

# VHKA

## Child Safety Risk Management



### 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

This document sets out a risk management approach to child safety. We are committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people who receive our services or attend our facilities. Having an active approach to this commitment contributes to the development of a child safe culture of risk management and continuous improvement.

All VHKA staff, volunteers, committee members and contractors, service providers and any other adult engaged by us involved in child-connected work must follow this Child Safety Risk Management.

This Child Safety Risk Management applies to all physical and online environments used by children.

## Principles and Considerations

VHKA is committed to adopt a risk management approach to child protection by developing and implementing strategies to identify and mitigate our child protection risks based on:

- The nature of all events' and facilities' environments;
- The activities children undertake at our events or facilities (including the provision of services by contractors or outside our facilities' physical environment);
- Physical and online environments that exist in relation to our organisation;
- The characteristics and needs of all of the children who receive our services and/or attend our facilities; and
- The Committee sees the importance of embedding an environment of child protection as part of the culture of VHKA.

VHKA have implemented and will continually maintain adherence to the below standards, namely:

<b>Standard 1:</b>	Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety.
<b>Standard 2:</b>	A child safety policy or a statement of commitment to child safety.
<b>Standard 3:</b>	A child safety code of conduct.
<b>Standard 4:</b>	Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce risk of child abuse
<b>Standard 5:</b>	Procedures for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse.
<b>Standard 6:</b>	Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse.
<b>Standard 7:</b>	Strategies to promote child participation and empowerment.

Along with compliance with the above standards, VHKA has implemented the following risk mitigation strategies to ensure that our organisation maintains a proactive approach to our duty of care in protecting children from harm and comply with our legal and regulatory obligations, including:

- Implementation of our child safety policies, strategies and practices, whereby the standards are communicated via induction and ongoing training to staff and volunteers annually, including identifying risks of child abuse in our events or facilities, and articulating their obligations and responsibilities for managing these risks;
- Provision of child safety training during induction, but also through ongoing training annually. This commitment exemplifies the VHKA's vision of having a strong culture when it comes to matters relating to child safety and protection;
- The presence of extensive policies and procedures in relation to our sports, arts, music, and other activities, ensuring that child protection risks specific to our sports, arts, music, and other activities are identified and put in place;
- Ongoing, periodic reviews of all our facilities to eliminate physical isolation risks, such as doors or rooms with no windows, or implement procedural controls where elimination is not possible;
- Procedures for verifying the Working with Children Check (WWCC) status of all staff and volunteers, who may have direct unsupervised contact with children; and
- A system of assurance through which risks of child abuse, and actions taken to reduce or remove these risks (risk controls), are recorded. The system is also used to monitor risk controls and to evaluate their overall effectiveness on a regular basis. VHKA ensures that all controls are functional at our events or facilities to ensure compliance and align with our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and our zero tolerance to child abuse.

## Risk Assessment Process

As part of child safety, risk assessments should be undertaken for any activity, event, or to test compliance measures that are in place.

Each event and facility will be different, and it is vital that each risk event or environment is assessed. The adequacy of existing controls should be assessed, and risk treatments (initiatives) should be developed if gaps (vulnerabilities) are identified.

A risk assessment enables us to control an identified risk, by the provision of measures to ensure child safety and embedding a culture of proactive child protection, as our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

Below is a list of terms that are used in risk assessments:

Term	Definition
Risk	A situation in where the protection of a child is compromised.
Risk Assessment	A systematic process of evaluating the possible risks that may be linked to an activity of task.
Risk Management	A coordinated approach of managing risks and ensuring adherence to Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

**Table 1: Risk Definition Table**

## Process

The following table details the principles for risk management in VHKA.

Process	Description
Identify risk	Identify where, when, why and how events could prevent, delay, or degrade the main outcome of the event, activity or meeting.
Analyse risk	Determine the likelihood of the risks to occur and the potential consequences related to the risks and how these could occur (cause and impacts).
Evaluate risk	Compare the level of risk against the potential adverse outcomes so that decisions can be made on how to manage the priorities.
Control risk	Develop and implement strategies and action plans which are beneficial to all involved.
Monitor and review risk	Monitor the effectiveness of the processes put in place. Provide feedback for improvement, considering on any follow up required from incidences.

**Table 2: Risk Management Principles**

Establishing the context of risk is the first step in the risk management process and is essentially termed as identifying the risk.

Each event and facility must ensure child safety risk is considered. Child safety risks must be assessed as part of standard risk management processes at each event and facility level and this includes activities where VHKA name is used in the arranging and operation of an activity.

Child safety risks must be controlled from the initial planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of an activity and must be managed throughout the lifecycle of the activity. This could include sports, arts, music and other events (e.g. isolated areas of buildings, lack of supervision areas, management/procedural elements, etc.).

Activities can be high risk for a number of reasons. This can be due their nature, their location, cultural sensitivities and whether other organisations are involved, etc.

In addition, VHKA may be engaging in a low risk activity however the activity may be occurring in a third party's building or environment, which could change the nature of the risk. A child protection risk assessment must be conducted before the activity can proceed.

In other words, the person undertaking the assessment should consider what the risk is.

As part of the risk assessment, consideration should be made on what could cause this risk to occur, and what impacts (worse case) could occur if controls are not in place. The type of harm that could impact children should be addressed.

<p><b>Unintentional/accidental harm</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Poor physical environment leading to injury</li> <li>-Poor supervision. High-risk activity</li> <li>-Lack of risk mitigation strategies in place</li> </ul>	<p><b>Physical abuse</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Physical punishment</li> <li>-Pushing, shoving, punching, slapping, biting, kicking.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Cultural abuse</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Lack of cultural respect</li> <li>-Racial or cultural vilification discrimination</li> <li>-Lack of support to enable a child to be aware of expressing their cultural identity</li> </ul>
<p><b>Neglect</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Lack of supervision</li> <li>-Not providing adequate nourishment</li> <li>-Not providing adequate clothing or shelter</li> <li>-Not meeting the specific physical or cognitive needs of children</li> </ul>	<p><b>Physical abuse</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Sexual abuse, assault, and exploitation</li> <li>-Grooming</li> <li>-Inappropriate touching</li> <li>-Inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature (either face-to-face, online or via other technology)</li> <li>-Crossing professional boundaries</li> </ul>	<p><b>Physical abuse</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Bullying.</li> <li>-Threatening language.</li> <li>-Shaming</li> <li>-Intentional ignoring and isolating (either face-to-face, online or via other technology)</li> </ul>

**Table 3: Type of Harm**

The assessment should identify what controls are in place to manage or mitigate the risk from occurring. If vulnerabilities or gaps are identified, it is vital that risk treatments (which can be termed as actions or initiatives) be implemented to reduce the risk.

Risk ratings should be devised to assess the likelihood, consequence, and risk rating.

All risk assessments should be retained and included in VHKA's Child Safe Risk Register. If risks are uncontrolled, they need to be escalated to the organisation's committee for their further consideration.

## Related policies and procedures

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Child Safety Reporting Obligations Policy
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- 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
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