

# VHKA

## Child Safety Code of Conduct



### Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand this policy, please contact [wade.ho@vhka.org.au](mailto:wade.ho@vhka.org.au)

## Purpose

Our Child Safety Code of Conduct sets out the expected behaviour of adults with children and young people who receive our services and/or attend to our facilities.

All VHKA staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers, committee members and any other adult involved in child-connected work must follow the Child Safety Code of Conduct.

The Child Safety Code of Conduct applies to all physical and online environments used by children.

## Acceptable behaviours

As VHKA, staff, volunteers, committee members or contractors, services providers or any other adult engaged by us may involve in child-connected work, we are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:

- upholding our VHKA commitment to child safety at all times and adhering to our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and other policies and procedures in effect;
- treating children and families who receive our services and/or attend to our facilities with respect;
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they disclose that they or another child has been abused or are worried about their safety or the safety of another child;
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children, children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with a disability, international children, children who are unable to live at home and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTIQ+) children;
- ensuring, as far as practicable, that adults are not alone with a child– one-to-one interactions between an adult and a child are to be in an open space or in line of sight of another adult;
- reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to our Child Safety Officer and/or Chairman;
- understanding and complying with all reporting and disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) in line with our Child Safety Reporting Obligations Policy; and
- if child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the child(s) are safe and protected from harm.

## Unacceptable behaviours

As our staff, volunteers, committee members or contractors, services providers or any other adult engaged by us may involve in child-connected work we must not:

- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse or harm;
- develop a relationship with any child that could be seen as favouritism or amount to 'grooming' behaviour (for example, by offering gifts);

- display behaviours or engage with children in ways that are not socially acceptable;
- ignore an adult's overly familiar or inappropriate behaviour towards a child;
- discuss intimate topics or use sexualised language;
- treat a child or child unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity;
- communicate directly with a child through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, email, instant messaging, texting etc) except where that communication is reasonable in all the circumstances, related to the organisation's work or activities or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter;
- photograph or video a child except with the consent of the child's parent or carer or where required for duty of care purposes;
- consume alcohol excessively or take illicit drugs in the organisation's facilities or at our organised activities or events where children are present; and
- have contact with any child outside of our hours of service except when parental permission has been sought.

## Breaches to the Child Safety Code of Conduct

All VHKA staff, volunteers, committee members or contractors, services providers or any other adult engaged by us involved in child-connected work who breach this Child Safety Code of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary procedures in accordance with their employment agreement or relevant industrial instrument, professional code or terms of engagement.

In instances where a reportable allegation has been made, the matter will be managed in accordance with the relevant governing authority's policies and may be subject to referral to Victoria Police.

All breaches and suspected breaches of the VHKA Child Safety Code of Conduct must be reported to the Child Safe Officer at [wade.ho@vhka.org.au](mailto:wade.ho@vhka.org.au).

### Related policies and further information

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Child Safety Reporting Obligations Policy
- Child Safety Risk Management
- Complaints Policy
- Staff and Volunteers Policy
- Privacy Policy

## Approval and review

<b>Created date</b>	12 August 2022
<b>Endorsed by</b>	VHKA's committee
<b>Endorsed on</b>	14 August 2022
<b>Next review date</b>	14 August 2022