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## Introduction

The Song Room is committed to promoting and protecting the interests and safety of children.

We have zero tolerance for child abuse.

Everyone working at The Song Room is responsible for the care and protection of children and reporting information about child abuse.

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is:

1. To facilitate the prevention of child abuse occurring within The Song Room.
2. To prevent child abuse within The Song Room.
3. To work towards an organisational culture of child safety.
4. To ensure child safety includes consideration of cultural safety.
5. To ensure that all parties are aware of their responsibilities for identifying possible occasions for child abuse and for establishing controls and procedures for preventing such abuse and/or detecting such abuse when it occurs.
6. To provide guidance to staff/volunteers/contractors (workers) as to action that should be taken where they suspect any abuse within or outside of the organisation.
7. To provide a clear statement to workers forbidding any such abuse.
8. To provide assurance that any and all suspected abuse will be reported and fully investigated.

# CHILD SAFETY POLICY

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## Policy

The Song Room is committed to promoting and protecting the best interests of children involved in its programs.

All children, regardless of their gender, race, religious beliefs, age, disability, sexual orientation, or family or social background, have equal rights to protection from abuse.

The Song Room has zero tolerance for child abuse. Everyone working at The Song Room is responsible for the care and protection of the children within our care and reporting information about suspected child abuse.

Child protection is a shared responsibility between all The Song Room workers and members of The Song Room community.

The Song Room will consider the opinions of children and use their opinions to develop child protection policies.

The Song Room is committed to implementing the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations attached as Appendix II.

The Song Room supports and respects all children and workers. The Song Room is committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, and those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children living with a disability. The consideration of Child Safety within a Cultural Safety context is attached as Appendix III.

If any person believes a child is in immediate risk of abuse, telephone 000.

## CHILD SAFETY PROCEDURES

### Responsibilities

The Board of The Song Room has ultimate responsibility for the detection and prevention of child abuse and is responsible for ensuring that appropriate and effective internal control systems are in place. The Board is also responsible for ensuring that appropriate policies and procedures and a Child Protection Code of Conduct are in place.

The CEO of The Song Room is responsible for:

- Ensuring Child Safety, Cultural Safety and the requirements of the National Principles for Child Safe organisations, including State based requirements, are embedded in all areas of The Song Room;
- Dealing with and investigating reports of child abuse immediately they are notified;
- Ensuring that all workers are aware of relevant laws, organisational policies and procedures, and the organisation's Code of Conduct;
- Ensuring that all adults within The Song Room community are aware of their obligation to report suspected sexual abuse of a child in accordance with these policies and procedures;
- Ensuring that all workers are aware of their obligation to observe the Code of Conduct (particularly as it relates to child safety);
- Providing support for workers in undertaking their child protection responsibilities.

All managers must ensure that they:

- Promote child safety at all times;
- Assess the risk of child abuse within their area of control and eradicate or minimise any risk to the extent possible;
- Educate workers about the prevention and detection of child abuse;
- Educate workers on the inclusion of cultural safety
- Facilitate the reporting of any inappropriate behaviour or suspected abusive activities.

Management should be familiar with the types of abuse that might occur within their area of responsibility and be alert for any indications of such conduct.

All workers share the responsibility for the prevention and detection of child abuse, and must:

- Familiarise themselves with the relevant laws, the Code of Conduct, and The Song Room's policy and procedures in relation to child protection, and comply with all requirements;
- Report any reasonable belief that a child's safety is at risk to the relevant authorities (such as the police and/or the state-based child protection service) and fulfil their obligations as mandatory reporters;
- Report any suspicion that a child's safety may be at risk to their manager/supervisor (or, if their manager/supervisor is involved in the suspicion, to a responsible person in the organisation); and
- Provide an environment that is supportive of all children's emotional and physical safety.

### Definitions

**Abuse of a child:** refers to physical abuse; sexual abuse; emotional abuse; neglect; and exposure to family and domestic violence.

