



Our Approach to Child Safety & Care

Mercy Connect is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children. As a residential care provider of children, we have established key principles to ensure the highest quality of care.

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Safety

A family centred approach will be taken but safety, welfare and the wellbeing of the child/young person is paramount.



Participation

The child/young person and parent(s) are encouraged to make informed choices about services and participate in decision making (integral to family centred approach).



Collaboration

Service delivery will be coordinated placing the child/young person at the centre of the collaborative decision. There will be a partnership approach taken between residential care agencies and funding bodies.



Respite

This is seen as critical for supporting the relationship between the child/young person and parent(s) in early intervention, and any unforeseen circumstances.



Appropriate services

The child/young person will not be placed in residential care if appropriate services can be provided to enable them to remain with their families - family supports, non-residential care respite arrangements (or a combination of these) will be considered in addition to residential care.



Age Appropriate care

Children under 7 years old will not be placed in centre based care unless they have complex health care needs. Young people aged 16-17 years old may be placed with adults if a risk assessment is completed. Children under 16 years old will only be placed with adults in exceptional circumstances i.e. there are high health needs.



Connections

Maintaining connections with family, significant others and community is supported as well as actively involving parents in planning their child's care and support.



Culturally considered/appropriate placements

Mercy Connect as a residential agency is respectful of cultural needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people from culturally and linguistic diverse backgrounds and this is reflected in the services provided.



Complaint handling

There are equitable and fair processes for dealing with complaints and disputes and we will ensure children/young people and their parent(s) are made aware of how to make complaints. Information will be made available in manner/language that is able to be clearly understood. Mercy Connect, as a residential care agency, will keep records of complaints and their responses to them.



Behaviour management policies

Mercy Connect, as a residential care agency, has clear policies in relation to approved behaviour management practices to be used by carers and staff. The policy includes prohibited practices and considerations relating to the use of any physical restraint.



Review & Planning

The relevant requirements for ongoing care are established and maintained for each child in care in accordance with the SSRC Planning and reviewing Guideline (NSW) or DFFH OOHC Planning and reviewing Guideline (VIC).



Staff Probity

All Mercy Connect workers working with participants under the age of 18 years will meet all initial and ongoing probity requirements as outlined in relevant recruitment procedures, and where required under State legislation, be registered as a residential carer.



Training & Qualifications

All Mercy Connect workers working with participants under the age of 18 years will be trained in residential care requirements and meet minimum qualification requirements.