

Purpose

This policy is part of The Centre for Volunteering's (The Centre's) ongoing commitment to protecting the children who interact with The Centre from harm and abuse. It:

- outlines the child safe practices our organisation has put in place to minimise the risks to child safety, and
- sets out what is required from staff, including volunteers and others who interact with our organisation, so they know what is expected from them to keep children safe.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers when taking part in any services, activities and events that involve children. Staff includes managers; supervisors; full-time, part-time or casual, temporary or permanent staff; job candidates; student placements, contractors, and sub-contractors at The Centre.

Policy Statement

Commitment to Child Safety and Wellbeing

At The Centre we commit to the safety and wellbeing of every child who interact with our services, activities and events, through training, Awards, and/or volunteer support. Please read our Statement of Commitment to Child Safety, which is available on The Centre's website and internally for staff at Common} CfV – Policies and Procedures} Current Policies.

The Centre ensures services, activities and events are inclusive of all children, including children with diverse needs.

Active Participation of Children, Families and Communities

All of The Centre's child-related policies and procedures are easily accessible on [The Centre's website](#) and offline by request (email info@volunteering.com.au) for everyone who accesses our services, activities and events, including children, parents, carers and community members.

What the Policy Covers

- **Social media use and online communication**
Staff and volunteers must never communicate privately with children online or on social media. Any necessary online communication should include the child's parent or carer in the correspondence.
- **Video, photography and the use of images**
Videos and images of children can only be taken with the permission of parents or carers. It is unacceptable for staff or volunteers to take videos or images of children, other than their own, on personal devices without express permission of The Centre for Centre activities, or to share images without permission. Where videos or images are taken for Centre activities, they must be deleted from the personal device once they have been uploaded onto The Centre's designated storage platform.
- **Physical contact**
Physical contact with children should be kept to a minimum. Everyone involved in the organisation is expected to have healthy physical boundaries with children.
- **Gifts and benefits**
Staff and volunteers must never give gifts to children, or bestow benefits of any kind to a child, unless they have direct permission from the child's parents or carers.

- **Out of hours contact with children**
Staff and volunteers must notify The Centre about any out-of-hours contact they have with children outside of The Centre's work. It is unacceptable for staff or volunteers to participate in the lives of children outside the organisation without a valid reason. Professional boundaries with children must be maintained at all times.
- **Illness and injury management**
Injuries must be reported to the first aid officer on duty and first aid administered in a safe space within lines of sight of other adults.

Reporting Requirements for Different Types of Concerns or Incidents

The Centre's Child Safe Reporting Policy sets out requirements and procedures for complaints, allegations, disclosures and reports, and external reporting obligations. It can be accessed at [The Centre's website](#).

Roles, Responsibilities, Delegations

Everyone at The Centre is expected to carry out the requirements specific to their role to keep children safe. This includes:

- upholding The Centre's commitment to child safety;
- reading, signing and upholding the behaviours set out in our Child Safe Code of Conduct;
- meeting requirements across all other child safe policies and procedures, including child safe recruitment practices and risk management;
- taking part in reviews of The Centre's child safe documents;
- reporting all breaches of The Centre's policies or any allegations of child harm or abuse, and meeting all external reporting obligations; and
- completing all required child safe training.

Please contact The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or Deputy CEO with any of your child-safety related questions or concerns at info@volunteering.com.au.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy and related policy documents, the following definitions apply:

Allegation	Includes an allegation which involves behaviour that is reportable conduct, also behaviour that is exempt from notification to the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian but The Centre is required to investigate.
Carers	In the context of child safe spaces carers refer to individuals who provide care and supervision to children. This can include foster carers, kinship carers, and other approved caregivers who ensure the safety and well-being of children in their care.
Child	For this policy and associated documents and procedures, a child is a person aged zero to 18 years.
Child-related work	Work which involves direct contact by the worker with a child or children where that contact is a usual part of and more than incidental to the work. It also includes work that is likely to involve contact with a child in connection with at least one of the 20 legislated categories of child-related work under the Child Protection (Working with Children) Regulation 2013 , which include: • education and care and child-minding services • clubs or other bodies providing programs and services for children

	- entertainment services for children, which includes sporting, cultural or other entertainment venues used mainly by children - transport services for children, which includes school bus services, taxi services for children with disability and supervising school road crossings It may also include a worker who has access to confidential records or information about children. The direct contact may be physical, face-to-face and/or online.
Harm and Abuse	Can mean a one-off incident or a pattern of any of the following: Psychological abuse (also known as emotional abuse) This includes bullying, threatening and abusive language, intimidation, shaming and name calling, ignoring and isolating a child, and exposure to domestic and family violence. Physical abuse This includes behaviours such as pushing, shoving, punching, slapping, kicking and unauthorised use of restraint. Sexual abuse This includes the sexual touching of a child, grooming, and production, distribution or possession of child abuse material. Grooming This is a process where a person manipulates a child or group of children and sometimes those looking after them, including parents, carers, teachers and leaders. They do this to establish a position of 'trust' so they can then later sexually or physically abuse the child. Misconduct This is inappropriate behaviour that may not be as severe as abuse but could indicate that abuse is occurring and would often be in breach of an organisation's Child Safe Code of Conduct. This could include showing a child something inappropriate on a phone, having inappropriate conversations with a child or an adult sitting with a child on their lap. Lack of appropriate care This includes not providing a child with adequate and proper supervision, nourishment, clothing, shelter, education or medical care.
Reportable conduct	Reportable conduct means the following conduct, whether or not a criminal proceeding in relation to the conduct has been commenced or concluded: - a sexual offence - sexual misconduct - ill-treatment of a child - neglect of a child - an assault against a child - failure to reduce or remove the risk of a child becoming a victim of abuse or concealing child abuse - behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child. Examples of indicators of significant emotional or psychological harm in respect to (g) include:

	1. displaying behaviour patterns that are out of character 2. regressive behaviour 3. anxiety or self-harm.
Wellbeing	In the context of child safety, wellbeing means keeping the child in focus when making decisions about their lives. It means working in partnership with them and their families to ensure they receive the care and services which support all the different dimensions of their lives.

Other Related Child Safe Documents

The Centre for Volunteering has a range of other key documents that relate to child safety. These can be accessed at [The Centre's website](#) and internally for all staff and volunteers [here](#) and include:

- **Statement of Commitment to Child Safety**
The Centre's public commitment to prioritising child safety across our organisation.
- **Child Safe Code of Conduct**
Guides the day-to-day behaviours of adults interacting with children at The Centre.
- **Child Safe Recruitment, Induction and Training Policy**
Sets out what is involved in the recruitment process and the procedures to be followed before a person is considered for a role at The Centre. This includes the verification of their Working with Children Check. It also outlines what is involved in the induction process for new recruits and any further training requirements.
- **Child Safe Risk Management Plan**
Describes the specific risks at the service that could affect children's safety and identifies the protective strategies used to lower each risk.

Publication, Communication and Engagement

The Centre's Child Safe Policy and other child safe documents can be found on our website at www.volunteering.com.au. Anyone involved in our community can request a copy via email at any time by contacting info@volunteering.com.au.