

# Child Safeguarding Policy

*Compliance with this policy is mandatory*

Save the Children’s vision is for a world in which every child attains the right to survival, protection, development and participation. As a Child Rights organisation, we’ll do whatever it takes to keep children safe, on track and connected to community and culture.

## Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure children, young people and families understand the protective practices put in place by Save the Children representatives to keep them safe from deliberate or inadvertent harm.
- Ensure everyone recognises and embraces their critical role in keeping children safe and fostering a culture of openness and the participation of children and young people.
- Ensure diverse cultural perspectives are respected, while recognising that such differences do not diminish a child’s right to be safe or the organisation’s responsibility to protect the child from harm. This applies to all children regardless of age, culture, religion, gender or disability.

This policy applies to all SCA representatives and partners across all workplaces we operate in and all activities we undertake (refer Appendix for definition).

## Policy Statements

1. Representatives and partner staff **must** demonstrate the highest standards of behaviour in their private and professional lives and never abuse the trust that comes with being a member of the Save the Children family.
2. Representatives and partners **must** report any actual or suspected harm to a child or young person and ensure every decision is made in the best interests of the child.
3. Representatives and partners **must** understand and acknowledge this policy and adhere to the child safeguarding training curricula relevant to their role.
4. Leaders **must** drive an honest, safe, two-way communication process between themselves and children, representatives, partners, parents and communities – welcoming scrutiny, making time to listen to them, and encouraging the expression of different views.
5. Program staff **must** ensure all children, young people, families and carers are informed about program activities, the rights and responsibilities of the people involved and have access to a support and feedback mechanism.
6. Program managers **must** ensure the voice of the child is systematically embedded in program design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Specific consideration must be given to the needs of vulnerable groups including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Pacific children, children with disability, and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
7. Program/Activity Managers **must** ensure that every program and activity has a risk assessment that identifies and mitigates risks to child safety, including in physical, emotional and online spaces.
8. Program managers **must** ensure all program partnership arrangements have appropriate agreements in place, partners have adequate child safety capabilities and representatives of partner agencies are assessed as suitable.
9. People managers **must** ensure that appropriate checks and monitoring are used to identify suitable representatives and deter unsuitable candidates and provide adequate professional supervision and development for all staff and volunteers.

Breaches in the policy can lead to disciplinary action including possible dismissal and criminal proceedings. For partners, breaches can lead to termination of agreement. Failure to meet training requirements leads to reassessment of duties and performance management until compulsory activities are complete.

Previous Version	Current Version	Comments	Author	Approved by Executive	Approved by BPRC	Review Date
2.0	3	Simplify statements & deal with operational issues	Head of Risk Support	15 Nov 2018	28 Nov 2018	Q3 2020

## Relevant other policies

Please refer to the Child Safeguarding Policy Guidelines, reporting process and other relevant policies and processes for more details and specific directions on how to apply this Policy, including:

- **Code of Conduct Policy:** outlines expected; behaviour, relationships, attitudes and responsibilities.
- **Recruitment Policy, Compliance Standards, Volunteer Policy, Consultant Process, Performance Lifecycle and Professional Supervision Model:** ensuring appropriate screening and behavioural checks and sign-on to key organisational policies.
- **Program Policy and Practice Standards in Children’s Participation:** ensuring programs include the voices of children and are culturally safe.
- **Risk Management Policy:** ensuring that risks – especially those to children – are identified, aggregated and communicated to higher levels of management.
- **Partnership framework, Contact Standards, Donor Acceptance and Refusal Policy and Procurement Policy:** describe expectations of partners and due-diligence, capacity building and monitoring activities.
- **Privacy Statement, Information Security Policy and Social Media Standards:** describing personal and professional acceptable use and sharing of information, systems and social media.
- **Image Policy, Ethical Decision Framework and Story Telling Guidelines:** ensuring the appropriate collection, assessment and consent for use of images and stories.
- **Safety and Security Policy:** creating a safe and secure environment.

## Definitions

Term	Description
<b>Child</b>	Anyone under the age of 18 years.
<b>Harm</b>	Refers to anything which individuals, institutions or processes do or fail to do which directly or indirectly causes intentional or unintentional abuse including; <b>Physical:</b> involves the use of violent physical force so as to cause actual or likely physical injury or suffering, (e.g. hitting, shaking, burning, female genital mutilation, torture). <b>Sexual:</b> includes all forms of sexual violence including incest, early and forced marriage, rape, involvement in pornography, and sexual slavery. Child sexual abuse may also include indecent touching or exposure, grooming, using sexually explicit language towards a child and showing children pornographic material. This may also include harmful behaviour between children. <b>Emotional:</b> includes humiliating and degrading treatment such as bad name calling, constant criticism, belittling, persistent shaming, solitary confinement and isolation. <b>Neglect:</b> Neglect describes the failure to provide the child with the basic necessities of life such as food, clothing, shelter, medical attention or supervision, to the extent that the child's health and development is, or is likely to be, significantly harmed. <b>Exploitation:</b> means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual or other purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically.
<b>Representatives</b>	Save the Children Australia permanent, maximum term and casual staff, trustees and board members, volunteers, interns, work experience/placement students and individual contractors and consultants (referred to as <i>representatives</i> ). Donors, journalists, celebrities, politicians and other people who visit Save the Children programmes or offices in order to make contact with children must be made aware that this Policy applies to them while visiting our programmes or offices (during this time they are referred to as <i>representatives</i> ).
<b>Partners</b>	Individuals, groups or organisations (including consortiums) who have a formal/contractual relationship with Save the Children Australia that involves any contact with children (referred to as <i>partners or staff of partner agencies</i> ).
<b>Leaders</b>	Board, CEO, Senior Management Team, Business Unit and Team Leaders etc.

## Statement to be Signed by all Save the Children Representatives and Partners

I, ..... (insert name) acknowledge that I have read, understand and agree to comply with Save the Children's Child Safeguarding Policy and relevant associated guidelines.

I understand and agree that it is my responsibility, as a person employed/engaged by Save the Children Australia, to use common sense and avoid actions that are abusive or exploitative of children and young people or could be construed as such.

I know what to expect if a report is made by me or an allegation is made against me.

I understand and agree that a breach of the Policy may provide grounds for my employment/engagement with Save the Children to be terminated. I also understand that a breach of the Policy could result in criminal prosecution.

I authorise Save the Children Australia to undertake any necessary inquiries, including criminal record checks and reference checks, as part of my appointment or recruitment process.

Name: .....

Position: .....

Signed: .....

Date: .....