# CHILD SAFETY POLICY

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**Child** for the purposes of this policy means a person below the age of 18 years.

Note: Relevant legislation, services and authorities may refer to a child between the ages of 12 and 18 as a 'young person'

**Child protection** means any responsibility, measure or activity undertaken to safeguard children from harm.

**Child protection authority:** the State or Territory government agency that is responsible for protecting children from the risk of harm of abuse or neglect when their parents or carers are unable to do so.

**Child protection report:** an official notification of a risk of abuse concern to a State or Territory child protection authority.

**Cultural Safety:** upholding the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and the children of all nationalities to:

- identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander or another nationality without fear of retribution or questioning
- receive an education that strengthens their culture and identity
- maintain connection to their land and Country
- maintain their strong kinship ties and social obligations
- be taught their cultural heritage by their Elders
- receive information in a culturally sensitive, relevant and accessible manner

**Reasonable grounds for belief** is a belief based on reasonable grounds (see below) that child abuse has occurred when all known considerations or facts relevant to the formation of a belief are taken into account and these are objectively assessed. Circumstances or considerations may include the source of the allegation and how it was communicated, the nature of and details of the allegation, and whether there are any other related matters known regarding the alleged perpetrator.

A reasonable belief is formed if a reasonable person believes that:

- (a) the child is in need of protection,
- (b) the child has suffered or is likely to suffer "significant harm as a result of physical injury," or
- (c) the parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child.

A 'reasonable belief' or a 'belief on reasonable grounds' is not the same as having proof, but is more than mere rumour or speculation.

A 'reasonable belief' is formed if a reasonable person in the same position would have formed the belief on the same grounds. For example, a 'reasonable belief' might be formed if:

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- a) a child states that they have been physically or sexually abused;
- b) a child states that they know someone who has been physically or sexually abused (sometimes the child may be talking about themselves);
- c) someone who knows a child states that the child has been physically or sexually abused;
- d) professional observations of the child's behaviour or development leads a professional to form a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused or is likely to be abused; and/or
- e) signs of abuse lead to a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused.

**Workers** include all staff, contractors and volunteers including all Board and Committee members.

## Employment of New Personnel

The Song Room undertakes a comprehensive recruitment and screening process for all workers that aims to:

- promote and protect the safety of all children under the care of the organisation;
- identify the safest and most suitable people who share The Song Room's values and commitment to protect children; and
- prevent a person from working at The Song Room if they pose a risk to children.

The Song Room requires all workers to pass through the organisation's recruitment and screening processes prior to commencing their engagement with The Song Room.

The Song Room may require applicants to provide a police check in accordance with the law and as appropriate, before they commence working at The Song Room and during their time with The Song Room at regular intervals.

The Song Room will undertake thorough reference checks as per the approved internal procedure.

Once engaged, workers must review and acknowledge their understanding of this Policy.

## Risk Management

The Song Room will ensure that child safety is a part of its overall risk management approach.

The Song Room will have a risk and compliance sub-committee committed to identifying and managing risks at The Song Room. Risk and compliance sub-committee members will receive regular training in relation to child safety.

## Reporting

Any worker who has grounds to suspect abusive activity must immediately notify the appropriate child protection service or the police. Contact details for each State and Territory can be found in Appendix I.

They should also advise their manager/supervisor about their concern.

In situations where the manager/supervisor is suspected of involvement in the activity, or if the person having the suspicion does not believe that the matter is being appropriately addressed or dealt with, the matter should be reported to the next highest level of supervision.

Managers/supervisors must report complaints of suspected abusive behaviour or misconduct to the CEO and also to any external regulatory body such as the police.

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For the purposes of this policy any worker will be considered a mandatory reporter and should adhere to the mandatory reporting requirements for the relevant State and Territory noted in Appendix I.

## Investigating

If the appropriate child protection service or the police decide to investigate a report, all workers must co-operate fully with the investigation.

