



**WEE CARE
PARENT/CARER
INFORMATION BOOKLET**

ALTHEA PROJECTS

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WELCOME

Dear Parents, Carer's and Children

May we take this opportunity to welcome you to the Wee Care Residential Service and Family Support program. Wee Care is a program of Althea Projects Incorporated and is funded by the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability services.

Wee Care provides 24-hour emergency crisis accommodation and day respite for children and young people aged from 0—11 years of age. Wee Care accepts referrals from various agencies, Townsville Police, Hospitals, Schools, Doctors and the local Community at large. Parents/carer's are encouraged to self refer if they require support.

Wee Care also provides a family support program "First Steps" which offers support to mothers and new born babies in the first month after birth. There is also a supported Playgroup on Thursday mornings from 9.30—11.30 excluding school holidays. This is open to all families in the community with children under the age of five years.

Wee Care adopts an anti-discrimination policy when employing staff and admitting children and young people into the Residential Service. There is always a Direct Care Worker available to answer your calls day or night. We are also able to provide information and referrals for you and your family, and aim to provide a friendly, safe environment for you and your children. This booklet contains information to help answer any questions you may have about your child's stay with us. The staff at Wee Care is committed to providing a safe, nurturing and creative environment. We appreciate any feedback from you or your children in regards to their stay.

Kind regards

Althea Projects– Wee Care Program Manager and Staff

Mission Statement

To support and strengthen families so children and young people can reach their full potential.

Values

Families

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
People, Places and Cultures

Human Dignity and Respect

The Principles of Justice and Equity

Diversity

Innovation and Excellence

Partnerships

What we believe!

Because of the diversity of children's experiences it is important to remember that each child/young person is different and has different needs and issues. Wee Care is flexible and committed to meeting the needs of individual children, young people and their families and we believe that every child/young person has the right to feel safe, to be heard, listened to and believed.

Do I need to pay?

There is no fee involved for families or children to stay at Wee Care. You are quite welcome to make a donation to the service if you wish, and of course this is greatly appreciated but in no way necessary.

What happens when I bring my child/young person to Wee Care?

When a child/young person comes into Wee Care it is necessary for the parent/guardian to complete a Child Information Form (this is a once yearly form) and an Admission/Departure Form (this is filled out every visit). These forms provide staff with relevant information to ensure a high quality of care for the child/young person is maintained during their stay. For example: any allergies, medication, what the child/young person likes to do, activities, general routine, special diet requirements, Medicare number, phone contact etc. If for any reason there may be any changes to the information given on admission it is important that these changes be communicated to Wee Care staff.

A time for arrival and departure is generally discussed with staff upon admission. however if this does change please contact Wee Care to let us know. Wee Care does offer ongoing respite support for children and families in need. Individual needs can be discussed with the Manager and if eligible a Family Case Plan can be arranged.

At times emergencies do arise due to accidents, or family breakdowns, ill health etc. and these families could be asked to cancel their scheduled respite for another time to allow the emergency children to utilise our services. Children can be placed through referrals from other agencies or their parents/carers.

What do I need to pack for my children/young person?

What ever you feel is necessary for their stay e.g. school uniform, bag and lunch box. Medication and any special food (although we can obtain this if necessary) etc. Sometimes it is good to pack in swimmers especially during the summer for water play or outings.

Utmost care is taken by staff to prevent belongings from being lost. We encourage that belongings are marked, however, children tend to know what is theirs and it just takes a phone call and we will do all we can to locate any lost items. We would appreciate you bringing in your child's toothbrush and hair brush/comb. Sometimes when we are in a hurry we can forget things, don't worry. Wee Care has plenty of extra clothes, shoes, hats, toiletries and sun screen. We do require you to bring formula and nappies/pull ups should these be required.

Wee Care does not encourage children to bring electronic media, such as mobile phones or tablet computers into care with them. Wee Care has iPads and iPad minis for the children to play with at certain times during their stay. If you feel that there is still a need for your child to bring any electronic media in with them, then please discuss this with the Manager. If items are brought in then staff will ensure that items are kept safe. Wee Care accepts no responsibility for theft or damage if these items are not provided to Wee Care staff on admission.

