

## Child Safe Policy and Code of Conduct for Working with Children

This Policy and Code of Conduct applies to the Rotary Club of Hawthorn (Club), its members and the conduct of its activities. It includes the Club's

- Child Safe Policy and statement of commitment to child safety;
- Code of Conduct including clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children;
- Screening and training processes for ensuring child safety from abuse;
- Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse;
- Strategies for identification and reduction or removal of the risks of child abuse; and
- Strategies for promotion of the participation and empowerment of children.

### 1. Introduction

Many of the Club's activities require members coming into contact and working with children and other vulnerable members of the community.

In response to both its moral and legal responsibilities regarding the protection of children, the Club endorses this policy, undertaking to fulfil the obligations placed upon it and its members by government legislation and District 9800 Policy.

#### 1.1 Policy and Legal Context

In addition to the ethical standards expected of, and agreed to by, Rotarians, the Club is subject to federal and state statutes, laws and Rotary District policies.

Of specific relevance to this policy are:

- The *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (CWSA Act) requires the Club to create an organisational culture of child safety.  
[http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/domino/Web\\_Notes/LDMS/LTObject\\_Store/LTObjSt6.nsf/dde300b846eed9c7ca257616000a3571/6606bb1b2dc56ce3ca257974000e4879/\\$FILE/05-83aa014%20authorised.pdf](http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/domino/Web_Notes/LDMS/LTObject_Store/LTObjSt6.nsf/dde300b846eed9c7ca257616000a3571/6606bb1b2dc56ce3ca257974000e4879/$FILE/05-83aa014%20authorised.pdf)
- The *Working with Children Check Act 2005* (WWCC Act) Amended 2017  
<http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/home/resources/legislation/>

- Rotary District 9800  
[http://rotarydistrict9800.com.au/images/Child\\_Safe\\_Activities\\_\(v2\).pdf](http://rotarydistrict9800.com.au/images/Child_Safe_Activities_(v2).pdf)

This policy requires Rotary Clubs to:

- Develop strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements;
- Create a child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety;
- Develop a code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children;
- Develop screening supervision training and other human resources practices that reduce risks of child abuse by new and existing personnel;
- Develop processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse;
- Develop strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse;
- Develop strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children.

## 2. Child Safe Code of Conduct

Everyone involved in Club and District activities that supply programs or services to children or have occasional contact with children is required to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children, as set out in this code.

### 2.1 Obligations:

Each Club member is responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children by

- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse.
- treating everyone with respect.
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of children; particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused and/or are worried about their safety or the safety of another.
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with Aboriginal, culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance of discrimination), in addition to the safety of children with a disability.
- ensuring that while in the Club's care, no child is left alone with an adult (other than the child's parent or guardian) at any time.
- reporting any allegations of child abuse to the Club Protection Officer and ensure that any allegation is reported to the police.
- reporting any child safety concerns to The Club Protection Officer.

- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the child is safe.
- encouraging children to “have a say” and participate in all relevant organisational activities where possible; especially on issues that are important to them.

## 2.2 Prohibitions:

Each Club member must not

- be alone with a child in the Club’s care; other than the member’s own child, or a child over whom the member has legal guardianship.
- develop a relationship with children that could be interpreted as favouritism.
- exhibit behaviour with children which may be construed as unnecessary physical contact.
- put children at risk of abuse.
- engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children.
- use inappropriate language in the presence of children.
- express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children.
- discriminate against any child, including because of culture, race, ethnicity, gender identity or disability.
- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse.

## 3. Contact with Children - Intentional and Incidental

Some Club service activities are specifically aimed at engaging children, whereas some service activities may result in contact with children that is purely **incidental** to the main purpose of the activity. The policy of the Club as to requirements for members differs with respect to these two classifications of activity. Verification requirements are higher for **Intentional** contact.

### 3.1 Intentional Contact

**Intentional** contact with children occurs when an activity is specifically intended to engage children. The following are examples of Club activities that feature **Intentional** contact with children:

- Any activity of the Youth Services Committee
- RYLA
- MUNA
- RYPEN
- Rotary Youth Exchange
- Mock Interviews
- Effective Speaking Training
- Any service project where child volunteers are employed

## 3.2 Incidental Contact

**Incidental** contact with a child occurs when the contact is not intended as a key component of the activity, and the direct contact with the child occurs by chance. Examples of **Incidental** contact include\*:

- Contact while working at a sausage sizzle (unless the sausage sizzle is at a school)
- Clean-Up Australia Day

\*Note: That if children are invited to take part in an activity that would otherwise be classified as involving **Incidental** contact, the activity is then said to feature **Intentional** contact, and requires the higher level of verification and accreditation.

## 4. Verification and Accreditation Requirements

This policy is designed to ensure that, The Club complies with the requirements of the WWCC Act and *more importantly* that children in the care of the Club are appropriately protected.

### 4.1 Working with Children Check

The Club and its members, through its service work has direct contact with children, both intentional and incidental, where 'children' are defined as people under the age of 18 years.

On 1 August 2017, a number of important amendments to the *Working with Children Check Act 2005* (The Act) came into effect. This means that organizations in which members have direct and intentional contact with children come within the scope of the Act.

As a result, it is now Club policy that, unless specifically exempted by the Club Board, all Members of the Rotary Club of Hawthorn must hold a valid Victorian *Working with Children Check* (WWCC). Exempted members will not participate in Club activities involving **Intentional** contact with children.

All new member of the Club will be required to hold a valid WWCC.

To be valid a WWCC registration must

1. be issued by the Department of Justice of the Victorian Government.
2. be current.