Whether or not the authorities decide to conduct an investigation, the CEO will consult with the authorities to determine whether an internal investigation is appropriate. If it is decided that such an investigation will not conflict with any proceeding of the authorities, the CEO may decide to conduct such an investigation. All workers must co-operate fully with the investigation.

Any such investigation will be conducted according to the rules of natural justice.

The CEO will make every effort to keep any such investigation confidential; however, from time to time other workers may need to be consulted in conjunction with the investigation.

After an initial review and a determination that the suspected abuse warrants additional investigation, the CEO shall coordinate the investigation with the appropriate investigators and/or law enforcement officials. Internal or external legal representatives will be involved in the process, as deemed appropriate.

## Responding

If it is alleged that a worker may have committed an offence or have breached the organisation's policies or its Code of Conduct the person concerned may be stood down (with pay, where applicable) while an investigation is conducted.

If the investigation concludes that on the balance of probabilities an offence (or a breach of the organisation's policies or Code of Conduct) has occurred then disciplinary action may follow, up to and including dismissal or cessation of involvement with the organisation. The findings of the investigation will also be reported to any external body as required.

## Privacy

All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved unless there is a risk to someone's safety. The Song Room will have safeguards and practices in place to ensure any personal information is protected.

Everyone is entitled to know how the personal information is recorded, what will be done with it, and who will be able to access it.

## Reviewing

Every two years, and following every reportable incident, a review shall be conducted to assess whether the organisation's child protection policies or procedures require modification to better protect the children under the organisation's care.

## Related Documents

- The law of the Commonwealth or of the relevant state or territory
- Child Safety Code of Conduct

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- Risk Assessment
- Responding to Risk of Harm - Children and Young People Policy
- Responding to Concerns or Allegations of Misconduct towards Children and Young People Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Recruitment Policy
- Induction Policy
- Whistleblower Policy

APPENDIX I – MANDATORY REPORTING GUIDELINES			
Legislation	Mandated reporters	When must a report be made?	Who is a child?
<b>AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY</b>			
<i>Children and Young People Act 2008(ACT)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doctors,nurses,enrolled nurses, midwives</li> <li>• Dentists</li> <li>• Teachers (including assistant teachers) and people providing education to a child or young person who is registered for home education under the Education Act2004</li> <li>• Police officers</li> <li>• School counsellors</li> <li>• People caring for a child at a child care centre</li> <li>• People coordinating or monitoring home-based care for a family day care scheme proprietor</li> <li>• Public servants who work with children and young people or families</li> <li>• The public advocate</li> <li>• An official visitor (i.e. someone authorised to be on the premises)</li> <li>• A person who, in the course of their employment, has contact with or provides services to children, young people and their families</li> </ul>	<p>A mandated reporter must make a report if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the person believes on reasonable grounds that a child or young person has experienced, or is experiencing, sexual abuse or non-accidental physical injury; and</li> <li>• that belief is formed in the course of the person's work</li> </ul> <p>NB: exceptions may apply.</p>	<p>A person under 12 years old</p> <p>NB: A 'young person' is a person who is 12 years old or older, but not yet 18 years old</p>
<i>Ombudsman Act 1989 (ACT)</i>	<p>The head (i.e. CEO, Principal etc.) of a designated entity.</p> <p>A designated entity means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an administrative unit that deals with the safety, welfare or wellbeing of a particular child or class of children;</li> <li>• a health service provider;</li> </ul>	<p>A mandated reporter must provide a written report to the Ombudsman if they become aware of a reportable allegation or any reportable conviction involving an employee, volunteer or contractor of the entity.</p>	<p>A person under 18 years old</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a government school or a non-government school;</li> <li>• a provider of an education and care service;</li> <li>• a child care service;</li> <li>• an approved kinship and foster care organisation;</li> <li>• an approved residential care organisation; or</li> <li>• any other entity prescribed by regulation.</li> </ul>		u
<b>NEW SOUTH WALES</b>			
<i>Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A person who, in the course of his or her professional work or other paid employment, delivers health care, welfare, education, children's services, residential services or law enforcement, wholly or partly, to children</li> <li>• A person who holds a management position in an organisation, the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of health care, welfare, education, children's services, residential services or law enforcement, wholly or partly, to children</li> </ul>	<p>A mandated reporter must make a report to the Department of Family and Community Services if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is "at risk of significant harm"; and</li> <li>• those grounds arise during the course of or from the person's work.</li> </ul> <p>NB: exceptions may apply.</p>	A person under 16 years old
<i>Crimes Act 1900 (NSW)</i>	Any person	<p>A mandated reporter must make a report to the police if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the person knows or believes that a serious indictable offence has been committed (i.e. child abuse); and</li> <li>• their information might be of assistance to police in apprehending, prosecuting or convicting the offender.</li> </ul> <p>NB: exceptions may apply.</p>	A person under 18 years old

