

Information for *PROFESSIONALS*

Our SPACE Program



Australian
Childhood
Foundation



What is this **BOOKLET** about?

You have received this booklet because you are involved with a particular child, young person, family or carer receiving a service through the Australian Childhood Foundation (ACF).

This booklet provides you with information related to how Australian Childhood Foundation staff will engage with you during our shared involvement with the child, young person, family or carer.



Our **COMMITMENT** to children and young people

We are committed to ensuring that all children and young people are given the opportunity to grow up in a safe and caring environment.

We are committed to providing young people with relationships that make a positive difference in their lives, honour their culture and support them to participate in decisions that affect them.

We are committed to supporting children and young people to develop a strong sense of identity, connection and belonging to their family and community and a sense of hope for their future.

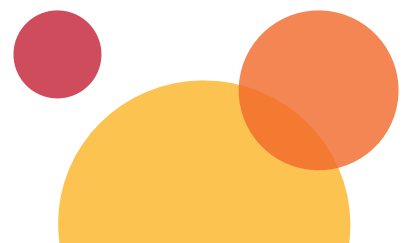


What is the ACF **OUR SPACE** Program?

OurSPACE provides trauma informed therapeutic support to children in foster and kinship care, and those who care for them. It is run by the Australian Childhood Foundation and funded by the NSW Government Their Futures Matter (TFM) Initiative. It offers therapeutic intervention and support to children who are affected by trauma and their carers. It helps children stay with their carers for as long as they need to.

OurSPACE supports children and families from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island backgrounds in ways that integrate culturally strong practices with trauma healing approaches that build connection to family, country and community. OurSPACE works in partnership with Ngaoara. Ngaoara is committed to supporting Aboriginal families to come together to meet the needs of some of our most vulnerable children.

OurSPACE supports children under the age of 15 years in foster care or kinship care who have experienced two changes to their living arrangements in the previous six months. Our staff work with everyone involved with children including the important people in their lives such as their family, extended family and teachers.





WORKING TOGETHER for children and young people

Children and young people need support and understanding from important people in their lives such as their family, carers, teachers, child protection workers, counsellors and others.

It takes time.....

It takes time to support them to change.

It takes a team....

Vulnerable children and young people need nurturing, consistency and predictability across all areas of their life – at home, in placement, at school and in the community. This is achieved when everyone works together. ACF staff are committed to working collaboratively in a coordinated approach with other professionals and organisations in our support of children, young people, their families or carers.

It takes understanding.....

ACF staff undertake a comprehensive assessment of children and young people referred to the program.

ACF staff will seek to work in partnership with you, in an effort to ensure a coordinated, timely and effective plan of support for the child/young person, family or carers.

It is our aim to support the professionals working with children/young people to participate in an ongoing review of the progress of ACF's involvement with the child/young person, family or carer towards their identified therapeutic goals.

Children, young people and their families will also be supported to be involved in the planning and review of their goals.



Our *ROLE*

We are committed to ensuring that all of our services are provided to a standard of that ensures the best possible outcome for children, young people, their families and carers.

ACF Staff have a responsibility to:

- **Explain what services will be provided to the child/young person, family or carer to ensure that you have a clear understanding of what these services involve.**
- **Answer any questions relating to the services being provided.**
- **Recognise a child/young person, parent or carer's individual, cultural, spiritual and social needs. All planning will take these factors into account to ensure the most appropriate services are provided.**
- **Ensure the dignity of children, young people, families and carers, and their right to be free from abuse, neglect, violence and preventable injury.**

- Ensure that you are aware of ACF's feedback and complaints processes.
- Ensure that children and young people receiving our services are protected at all times.
- Seek regular feedback from you, the child/young person, family and carers regarding satisfaction with the quality of services provided by ACF.
- Keep open lines of communication with children, young people, families, carers and key professionals involved with the care team.



Protecting *CLIENT RIGHTS* to privacy and confidentiality

ACF is compliant with all privacy legislation.

What information do we collect?

We collect information relevant to the child/young person, their family and carer. Our records will include a variety of information including:

- names and contact details
- dates of birth
- family/carer information
- referral information
- assessments
- information about other agencies/schools and services working with the child/young person and the family
- information about visits, telephone calls and discussions with you, the child/young person, family members and other services involved.



Client *RIGHTS*

Clients have the right to:

- Be fully informed about the amount and type of personal information being collected and how this information will be used.
- Choose what level of personal information they disclose while using our services.
- An assurance that any personal information held by us will be protected from loss and misuse.

- **Have access to their information and to ensure that this information is accurate.**
- **Have a safe, secure environment when providing information that is sensitive or of a personal nature.**
- **Access and/or engage a support person or advocate when they are involved with our programs.**



How *DO WE PROTECT* client privacy?

When collecting personal information we guarantee to only collect information that is necessary for us to provide an appropriate service to the child/young person, family or carer.

We will ask for consent from children/young people, and/or parents/guardians before we seek out or provide information about them to any other individuals or organisations.

You can request a copy of our Privacy Policy from any ACF staff member.



What is client *INFORMATION USED* for?

We collect information about children/young people and their families or carers to assist us to record and review information related to the focus of and progress towards the therapeutic goals.

We undertake audits of client records on a regular basis as part of our quality review processes to ensure that we are providing a high quality service to children, young people, families and carers.

We provide non-identifying statistical information to relevant government departments, about the numbers and profiles of children and families and the type and duration of the service we provided.

This information is also sometimes used for research and evaluation purposes.



How can clients access *THEIR RECORDS?*

Children/young people, or their parents who would like to read information we have recorded, are encouraged to talk to their allocated ACF worker.

We recommend that children/young people and parents read through this information with their ACF worker so that they can answer any questions the child/young person or parent might have. They may request to have you, or another nominated advocate/support person present as well.