Day To Day Happenings at Wee Care.

Play Group

Wee Care provide a free Play Group session every Thursday morning (excluding school holidays) from 9.30 – 11.30 a.m. This is for children aged from 0-5 years. Families are encouraged to participate and actively engage with their children during play. Families are asked to bring a piece of fruit for sharing at morning tea. A gold coin donation is also appreciated to help cover the cost of arts and crafts supplies.

Residential Service

Wee Care follows a daily routine which includes a rest/quiet time after lunch each day. The staff at Wee Care will, wherever possible, adapt a routine to suit any particular child's needs.

Children and young people are encouraged to choose television shows that are age appropriate. The service has a large variety of suitable DVD's, CD's and games on iPads. Children and young people generally watch a DVD's during quiet time and after dinner. Outdoor play is encouraged in the cooler part of the morning and afternoon.

Children and young people are supported to complete any homework or projects that are required.

Meals are creatively prepared by the staff and children and young people receive a balanced diet during their stay. If there are any special dietary requirements these will be met.

Children and young people generally have separate bedrooms. However, family groups do share the same room if they wish.

Wee Care offers transport to and from school for children and young people during their stay.

Bedtime is dependant on the age of the child. Generally though, bedtime occurs between 8-8.30 pm during school days and may differ on weekends.

Phone contact and visits to Wee Care while your child/young person is here is encouraged. It is a good idea to let us know before you visit in case we have taken your child/ren on an outing. Outings are often arranged on the weekends and during school holidays depending on the number of children in care. Outings may include visiting : Reef HQ, the museum, the Strand, parks and the beach. If for any reason you do not wish your child to participate in outings please let us know at admission.

“First Steps” Family Support program

A mums and new bub program which is co-designed by Althea Projects and the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services. This model aids in the prevention of newborn infants being removed from their mother at birth by Child Safety. Althea's team hope to develop opportunities for the mother to develop safe parenting skills so that the mother is able to take her child home with her.

What do we do if a child/young person becomes unwell?

If the child/young person becomes unwell during their stay we will contact you first. If you are unavailable we will arrange to take the child/young person to a doctor. Wee Care generally goes to a local doctors clinic who bulk bills, or the Townsville General Hospital after hours. On some occasions Wee Care will call Doctors to Your Door to attend to children at the service.

You will be advised of the outcome of the visit and Wee Care will purchase  any medication on the child's behalf.

Wee Care Staff Administering Medications to Children

Wee Care staff is unable to administer prescription medication without instructions from a doctor or pharmacist. All medications should be labelled clearly instructing dosage and time to be given.

Paracetamol is approved for reducing fever in children and can be administered to your child providing you have given permission to do so in your Child Information Form. If staff are required to administer Panadol then they will telephone you to advise you of the next step in dealing with the situation.

Wee Care considers a fever to be greater than 38 c.

Paracetamol can assist in temporary relief from pain and fever associated with: teething problems, immunisation, cold and flu symptoms, Earache and headache.

Bonjela is not supplied by Wee Care, however you can supply your own and permit Staff to apply to your child if she/he is teething.

Amber teething Necklaces: Due to the risk of choking or suffocating Wee Care does not allow these to be worn while your child is in care at Wee Care.

Transporting Children in Wee Care Residential Car

Wee Care has a Toyota Tarago which we use to drive children to and from school, and occasionally on external outings. You will see a permission box on the Child's Information Form allowing staff permission to transport your child should it be required.

The safety of all children and staff will be provided in all activities as per the organisational Harm Prevention Policy and Motor Vehicle Policy. Staff will carry an organisational mobile phone and their drivers licence at all times.

Children will be transported in appropriate child restraints. Wee Care has a range of car seats for children of different ages and weights and these are used at all times when children are transported in the vehicle. The safety of children is paramount to Wee Care and we follow all the current guidelines set out by the Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads.

Who are the Staff and when do they work?

Residential Direct Care Workers provide support and are responsible for the safety and well being of your children during their stay. There is always two staff members present on 24 hours a day including weekends and two staff sleepover every night.

