



ROTARY CLUB OF PORT FAIRY Inc.

PO Box 1, Port Fairy VIC 3284

Child Safe Standards

ROTARY CLUB OF PORT FAIRY – CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

PREAMBLE

Commencement of the standards

From 12 April 2017:

To create and maintain a child safe organisation, an organisation to which the standards apply must have:

1. Strategies to embed an organisational 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 resource practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel
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.

Types of abuse

Physical

This means intentionally causing, or threatening to cause, physical injury to a child, or inadvertently causing injury as a consequence of physical punishment or physically aggressive treatment of a child. The injury may take the form of bruises, cuts, burns or fractures.

Sexual

A child is sexually abused when any person uses their authority over the child to involve the child in sexual activity. Child sexual abuse involves a wide range of sexual activity including fondling genitals, masturbation, vaginal or anal penetration by a finger, penis or any other object, voyeurism and exhibitionism.

Sexual exploitation is considered a specific form of sexual abuse because children, by virtue of their age and development, are unable to give informed consent. Sexual exploitation of children takes different forms. It can include children being involved in sexually exploitive relationships, exposing a child to pornography, receiving money, goods, drug or favours in exchange for sex with one or more adults, or being exploited in more 'formal' forms of sex work. In all cases, those exploiting the children have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, physical strength, economic or other resources, such as access to drugs or gifts.

Emotional and psychological

This occurs when a person engages in inappropriate behaviours, such as rejecting, ignoring, humiliating, isolating, threatening or verbally abusing a child, or allowing others to do so. Because this kind of abuse does not leave physical injuries, it is often hidden and underestimated.

Neglect

This means failing to meet a child's basic needs, such as providing adequate food, drink, shelter, clothing, supervision, hygiene and medical attention.

Racial, cultural, religious

This is conduct that demonstrates contempt, ridicule, hatred or negativity towards a child because of their race, culture or religion. It may be overt, such as direct racial vilification or discrimination, or covert, such as demonstrating a lack of cultural respect (attitude and values) and awareness (knowledge and understanding) or failing to provide positive images about another culture.

Child Safe Standard 1

In order to fulfill the requirements of Child Safe Standard 1 we will :

- Carry out a Child Safety Review
- Review existing policies and practices
- Think about our risk management plan
- Think about the diverse needs of children
- Where possible, invite children to contribute to the process
- Invite members and volunteers to contribute to the process

Child Safe Standard 2

Rotary Club of Port Fairy - Child Safe Policy

This Child Safe Policy was approved by the Board of the Rotary Club of Port Fairy on 12 April 2017 and endorsed by members at the meeting on 24 April 2017. It is due to be reviewed at each Annual General Meeting from 2017 onwards.

This policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of the members to child safety and to provide an outline of the policies and practices developed to keep everyone safe from any harm, including abuse.

Commitment to child safety

All children who interact with the Rotary Club of Port Fairy have a right to feel and be safe. The welfare of the children under our supervision will always be our first priority and we have a zero tolerance to child abuse. We aim to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe and have fun.

This policy applies to all members, volunteers, children and individuals involved in our Club.

Children's rights to safety and participation

The Rotary Club of Port Fairy members and volunteers encourage children to express their views. We listen to their suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect them. Where possible, we actively encourage all children who interact with our club to 'have a say' about things that are important to them.

We teach children about what they can do if they feel unsafe. We listen to and act on any concerns children, or their parents, raise with us.

We value diversity and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices. To achieve this we:

- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children and their families
- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families
- welcome children with a disability and their families and act to promote their participation
- seek members from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Recruiting members and volunteers

The Rotary Club of Port Fairy applies the best practice standards in the screening of members and volunteers. We require all new members inducted from 1 January 2017 to hold a volunteers Working with Children Card.

