



Child Safety

1.33-14, Version 0.2

1. Purpose

The Child Safety Code of Conduct outlines appropriate standards of behaviour by adults towards children.

2. Relevant to

This policy applies to all members (staff and volunteers) of VICSES and all other individuals engaged in activities reasonably connected with the VICSES, to the extent that their activities include dealings or contact with children.

3. Principle

Children have a fundamental right to be safe from any form of abuse or neglect. Protecting children involves legal as well as universal moral obligations.

Child protection is the responsibility of all VICSES members and external providers, particularly if the function of their job includes, or is likely to include, providing services directed towards children or the conduct of activities involving children.

The Code of conduct aims to protect children and reduce any opportunities for abuse or harm to occur. It also helps VICSES members by providing them with guidance on how to best support children and how to avoid or better manage difficult situations.

4. Definitions

Child / Children mean a person / people who is / are under the age of 18 years.

VICSES members' means:

- VICSES employees;
- VICSES volunteers; and
- All other individuals engaged in activities reasonably connected with VICSES, including contractors, consultants, honorary, visiting, or adjunct appointees, VICSES Board and visitors.

5. Code of conduct

All VICSES members **are responsible for** promoting the safety, participation, wellbeing, and empowerment of children by:

- Adhering to the VICSES Child Safety Procedure and all related policies;
- Taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse;
- Treating everyone with respect, including listening to and valuing their ideas and opinions;
- Welcoming all children and their families and carers and being inclusive;
- Respecting cultural, religious, and political differences and acting in a culturally sensitive way;
- Modelling appropriate adult behaviour;



- Listening to children and responding to them appropriately;
- Ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not left alone with a child;
- Working with children in an open and transparent way – other adults should always know about the work you are doing with children;
- Reporting and acting on any breaches of this Code of Conduct, complaints, or concerns; and
- Respecting the privacy of children and their families, and only disclosing information to people who have a need to know.

All VICSES members **must not**:

- Develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism through the provision of gifts or inappropriate attention;
- Seek to use children in any way to meet the needs of adults;
- Ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions, or disclosures of child abuse;
- Use prejudice, oppressive behaviour, or inappropriate language with children;
- Express personal views on cultures, race, or sexuality in the presence of children;
- Engage in rough physical games;
- Discriminate on the basis of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, or sexuality;
- Initiate unnecessary physical contact with children or do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes;
- Exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking site details or email addresses with children; and
- Have unauthorised contact with children online or by phone.

6. References and related policies and procedures

- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)*;
- *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*;
- *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities*
- *Victorian Child Safe Standards*
- *Working with Children Act 2005 (VIC)*
- Policy - 1.01 - Membership
- Policy - 1.33 - Employment, Recruitment, and Resourcing
- Policy - Junior Members
- Policy - Cadet Members
- Procedure - 1.33-11 - Child Safety

7. Attachments - Nil

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