

Child Safety Code of Conduct Policy

Aims of the Policy

Djerriwarrh is committed to creating and building a culture of child safety. Any child attending Djerriwarrh has the right to feel safe and feel protected from sexual, physical and emotional abuse.

Djerriwarrh's statements of commitment to child safety:

- Djerriwarrh is committed to child safety and all staff, volunteers and board members have a responsibility to prevent child abuse and respond appropriately to allegations.
- Djerriwarrh is committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment for all children and young people from all cultures and linguistically diverse backgrounds and those with a disability.

Users of this Policy

The Child Safety Code of Conduct Policy sets out the expectations for personal and professional behaviour of staff and volunteers when teaching, working with and/or supporting children and should be observed by staff in conjunction with the Code of Conduct Policy PO 060.

Using this Policy

Djerriwarrh's Child Safety Code of Conduct Policy should be strictly adhered to at all times when staff or volunteers are engaged in any work or work related activity with children.

All organisations that work with children and young people are required to meet Victoria's **Child Safe Standards**:

1. Strategies to embed a culture of child safety through effective leadership arrangements.
2. A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety.
3. A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children
4. Screening, supervision, training, and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing staff
5. Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse.
6. Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse.
7. Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children.

The Child Safe Standards are underpinned by the understanding that all children are vulnerable. However, three **overarching principles** require organisations to consider the increased vulnerability of:

- Aboriginal children
- those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- children with disabilities.

Overview

Djerriwarrh is committed to working with staff to meet the highest possible professional standards. It is expected that when in contact with a child, Djerriwarrh staff and volunteers acknowledge and adhere to the Child Safety Code of Conduct Policy.

All Djerriwarrh staff and volunteers are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children by:

- adhering to Djerriwarrh's statement of commitment to child safety at all times
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- treating everyone with respect
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused and/or are worried about their safety or the safety of another
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability
- ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not left alone with a child
- reporting any allegations of child abuse to a member of Djerriwarrh's leadership team, and ensure any allegation is reported to the police or child protection (refer to PO 078 Mandatory Report Policy).
- reporting any child safety concerns immediately to a member of the Djerriwarrh's leadership team
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe
- reporting any suspicious behaviour by staff, volunteers, visitors or contractors immediately to a member of the leadership team

Staff and volunteers must not:

- develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism
- exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical
- put children at risk of abuse
- engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children
- use inappropriate language in the presence of children
- discriminate against any child, on the basis of culture, race, ethnicity or disability
- have contact with a child or their family outside of Djerriwarrh without their line supervisor's knowledge and/or consent
- have any online contact with a child or their family (unless necessary, for example providing families with e-newsletters)
- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse

Associated Policies	PO 004 Workplace Health & Safety Policy PO 060 Code of Conduct PO 078 Mandatory Reporting Policy PO 088 Reportable Conduct Scheme Policy
Associated Procedures	PR 004a Staff Safety Procedure
Other associated documents Internal	FO 295 Child Safe Incident Report Form
Relevant Legislation	Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Act 2015 Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006 Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (amended 2011 Section 182) Crimes Amendment Act 2015 (Protection of Children) Working with Children Regulations 2006
Other associated documents External	http://www.ccyp.vic.gov.au/downloads/tipsheets/tipsheet-empower-participation-children.pdf www.dhs.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0005/955598/Child-safe-standards_overview.doc www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/reports-publications/guide-to-making-a-report-to-child-protection-or-child-first www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/plans,-programs-and-projects/projects-and-initiatives/children,-youth-and-family-services/creating-child-safe-organisations