Supporting members and volunteers

The Rotary Club of Port Fairy seeks to attract and retain high standard members and volunteers. We provide support and supervision so people feel valued, respected and fairly treated. We have developed a Code of Conduct to provide guidance to our members and volunteers, all of whom receive training on the requirements of the Code. We encourage all existing members and volunteers to obtain a Working with Children card. We will only use members and volunteers who have a Working with Children card at events where interaction with children is likely.

Reporting a child safety concern or complaint.

John Clue has been appointed as the Child Safety Person responsible for responding to any complaints made by members, volunteers, parents or children. Our complaints processes are outlined on the attached diagram.

Risk Management

We recognise the importance of a risk management approach to minimising the potential for child abuse or harm to occur and use this to inform our policy, procedures and activity planning. In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to children.

Reviewing this policy

This policy will be reviewed every two years and we undertake to seek views, comments and suggestions from members, volunteers, children, parents, and carers.

Child Safe Standard 3

Rotary Club of Port Fairy - Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct outlines appropriate standards of behaviour by adults towards children.

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

All Rotary Club of Port Fairy members and volunteers are responsible for promoting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people by:

- adhering to our Child Safe Policy
- 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
- reporting and acting on any breaches of this Code of Conduct, complaints or concerns
- complying with our guidelines on physical contact with children
- working with children in an open and transparent way – other adults should always know about the work we are doing with children
- respecting the privacy of children and their families, and only disclosing information to people who have a need to know.

Rotary Club of Port Fairy members and volunteers must NOT:

- 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 language with children
- engage in excessively 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
- develop 'special' relationships with specific children or show favouritism through the provision of gifts or inappropriate attention
- exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking site or email addresses with children
- have unauthorised contact with children and young people online or by phone.

I have read this Code of Conduct and agree to abide by it at all times.

Name

Date

Signature

Witness

Date

Child Safe Standard 4

Screening, supervision, training - Assess potential members or volunteers

When recruiting new members or volunteers, some important areas you need to assess will include:

- motivation to work with children (personal and/or professional)
- relevant and verifiable experience
- understanding of children's physical and emotional needs
- understanding of professional boundaries
- communication skills
- attitudes to children's rights and how they can be upheld
- values (honesty, integrity, reliability, fairness, and non-discrimination)
- responses from existing members
- We will need to invest time and resources when recruiting members or volunteers who will work closely with children, particularly if the children are vulnerable or have special needs.

Working with Children Check

The Working with Children Check helps protect children from physical and sexual harm. It does this by screening people's criminal records and professional conduct and preventing people who pose an unjustifiable risk to children from working with or caring for them.

A Working with Children Check is valid for five years. It is transferrable between employers or volunteer organisations, as it remains the property of the individual. An exception to this is if someone is moving from a volunteer to an employee position, as you cannot use a volunteer card to engage in paid work.

A Working with Children Check is different from a police check because Working with Children cardholders are monitored on an ongoing basis for any new relevant offences or adverse professional conduct reports from prescribed professional bodies. New charges, convictions or findings relevant to the Working with Children Check will instigate a re-assessment of the person's eligibility to hold a card.

A Working with Children Check is just a starting point. It does not assess someone's suitability to work with or care for children in a particular role. It is your responsibility to assess if a worker is suitable to work with children and to monitor their behaviour around children.

A Working with Children Check is one part of building a child safe organisation, but it is not a substitute for undertaking the other strategies included in this guide.

We must ensure all workers engaged in child-related work hold or have applied for a Working with Children Check card. We need to :

- Take reasonable steps to ensure you do not allow anyone charged with, found guilty or convicted of a serious sexual, physical or drug-related offence to do child-related work unless they can show you their Working with Children Check card
- View receipts and cards of all new members before engaging them in child-related work
- Check the validity of a new member's card or receipt using 'Check status' on the Working with Children Check website
- Regularly check the validity of the cards of all members to make sure no one has been given a Negative Notice or had their card revoked or suspended
- Remind cardholders that they must inform the Working with Children Check Unit of their new work details and changes to personal and contact details within 21 days
- Keep a register of all members with a Working with Children Check and record expiry dates, card numbers and card type.
- Ensure cardholders renew their Working with Children Check card by the card's expiry date if they wish to continue in child-related work
- Develop processes to deal with a worker who is given a Negative Notice. Make sure they do not do any child-related work, even if they are directly supervised or exempt.