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	<p>The head of a designated government or non-government agency.</p> <p>A designated non-government agency includes non-government schools, organisations that provide out-of-home care or substitute residential care for children, approved education and care services, and affiliated health organisations within the meaning of the Health Services Act 1997 (NSW).</p>	<p>A mandated reporter must make a report to the Office the Children's Guardian if they become aware of a reportable allegation or reportable conviction against an employee, volunteer or contractor of the agency.</p>	<p>A person under 18 years old</p> <p style="text-align: right;">u</p>
<b>NORTHERN TERRITORY</b>			
<p><i>Care and Protection of Children Act 2007 (NT)</i></p>	<p>Any person</p>	<p>A mandated reporter must make a report to the Department of Health and Families or the police if the person believes on reasonable grounds that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a child under 18 years old has suffered or is likely to suffer harm or exploitation; or</li> <li>• a child under 14 years old has been or is likely to be a victim of a sexual offence; or</li> <li>• a child under 18 years old had been or is likely to be a victim of a sexual offence occurring in the context of a special care relationship.</li> </ul> <p>NB: exceptions may apply.</p>	<p>A person under 18 years old</p>
	<p>In the NT, there are additional reporting obligations on 'registered health practitioners'.</p> <p>Registered health practitioners include Aboriginal health workers, chiropractors, dentists, dental hygienists, dental prosthetists, dental specialists, dental therapists, medical practitioners, midwives, registered nurses authorised to practise midwifery, registered and enrolled nurses, occupational therapists; optometrists; osteopaths; pharmacists, physiotherapists, psychologists and radiographers.</p>	<p>A registered health practitioner is under additional reporting obligations and must make a report if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• they believe on reasonable grounds that a child aged 14 or 15 years old has been or is likely to be a victim of a sexual offence; and</li> <li>• the age difference between the child and the sexual offender is greater than two years.</li> </ul> <p>NB: exceptions may apply.</p>	<p>A person under 18 years old</p>

# CHILD SAFETY POLICY

<p><i>Domestic and Family Violence Act (NT)</i></p>	<p>A person</p>	<p>A mandated reporter must make a report if the person believes on reasonable grounds that the life or safety of a person (i.e. a child) is under serious or imminent threat because domestic violence has been, is being or is about to be committed. NB: exceptions may apply.</p>	<p>A person under 18 years old</p>
<p><b>QUEENSLAND</b></p>			
<p><i>Child Protection Act 1999 (QLD)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers (specifically, approved teachers under the Education [Queensland College of Teachers] Act 2005, employed at a school)</li> <li>• Doctors</li> <li>• Registered nurses</li> <li>• Police officers with child protection responsibilities</li> <li>• A person performing a child advocate function under the Public Guardian Act 2014</li> <li>• Child Safety employees</li> </ul> <p>Licensed care services employees</p>	<p>A mandated reporter must make a report if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• they form a reasonable suspicion that a child has suffered, is suffering or is at an unacceptable risk of suffering significant harm caused by physical or sexual abuse; and</li> <li>• the child may not have a parent able and willing to protect the child from the harm.</li> </ul> <p>NB: exceptions may apply</p>	<p>A person under 18 years old</p>
<p><i>Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld)</i></p>	<p>Staff members at a school</p>	<p>A mandated reporter must make a report if they reasonably suspect, in the course of their employment at the school, that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a student under 18 years old attending the school has been or is likely to be sexually abused by another person;</li> <li>• a pre-preparatory age child registered in a pre-preparatory learning program at the school or a distance education pre-preparatory learning program at the school; or</li> <li>• a person with a disability who is being provided with special education at the school and is not enrolled in the preparatory year at the school.</li> </ul> <p>NB: exceptions may apply</p>	

