

Child Safe Policy

Responsible officer: General Manager Primary Health

Supersedes notification (if applicable): Supersedes 2.9 Children and Youth Safety Policy

1. Purpose

EACH has a commitment to creating a child safe culture and maintaining a child safe and child friendly environment. Protecting children and young people is everybody's responsibility. Young people will be referred to as children in this policy and related procedures.

Child Safe Principles

These principles guide the child safe culture at EACH:

- Take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety
- Implement child safety procedures which support ongoing assessment and mitigation of risk.
- Value and empower children to participate in decisions which affect their lives
- Respect diversity in cultures while keeping child safety paramount
- Provide written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviours towards children
- Engage only the most suitable people to work with children and have high quality staff and volunteer supervision and professional development
- Provide ongoing professional development to support a complete understanding by staff and volunteers of their obligations both under the law and as a duty of care
- Report suspected abuse, neglect or mistreatment promptly to the appropriate authorities
- Share information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations where safety and wellbeing of a child is at risk
- Promote the cultural safety of aboriginal children and young people
- Promote the cultural safety of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Promote safety of children with a disability

Commitment Statement

The following statement acknowledges EACH's commitment to child safety. The statement provides a consistent message for electronic and written communications to support an ongoing culture of child safety.

All children who come to EACH have a right to feel and be safe. EACH is committed to the safety and well-being of all children whether they are direct service recipients or indirectly linked to our services such as children of clients or carers. The welfare of children and young people will always be our first priority. We aim to create a child safe and child friendly environment where all children are valued and heard, are safe and protected.

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Policy Statements

The following policy statements demonstrate EACH's commitment to safeguarding children through:

Supporting a child safe culture

EACH is committed to supporting a child safe culture, and will ensure adequate resources are allocated to enhancing EACH's approach to safeguarding children, and responding to risks identified in work practices or staff behaviour. The EACH Code of Conduct outlines the behaviour, relationships, attitudes and responsibilities expected of management, staff and volunteers in relation to children with whom the organisation has contact.

Recruitment and selection

EACH will implement rigorous staff and volunteer recruitment and selection practices to support a child safe organisation for all appointments.

Training and Induction

All EACH staff and volunteers must participate in an induction program, which includes information on child safety and participate in training programs and ongoing professional development.

Responding to and reporting child abuse and/or neglect

EACH staff must report all suspected and allegations of child abuse and/or neglect as per reporting procedures and relevant state legislation. All reports will be managed in line with the Child at Risk Procedure.

2. Scope

This policy applies to EACH staff, Board of Directors, volunteers, students, contractors, visitors, consumers and carers and is inclusive of EACH services delivered offsite or in partnership with other agencies.

3. Definitions

Child: A person under the age of 18 years.

Child Abuse: Any act against a child involving: physical violence, sexual offences, serious emotional or psychological abuse and serious neglect.

Child Safety: Measures to protect children's health, safety and wellbeing

Safety: The state of being safe; freedom from the occurrence or risk of injury, danger, or loss.

Risk: Refers to anything that can threaten the safety and wellbeing of children

Risk Assessment: Overall process of risk identification, risk analysis and risk evaluation.

Safe Culture: The ongoing and genuine provision of organisational beliefs and processes that support EACH as a workplace where all people are able to engage freely without the threat or potential threat of physical or psychological harm.

Contractors: (and employees of contractors or agency staff). A person (other than an EACH employee) engaged to perform work for, or on behalf of EACH.

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4. Contact Officer

The General Manager Primary Health can be contacted on Ann.Elkins@each.com.au

5. References/Relevant legislation

Each state or territory sites and services has the responsibility to be aware of the relevant legislation.

Australia: Family Law Act (1975)

Victoria: Children's Youth and Families Act (2005)

Victoria: Child Wellbeing and Safety Act (2005)

NSW: Children and Young Person's (Care and Protection) Act 1998

Queensland: Child Protection Act (1999)

Tasmania: Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act (1997)

Family Violence Act (2004)

ACT: Children and Young People Act (2008)

South Australia: Child Protection Act (1993)

Western Australia: Children and Community Services Act (2004)

Northern Territory: Care and Protection of Children (2007)

6. Related Policies/Documents

EACH policies and procedures that support the Child Safe policy;

- Freedom from Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation Policy
- Child at Risk Procedure
- Whistleblower Policy
- Pre-employment security screening Policy
- Recruitment Policy and Procedure
- Professional Development Policy
- Supervision Policy and Procedure

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7. Implementation Procedures

Responsibility	Implementation Actions
Board of Directors	Knowledge of their governance role in respective jurisdictional legislation and the Victorian Child Care standards
EACH CEO and Management	Adequate resources allocated to allow for effective implementation Approval of supporting policies and procedures
EACH Human Resources	Support the induction and training in child safe and mandatory reporting procedures Ensure rigorous recruitment and selection processes
EACH Communications	Promote child safe policy and related professional development opportunities through EACH communication channels
EACH Quality Team	Ensure annual review of the Child Safe Standards Make available United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child to all EACH locations/sites
EACH Managers and Team Leaders	Review child safety risks (as appropriate) in the annual EACH risk assessment process
EACH staff, volunteers, students and contractors	To abide by this policy and relevant procedures, in all direct and indirect interactions with children at EACH Respond to and report allegations of child abuse as per Child at Risk Procedure