Child Safe Standard 5

We have a responsibility to encourage members, volunteers and children to speak up when they are uncomfortable or concerned. When there is a well-publicised reporting process that members and volunteers are trained to use. It is more likely that people will raise relevant and important issues about child safety. This process will also encourage people to give helpful and important information that reduces the risk of all forms of harm to children members and volunteers.

What concerns should be reported?

Concerns about the safety and wellbeing of children can range from an uncomfortable feeling through to a direct observation or a disclosure by a child. People are encouraged to speak to someone and be proactive rather than wait until it is too late. Members and volunteers need to be aware of their duty of care to children and of their legal responsibilities.

Examples of child safety concerns include:

- concerns about a physical environment that may pose a risk to children (this includes health and hygiene issues)
- inappropriate or special relationships developing between members or volunteers and children
- inadequate member-child supervision ratios
- breaches of the Code of Conduct, particularly if they are persistent
- feelings of discomfort about interactions between a member or volunteer and a child
- suspicions or beliefs that children are at risk of harm
- observations of concerning changes in behaviour
- children's disclosures of abuse or harm, which must be reported to Child Protection or the police

When should concerns be reported to the police?

Physical or sexual abuse of children is a crime and must be reported to the police.

Criminal offences

Your organisation needs to be aware of and be responsive to the following criminal offences that help protect children from harm.

Grooming for sexual conduct with a child under the age of 16 years

Many perpetrators of sexual offences against children purposely create relationships with victims, their families or carers in order to create a situation where abuse can occur. The grooming offence applies where a person over 18 years of age communicates, by words or conduct, online or face-to-face, with a child under the age of 16 years or with a person who has care, supervision or authority for a child, with the intention of later sexual activity with a child.

Failure to disclose

Any adult who forms a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under 16 years of age has an obligation to report that information to police, unless they have a reasonable excuse for not disclosing or exemptions apply. Failure to disclose the information to police is a criminal offence.

A reasonable belief is formed if a reasonable person in the same position would have formed the belief on the same grounds.

Failure to Protect

The failure to protect offence commenced on 1 July 2015 and applies to people within organisations who knew of a risk of child sexual abuse by someone in the organisation and had the authority to reduce or remove the risk, but did not act to protect the child.

Keep accurate and secure records

Your organisation should record any child safety complaints, disclosures or breaches of the Code of Conduct and store the records in accordance with security and privacy requirements.

Keep a record of action taken, any internal investigations and any reports made to statutory authorities or professional bodies.

To avoid confusion and maintain confidentiality, everyone, including children, should be made aware of the need to report serious matters involving child protection to external authorities. You cannot promise confidentiality in these matters; however, you must assure privacy in handling the matter and that only those who need to know will be advised.

A flowchart outlining the process for reporting child safety concerns can convey a clear message to everyone that their concerns will be handled fairly, confidentially and efficiently is attached in the appendix to this document and should be issued with the Child Safe Policy document.

Child Safe Standard 6

Risk management

Establish the context

How does your organisation interact with children? Remember that different levels of risks are inherent in different types of activities.

What governance and supervision structures are in place to prevent harm or abuse?

Describe the children accessing your organisation. All children are vulnerable due to their developmental level; however, some children are particularly vulnerable. This may include children who have experienced trauma, abuse or neglect; Aboriginal children; and children with a disability.

How will you undertake the risk management plan?

What approach will you adopt?

Who will be involved?

How long will it take?