The child/young person and parent are entitled to request that information be changed if it is not accurate or misleading. The reasons for this must be explained in writing.



What can clients do if they believe their privacy *HAS BEEN BREACHED?*

If a client believes their privacy has been breached they should be supported to consider a number of options.

In the first instance they should speak to their allocated ACF worker.

If they are not happy with the way their complaint is managed, they should communicate with the Manager of the ACF Services in NSW who will support them to seek a resolution to their concern.

If they are still not satisfied with this outcome, they can also contact the CEO of the Australian Childhood Foundation by telephone, email or letter and request an investigation into the breach.

For further advice they can also contact:

Information and Privacy Commissioner NSW

Phone: 1800 472 679

Email: ipcinfo@ipc.nsw.gov.au

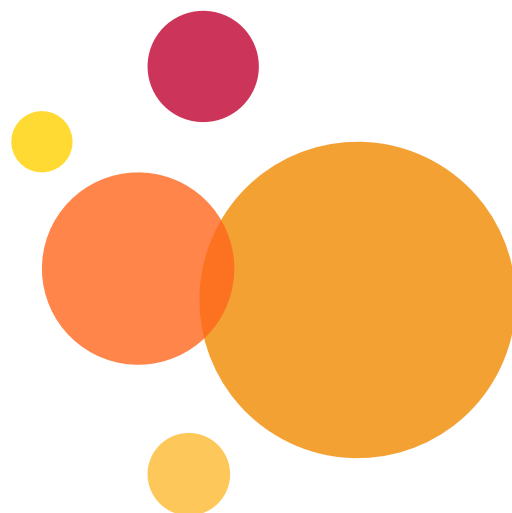


What will we do if we are concerned about *THE SAFETY* of a child or young person?

We will always seek to act in the best interests of children and young people and we are committed to their safety and protection. We will take all reasonable steps to ensure their safety.

If we become concerned about the safety of a child or young person, wherever possible, we will discuss our concerns with the family, carers and relevant professionals (if appropriate), and together develop a plan to ensure the safety and protection of the child/young person.

Where a plan cannot be established to ensure the protection of the child/young person, ACF staff will discuss the need to notify either the Child Protection Services or the Police (where appropriate).





We want to *HEAR FROM YOU* about how we are doing.

We are committed to providing high quality services and meeting the needs of you and children and young people in your care.

We value your feedback and appreciate you taking time to let us know what you think we do well and where we can improve our services.

ACF will seek regular feedback from you about our service to the child/young person, family and carers in addition to feedback about the quality of our collaboration with others involved with the family.



Do you have a *COMPLAINT?*

ACF is committed to working collaboratively, respectfully and ethically with all other community service organisations.

We will take seriously any concerns, or issues raised by you about the quality of our work with children, young people, families or carers.

As a part of this commitment, our complaints process is guided by the following principles:

- **The rights, best interests and views of the child or young person will guide the process, regardless of who initiated the complaint.**
- **There will not be any negative consequences to anyone, including children, young people, families or carers as a result of making a complaint.**
- **The confidentiality and privacy of individuals and families will be respected.**
- **Everyone, including children, young people, families and carers, has the right to involve an advocate, relative or friend to support them through the process.**
- **All complaints will be responded to promptly.**

You can request a copy of our Complaints Policy from an ACF staff member.



How do you make a *COMPLAINT?*

If you wish to make a complaint, wherever possible in the first instance, you are asked to attempt to resolve your concerns directly with the ACF staff member involved.

If you believe that your complaint has not been resolved to your satisfaction, you are invited to discuss this matter with the relevant Program Manager.

If you are not satisfied with the way we have responded to your complaint or a complaint from a child or family member, you should contact the CEO of the Australian Childhood Foundation.

We have informed children and their parents and/or carers about a list of possible advocates who they can access if they need additional support. You can request a copy of this list from the ACF work.



What to *EXPECT?*

If you have a complaint, we will respond to it promptly and sensitively. You can help us by providing as much relevant information as possible.

We will work with you to assess how best to resolve your complaint. Please consider the outcome you would like and we will strive to provide it.

Where required, we will investigate your complaint to understand what happened and why and to find ways to prevent it from happening again.

We will keep you informed about the progress of your complaint along the way.



What if I am *NOT HAPPY* with how my complaint has been handled?

If you are not satisfied with the outcome after raising your concern you can write to the CEO of the Australian Childhood Foundation.

If you are still not satisfied, you can also contact:

**Enquiry, Feedback and Complaints Unit
FACS NSW**

Frecall: 1800 000 164

Email: complaints@facs.nsw.gov.au





The *AUSTRALIAN CHILDHOOD FOUNDATION*

The Australian Childhood Foundation (ACF) is a national not for profit organisation which uses the knowledge about the neurobiology of child development, trauma and attachment as the evidence base to provide specialist therapeutic intervention for traumatised children and their families, therapeutic foster care and residential care programs, parenting programs and professional education initiatives.

ACF is a leading specialist provider of therapeutic counselling and out of home care programs for children who have experienced abuse related trauma. It currently runs these programs in Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia, the Australian Capital Territory, Western Australia, the Northern Territory and New South Wales.

ACF is a Registered Training Organisation and runs national professional education and workforce development programs focused on child abuse and trauma and a range of related topics.

ACF's Bringing Up Great Kids Parenting programs are delivered nationally.

ACF runs a range of national community awareness and child abuse prevention initiatives.

ACF runs the Safeguarding Children Program, an accreditation program for organisations to provide child safe environments for children and young people who access their services.



CONTACT us

Australian Childhood Foundation

Free call 1300 381 581

Email: info@childhood.org.au

Website: professionals.childhood.org.au