During the week the Program Manager is present to answer any questions you may have.

What do you expect of my child/young person when they come to Wee Care?

We only put a few rules in place, and they are, respect for others, respect for property and most importantly, respect for oneself.

What about Drugs/ Alcohol and Smoking?

Wee Care has a smoke-free policy. No one is permitted to smoke inside the building or on Wee Care Residential premises and whilst they are in contact with children/young people. Alcohol and drugs are banned from Wee Care.

Please ensure you check your children's bags for any sharp objects and or aerosol sprays before you bring them into our premises.

What do I do if I or my children have concerns about their stay?

During their stay children and young people are encouraged to “Speak up” if anything is happening that they do not feel comfortable about. Staff talk to children and young people when they first come into Wee Care and let them know that they are available to listen and to talk through any concerns they may have. Feedback is encouraged and can be completed on the Admission and Departure Form.

Wee Care acknowledges the invaluable feedback from parents/carers and children, so please feel free to talk to the Manager about any issues or concerns.

How long can my children stay?

The length of time that a child is able to stay at Wee Care is needs based, and length of time may be anywhere from a short day stay to a longer period. Should you require ongoing support the Manager is happy to discuss this with you and may be able to place your child on a Family Case Plan.

What about safety for my child?

Wee Care takes all precautions to ensure your child has a safe stay with us. Safety plans are displayed: Smoke detectors and internal and external video surveillance cameras are in place throughout Wee Care and all exits are clearly marked. Wee Care has plans in place for many situations where safety may be a concern. There are procedures around water safety, bullying, contact with animals and medical emergencies. Just to name a few. Wee Care follows the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in everything we do.

Confidentiality

This is a really important issue. When working with children/young people we embrace a trusting, confidential relationship. Whilst confidentiality and trust is essential in any relationship between children and staff, the safety of the child is seen as paramount. However at times there are exceptions to the rules of trust and confidentiality. Where a child may disclose abuse or potential risk of abuse, the worker is required by law to report this to the relevant authorities.

Adverse Weather Conditions

During the Cyclone season the Wee Care Manager will make a decision as to whether it is safe for the children to remain at the residential service. If for any reason the child cannot return home (you may be in hospital) other arrangements will be made after speaking to the parent/carer and Althea Projects CEO.

Inclusion and Cultural Diversity

The Organisation **Code of Ethics Policy** outlines the principles of social justice where children of all abilities are valued and included in all aspects of the centre and the community.

Althea Projects and Wee Care believe that all children and families have a right to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging regardless of gender, age, socio economic status, race, language, beliefs, additional needs and family structure or lifestyle. All children and families who utilise the service will be treated with dignity and respect. Wee Care is able to support the physical needs of children with disabilities.

Staff will ensure that they follow any specific requests by families, wherever possible, to provide consistency. Staff treat every child equitably and will encourage children to treat each other with fairness and respect.

Accidents and Incidents

If your child is involved in an accident or incident while they are staying at Wee Care then you will be informed of this either immediately, if the accident or incident is serious or requires medical attention, or if the accident or incident is only minor the staff will inform you of it when you pick up your child. You may be asked by staff to sign an Accident/Incident form when you collect your child. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask the Manager for more information or clarity.

Client Service Charter And Complaints by Clients

Introduction

Althea Projects wants people who use it's services to be empowered by their experience. The organisation is committed to making clients aware that we promote the opportunity for choice and participation. The Client Service Charter outlines these the responsibilities of the organization in a way that accessible and easily understood by clients.

Our Commitment to you:

At Althea Projects you can expect:

- To be treated with dignity and respect
- To be treated justly and fairly
- To be supported through whatever situation or crisis you are facing to ensure you and your children have the best possible outcome.
- To be supported in a way that encourages hope for the future
- To be supported in a way that builds on your individual strengths and assists you in finding your own solutions
- To be protected from harm to your safety and wellbeing
- Althea Projects staff to be honest, accountable, non-judgmental and transparent in their work
- To be supported by a skilled and competent staff group
- Your feedback or suggestions to inform how we can improve and make our services more appropriate for our clients.