Consult and communicate

How will you let children, parents, carers, members, volunteers and any other stakeholders know you are doing a risk management plan?

How will you seek their views and input?

How will you inform them about the plan?

Identify the risks

These may range from occupational health and safety risks to child abuse and accidents.

Do not forget to include risks related to the online environment.

Analyse the risks

Consider the likelihood and consequence for children, your organisation, members, volunteers and others if harm did occur.

Develop intervention

What you can do to reduce the likelihood of risk?

What would you need to do if the risk did occur?

Changing the environment, putting preventative measures in place to make it harder for someone to perpetrate abuse and making it more likely that abuse will be discovered can also reduce the potential for abuse to occur.

Monitor and review

Have a clear monitoring structure to record any risks that did eventuate, how effective the risk management plan was and how it can be improved.

Have a set timeframe for reviewing this plan to incorporate these learnings.

Designate and manage

Risk management should be a responsibility of a designated role within your organisation. This person must lead the child safety culture.

Key risks

Some of the key risks to children in organisational settings are outlined below:

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

Child Safe Standard 7

Talk to children about safety

To create a true child safe organisation, it makes sense to ask those you are trying to protect when they feel safe and when they feel unsafe. Their comments and insight will always be different from the adult perspective. Well-intentioned people put policies and procedures aimed at protecting children in place, yet it is rare that children know these policies exist. Often children do not know what to do if they feel unsafe or are concerned about something.

The concept of 'safety' is very broad and means different things to different people, especially children. It is much easier to understand the concept of 'physical' safety and the need for safe practices around hygiene, road and water safety, slippery surfaces, pool fencing, sign-in and sign-out procedures and members supervision ratios. All of these contribute to the physical protection of children.

In a child safe organisation, we also want to promote 'psychological' safety. Even if the physical environment is as safe as we can make it, when children feel unsafe we need to understand why and respond to their needs. Psychological safety means children feel valued, respected and cared for. They know they can speak to people if they feel unsafe or unhappy, and that something will be done to address their concerns. Knowing this increases their self-esteem, which boosts their confidence and empowers them to speak up when necessary.

Children also contribute valuable insight and ideas towards the creation of a meaningful child safe organisation. Children may be able to identify strengths, weaknesses, risks and dangers in activities that may not be identified by other methods.

Children must be empowered to understand their rights, recognise what abuse is and understand it is not ok and that they can do something about it.

Consulting and talking	Practical suggestions	Good outcomes
Establish what safety means to children	<p>Ask children when they feel safe and when they feel unsafe.</p> <p>Ensure the physical environment is safe, warm and friendly towards children.</p>	<p>Children's insight and responses will inform the development of the Child Safe Policy, Code of Conduct and complaints management process.</p> <p>You will be alerted to any physical danger in the environment.</p>
Educate children about their rights	<p>Run informal education sessions on the Convention on the Rights of the Child.</p> <p>Teach children that with every right they enjoy, they need to meet its corresponding responsibility.</p> <p>Undertake activities on rights versus wants.</p>	<p>The children will understand their basic human rights and also understand they need to meet their responsibilities.</p> <p>The children will know the difference between a 'right' and a 'want'.</p>
Include children in policy development	<p>Explain what the organisation is attempting to do and ask the children for their ideas, opinions and suggestions.</p> <p>Run small discussion groups, and provide refreshments and activities. Give regular breaks.</p>	<p>Your organisation will have a Child Safe Policy that children understand and which represents their suggestions.</p> <p>Practical suggestions will be contributing to a physically safe environment towards children.</p>
Encourage children to develop their own Code of Conduct	<p>Ask children what is acceptable behaviour and unacceptable behaviour. This includes behaviour of adults towards children, of children towards adults and of children</p>	<p>Formulate a code of conduct using 'DO' and 'DO NOT' or 'WE WILL' and 'WE WILL NOT'.</p>

APPENDIX

Flowchart: Child safety reporting process