# CHILD SAFETY POLICY

SOUTH AUSTRALIA			
<p><i>Children's Protection Act 1993 (SA)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doctors</li> <li>• Pharmacists</li> <li>• Registered or enrolled nurses</li> <li>• Dentists</li> <li>• Psychologists</li> <li>• Police officers and community corrections officers</li> <li>• Social workers</li> <li>• Teachers in education institutions including kindergartens</li> <li>• Family day care providers</li> <li>• Employees/volunteers in a government department, agency or instrumentality, or a local government or non-government agency that provides health, welfare, education, sporting or recreational, child care or residential services wholly or partly for children</li> <li>• Ministers of religion (with the exception of disclosures made in the confessional) and employees or volunteers in a religious or spiritual organisation.</li> </ul>	<p>A mandated reporter must make a report to the Department of Education and Child Development if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been or is being abused or neglected; and</li> <li>• the suspicion is formed in the course of the person's work (whether paid or voluntary) or carrying out of their official duties.</li> </ul> <p>NB: exceptions may apply</p>	<p>A person under 18 years old</p>
TASMANIA			
<p><i>Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997 (TAS)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registered medical practitioners</li> <li>• Nurses and midwives</li> <li>• Dentists, dental therapists or dental hygienists</li> <li>• Registered psychologists</li> <li>• Police officers and probation officers</li> <li>• Principals and teachers</li> <li>• Persons who provide child care</li> <li>• Persons involved in the management of a child care service licensed under the Child Care Act 2001</li> <li>• Employees or volunteers of</li> </ul>	<p>A mandated reporter must make a report to the Department of Health and Human Services or a Community-Based Intake Service if, in the course of carrying out their official duties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• they believe or suspect on reasonable grounds, or know that a child has been or is being abused or neglected; or</li> <li>• there is a reasonable likelihood of a child being killed or abused or neglected by a person with whom the child resides.</li> </ul>	<p>A person under 18 years old</p>

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	<p>government agencies that provide health, welfare, education, child care or residential services for children, and organisations that receive any funding from the Australian Government for the provision of such services</p> <p>Any other person of a class determined by the relevant government Minister by notice in the Tasmanian Government Gazette</p>	<p>This also applies to unborn children.</p> <p>NB: exceptions may apply</p>	
<b>VICTORIA</b>			
<i>Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any person 18 years or older</li> </ul>	<p>A mandated reporter must make a report to the police if they form a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria against a child by another person of or over the age of 18 years.</p> <p>NB: exceptions may apply.</p>	A person under 16 years old
<i>Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Registered medical practitioners, midwives and registered nurses</li> <li>Teachers registered or granted permission to teach under the Education, Training and Reform Act 2006</li> <li>Principals</li> <li>Police</li> </ul>	<p>A mandated reporter must make a report if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from physical injury or sexual abuse;</li> <li>The parents cannot or will not protect the child; and</li> <li>The belief is formed in the course of practising his/her position of employment.</li> </ul> <p>NB: exceptions may apply.</p>	A person under 17 years old
<b>WESTERN AUSTRALIA</b>			
<i>Children and Community Services Act 2004 (WA)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>	<p>A mandated reporter must make a report to the Department of Communities Child Protection and Family Support if, in the course of their work, they believe on reasonable grounds that a child has been the subject of sexual abuse or is the subject of ongoing sexual abuse.</p> <p>NB: exceptions may apply.</p>	A person under 18 years old
<b>COMMONWEALTH</b>			