Client's Rights and Responsibilities:

At Althea Projects it is your Right that:

- Any dealings you have with Althea Projects will be treated in a confidential manner
- You are provided with a service that respects your dignity and independence , and is responsive supporting your physical, cultural and social needs
- You have access to all information held about you by Althea Projects
- You are protected from harm to your safety and wellbeing in your dealings with Althea Projects
- You are given the chance to have the opportunity to tell us about your needs and what you would like to achieve
- For longer term support a case plan will be developed between you and your support worker
- A referral option will always be attempted to be offered if Althea Projects is unable to meet your needs
- You are able to complain about the service that you have been given without fear of retribution
- You have access to an interpreter should you need one

At Althea Projects it is your responsibility to:

- Treat others fairly and with respect
- Let staff know what your needs are
- Take responsibility for your own actions and recognize that they can affect other people
- Understand that if you are supported by one of our programs you are expected to abide by the conditions outlined in the relevant handbook or information package provided at intake
- Understand your responsibility in minimizing the physical or emotional risk of harm to yourself and those around you
- Actively work towards achieving the goals that you and your support worker have agreed upon and tell us when things aren't working for you
- Let us know if you can not keep any appointments made.

Complaints

You may make a complaint by any of the following methods:

- Telling a Direct Care Worker or Program Manager
- Putting the complaint in writing
- Via email
- Via an advocate or support person
- Completion of a Feedback Form

You have an option to remain anonymous, but by doing so we are unable to notify you of the outcome of your complaint.

All complaints are considered and dealt with appropriately, and you will receive acknowledgement of your complaint in writing within 14 days, wherever possible

An investigation will be conducted and depending on the cause and seriousness of your complaint various ways will be considered to resolve your complaint.

You will be informed of this outcome in writing within 60 days from a manager.

If you are unhappy with the decision you may appeal by:

- Discussing with Althea Projects CEO or Management Committee members
- Pursuing the complaint with the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services
- Contacting an external organisation such as:
 - ~Children Services Tribunal.
 - ~Queensland Family& Child Commission
 - ~Queensland Ombudsman
 - ~Crime and Misconduct Commission



Wee Care Residential Privacy Statement and the Right to Access Information

Personal information collected by Althea Projects Incorporated is protected under the *Privacy Act 1998 (Cth)*, the *Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld)* and the *Right to Information Act 2011 (Qld)*. Personal information is any information or an opinion that identifies you and includes sensitive and health information.

Althea Projects follows the Australian Privacy Principles contained in the Privacy Act relating to handling personal information collected from clients. Althea Projects has developed a Privacy and Confidentiality Policy to protect your privacy and is available in hard copy on request. This contains information about Althea Projects responsibilities, your rights, the information that may be collected by Althea Projects, and how it would be used.

Your personal information may be used to:

- Provide you with a service
- Report to government or other funding bodies how funding is being used
- Process your donation or purchase to provide receipts
- Communicate with you about Althea Projects services, causes, events and services which we believe may be of interest to you
- Respond to your complaints or feedback, and
- Answer your queries.

It may also be used for:

- Any other specific purpose for which it was requested and which was advised to you through intake process, and
- Directly related purposes.

Wherever possible Althea Projects used information in a de-identified form. Personal information will not be disclosed to third parties without your consent, except where permitted or required under the Privacy Act.

All personal information collected from you will be securely stored by Althea Projects and protected from unauthorised use or access. All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure information is accurate and up to date. Our Privacy Policy also provides a process for requesting access to your information and making a privacy complaint.

If you have any questions about your privacy or personal information then please let us know.

We Feel that families are the experts

This challenges us to really listen!

What are your families needs?

What will help you?



**WEE CARE
RESIDENTIAL SERVICE
ALTHEA PROJECTS**



Emergency Crisis Accommodation for Children
and
Family Support

**9 First Street
Railway Estate
Townsville
4810**

Tel: 47724499 Fax: 47216401

Wee Care is a program of Althea Projects
Incorporation
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Services
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