with them immediately, sensitively and expediently.