# CHILD SAFETY POLICY

<p>Family Law Act 1975 (Cth)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Registrar or a Deputy Registrar of a Registry of the Family Court of Australia;</li> <li>• the Registrar or a Deputy Registrar of the Family Court of Western Australia;</li> <li>• a Registrar of the Federal Circuit Court of Australia;</li> <li>• a family consultant;</li> <li>• a family counsellor;</li> <li>• a family dispute resolution practitioner;</li> <li>• an arbitrator; or</li> <li>• a lawyer independently representing a child's interests</li> </ul>	<p>A mandated reporter must make a report to the prescribed welfare authority if, in the course of performing their duties, functions or powers, they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a child has been abused; or</li> <li>• a child is at risk of being abused</li> </ul>	<p>A person under 18 years old</p>
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## WHERE TO CONTACT IF YOU NEED TO RESPOND TO A RISK OF CHILD ABUSE, OR CONCERN OR ALLEGATION OF MISCONDUCT

<p>AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY</p>	<p>Child and Youth Protection Services</p>	<p><a href="http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au/ocyfs">http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au/ocyfs</a> 1300 556 728</p>
<p>NEW SOUTH WALES</p>	<p>Office of the Children's Guardian</p>	<p><a href="https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/reportable-conduct-scheme/notification-forms">https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/reportable-conduct-scheme/notification-forms</a></p>
<p>NORTHERN TERRITORY</p>	<p>Child Protection NT</p>	<p>Child Protection Hotline: 1800 700 250 Online: <a href="http://childprotectionreport.nt.gov.au">childprotectionreport.nt.gov.au</a></p>
<p>QUEENSLAND</p>	<p>Department of Child Safety Youth and Women</p>	<p>1800 811 810 <a href="https://secure.communities.qld.gov.au/cbir/ChildSafety#">https://secure.communities.qld.gov.au/cbir/ChildSafety#</a></p>
<p>SOUTH AUSTRALIA</p>	<p>Department for Child Protection SA</p>	<p>13 14 78 <a href="http://www.reportchildabuse.families.sa.gov.au">www.reportchildabuse.families.sa.gov.au</a></p>
<p>TASMANIA</p>	<p>Department of Communities</p>	<p>1800 000 123 <a href="https://www.health.tas.gov.au/contact/child-protection_notification_form">https://www.health.tas.gov.au/contact/child-protection_notification_form</a></p>
<p>VICTORIA</p>	<p>Commission for Children &amp; Young People</p>	<p><a href="https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/reportable-conduct-scheme/notify-and-update/">https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/reportable-conduct-scheme/notify-and-update/</a></p>
<p>WESTERN AUSTRALIA</p>	<p>Department for Child Protection WA</p>	<p>1800 708 704 <a href="http://www.mandatoryreporting.dcp.wa.gov.au">www.mandatoryreporting.dcp.wa.gov.au</a></p>

## CHILD SAFETY POLICY

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IN ALL INSTANCES WHERE A CHILD IS IN IMMEDIATE RISK OF ABUSE CALL THE POLICE ON 000

## APPENDIX II

### Implementing the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations – overlaid with the 2022 Victorian Child Safe Standards

#### Cultural safety for Aboriginal children and young people

**Victorian Standard 1** – *Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued*

- A child's ability to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights is encouraged and actively supported.
- Strategies are embedded within the organisation which equip all members to acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal culture and understand its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children and young people.
- Measures are adopted by the organisation to ensure racism within the organisation is identified, confronted and not tolerated. Any instances of racism are addressed with appropriate consequences.
- The organisation actively supports and facilitates participation and inclusion within it by Aboriginal children, young people and their families.
- All of the organisation's policies, procedures, systems and processes together create a culturally safe and inclusive environment and meet the needs of Aboriginal children, young people and their families.

