

1.15 Child Safe - Child Friendly Policy

At Stepping Stone House our highest priority is the safety and welfare of the young people we support. Child safety is a shared commitment with responsibilities at all levels of the organisation.

Stepping Stone House Child Safety Values

- Trust – Building supportive relationships that the young people trust, providing them a safe space to be open about issues affecting them.
- Respect – We value the experiences and feedback of all young people in our services.
- Inclusion – Young people feel a sense of control, having their voices heard and acted upon.

We support the active participation of children and young people in our organisation. We listen to children and young people's views, respect what they say, and involve them when we make decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them. All young people are provided with safe and easily accessible methods to provide feedback and concerns directly to us through house meetings, case meetings or confidential online feedback forms.

Stepping Stone House also encourages participation and inclusion of the families, significant others and the broader community. You can contact us through our online feedback form. Any complaints or concerns raised will be addressed in a timely manner and will be handled in a confidential, honest and respectful way. Appropriate persons/agencies will be notified where applicable. Stepping Stone House encourages a community approach to keeping young people safe. If you are unhappy with our response you can further the complaint through the NSW Ombudsman.

Stepping Stone House supports employees and volunteers through:

- a. Promoting respect, fairness and consideration for all employees, volunteers and students
- b. All employees, volunteers and students have a more senior employee member assigned to support and supervise their work
- c. All new employees, volunteers and students will receive a copy of the Child- safe Child- friendly Policy, Code of Conduct and Dealing with Complaints process

Stepping Stone House maintains a rigorous and consistent recruitment, screening and selection process. We conduct interviews, reference checks, working with children checks, criminal history checks and 3 buddy shifts prior to employment.

Stepping Stone House will ensure this information is known by:

- 1) Conducting regular information sessions

- 2) Including in induction training for all new employees, volunteers and students
- 3) Publicly showing this information on our website and social media platforms to ensure clear and transparent communication and processes.