#### A commitment to child safety and wellbeing

**National Principle 1 (Victorian Standard 2):** *Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.*

- Child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures, and governance arrangements that facilitate their implementation.
- Child Safe Code of Conduct.
- Risk assessment and management process.
- Policies and procedures on record keeping, information sharing and external reporting.

#### Taking child participation seriously

**National Principle 2 (Victorian Standard 3):** *Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.*

- Information or training is provided to staff and volunteers to ensure they understand child rights-based approaches and are skilled at engaging with young people.

#### Involving families and communities

**National Principle 3 (Victorian Standard 4):** *Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.*

- Child safety policies and procedures are made clear and accessible to families and communities on the website.
- The Song Room engages with families and communities to build cultural safety and inclusion through partnerships and respectful relationships.
- Policies and practices are in place for seeking parental consent for relevant activities.

## Respecting equity and diversity

**National Principle 4 (Victorian Standard 5):** *Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.*

- Policies on accessibility, anti-discrimination, cultural safety, diversity and inclusion.
- In conjunction with schools strategies are used to counter discrimination and exclusion, including guidance on creating environments that are safe and welcoming for all children.
- Training for staff and volunteers on identifying and responding to children and young people with diverse backgrounds and needs.

## Ensuring that staff are suitable and supported

**National Principle 5 (Victorian Standard 6):** *People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.*

- Policies on recruitment, including advertising, selection criteria, and referee checks.
- Systems for ensuring that all relevant staff have current working with children checks or equivalent background checks.
- Induction training for all staff and volunteers on their child safety and wellbeing responsibilities, the organisation's child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures, external reporting obligations (eg mandatory reporting) and the Code of Conduct.
- Policies and guidelines for ongoing supervision, support and performance management of staff and volunteers.

## Child focused complaint systems

**National Principle 6 (Victorian Standard 7):** *Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.*

- An accessible policy for receiving, responding to and investigating complaints of child harm or abuse that prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Complaints may relate to concerning conduct, misconduct or criminal conduct.
- Policies on reporting to external authorities, record keeping and information sharing, and systems to ensure the organisation meets its reporting requirements and employment law and privacy obligations.
- Training for staff and volunteers on the complaints process, their roles and responsibilities, reporting and privacy obligations, and responding to children who disclose abuse (including recognising the different ways that children may disclose).

## Staff knowledge, skills and awareness

**National Principle 7 (Victorian Standard 8):** *Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.*

- Periodic training for staff and volunteers on children's rights, child development, the organisation's child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures, recognising signs of harm or abuse, responding to disclosures, understanding and responding to harmful behaviours by a child towards another child, record keeping, risk assessment and

## Safe physical and online environments

**National Principle 8 (Victorian Standard 9):** *Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.*

- Risk assessment and management processes for physical and online environments that address risks arising from those environments, organisational activities, adult to child interactions and child to child interactions.
- Requirements that staff and volunteers use online environments in line with the Code of Conduct and relevant communication protocols.
- The organisation always seeks to promote cultural safety in physical and online environments.

## Review of child safe policies and practices

**National Principle 9 (Victorian Standard 10):** *Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved.*

- A commitment to review this policy, and the organisation's other child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures, on a regular basis.
- The organisation records and reports complaints, incidents and concerns in order to identify causes or systemic weaknesses and implements improvements.

## Documenting policies and procedures

**National Principle 10 (Victorian Standard 11):** *Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.*

Provided on The Song Room website and intranet, and a mandatory part of all recruitment and induction, are the following:

- Child Safety Policy
- Child Safe Code of Conduct
- Child Safety Risk Assessment
- Responding to Risk of Harm - Children and Young People Policy
- Responding to Concerns or Allegations of Misconduct towards Children and Young People Policy

These are all assessed and reviewed annually.