Record as an 'Employer' the Rotary Club of Hawthorn Inc., PO Box 33 Hawthorn VIC 3122.

### 4.2 Rotary Youth Volunteer Information and Declaration Form (See Appendix 2)

It is prudent, and the Club's insurers demand, that a higher level of verification applies where direct contact with children is **Intentional**.

All adult volunteers, whether Rotarians or non-Rotarians, engaged in **Rotary Organised Programs (ROPs)** involving **Intentional** contact with children must complete and submit a **Rotary Youth Volunteer Information and Declaration Form** (see Appendix 2).

The form requires three references, only one of whom may be a Rotarian.

1. The completed form is to be submitted to the Club Secretary, who will ensure it is fully completed.
2. The Club Secretary, or delegate agreed by the Board, will interview the referees.
3. Once satisfactory references are checked and verified, the Club Secretary, or delegate, will send the completed form to the Club Protection Officer for filing - verified forms are to be scanned and filed on Dropbox.
4. The Club Secretary will advise the volunteer via email that their references have been checked and that the process has been satisfactorily concluded.

### 4.3 Direct Contact with Children

Those members who have direct and intentional contact with children as part of a Club or District activity are required to complete Rotary Youth Volunteer Information and Declaration – refer appendix 2.

### 4.4 Exemptions

Those members who are serving Police officers or registered Teachers under the Victorian Institute of Teaching are exempt from the requirements to obtain a **WWCC** and completion of the **Rotary Youth Volunteer Information and Declaration**. They must however provide the Club with evidence of their current police membership or teacher registration.

See exemptions at

<http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/home/about+the+check/who+needs+a+check/exemptions/>

### 4.5 Members Unable to Comply

Where an Active Member is unable to participate in any ROPs due to health or other personal issues, the Club Board may, by formal resolution, exclude them from the requirements of this policy with respect to a WWCC and Insurance Declaration and permit them to remain a member, subject to the Rules of The Club. An Active Member granted exemption is not permitted to engage in any ROP involving **Intentional Contact** with children while the exemption is in place.

## 5. Scope

This policy is applicable to all members of the Club, partners, friends and volunteers who are engaged in **Rotary Organised Projects (ROPs)**. There are no exclusions to the policy.

## 6. Application of this policy

### 6.1 Intentional Contact

All members and non-Rotarian volunteers engaged in a ROP that is determined to involve **Intentional** contact with children must have:

- A valid Working With Children Check.
- A completed and verified Rotary Youth Volunteer Information and Declaration Form.
- Or equivalent as per the relevant legislation.

### 6.2 Incidental Contact

Where a ROP is determined to involve **Incidental** contact with children, the following rules apply:

#### 6.2.1 Active Members

All Active Members, unless specifically exempted by the Board (see Section 4.5), must have a valid Working With Children Check as a condition of membership. Where **Incidental** contact occurs, all members are bound by the 'Prohibitions' set out under Section 2.2 of this document.

#### 6.2.2 Honorary Members

Honorary Members of the Club are required to comply as prescribed for Active Members in 6.2.1 where they engage in any Service activity of the Club. The holding of a valid Working With Children Check is not a condition of honorary membership.

#### 6.2.3 Partners of members and non-Rotarian volunteers

Partners of members and non-Rotarian volunteers must comply with the policy as follows:

##### 1. **Incidental Contact**

Partners or non-Rotarians engaged in ROPs where contact with children is classed as **Incidental** may do so without holding a current WWCC.

##### 2. **Intentional Contact**

Partners or non-Rotarians who are to engage in an activity classed as involving Intentional contact, as defined above, must comply fully with the requirements of this policy as prescribed for Active Members in 6.1 above.

## 7. Determining if a Project Involves Intentional or Incidental Contact with Children

Child safety must be directly addressed as part of any project planning or review exercise. Club ROPs will be submitted to the Club Protection Officer before commencement who will determine whether the ROP involves Intentional or Incidental contact with children. The confirmation of Child Safety status will be conveyed to the activity organiser, with a copy to the Club Secretary for archiving together with the volunteer roster for the project.

It is the responsibility of the Rotarian organising the activity to ensure that all volunteers on the project comply with the requirements of this policy.

## 8. Child Safety Champion

The Club will appoint a 'Child Safety Champion' who will have responsibility for oversight of the club's activities to ensure that Child Safety is paramount. The Child Safety Champion will report directly to the Club President.

The Child Safety Champion must have a valid Working With Children Check and a fully completed and verified Rotary Youth Volunteer Information and Declaration Form, or equivalent.

## 9. Reports of a Potential Offence Against Children

Any member who receives a complaint that a child has been offended against is required to immediately report the allegation to all of the following:

- The Club Protection Officer
- The Club President
- The Club Secretary

The Club President or Protection Officer is to report the matter to Victoria Police.

- The local Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Investigation Team can be contacted on 03 88923292.
- In an emergency Phone 000 – (ask for Sexual Abuse Officer for the area)
- Commission for Children and Young People (Tel. 03 8601 5281).

The Club President is to inform without delay:

1. The District 9800 Protection Officer and
2. The Cluster Assistant Governor

who will advise how to proceed further. If the Club President is the subject of the complaint, the Club Secretary or the Club Protection Officer, or any member of the Club Board, is to take responsibility to advise the District 9800 officers above.

If the complaint is against one or more of the above Club officers, that person is to be excluded from the initial report until advice is received from the District officers.

Any member who is of the opinion that their initial report is not being acted upon, or for any reason believes it preferable, should raise their concerns directly with the District 9800 officers or with the District 9800 Governor.

The reporting process must comply with the requirements of the District Protection Policy, as amended from time to time.

## 9. Definitions

### 9.1 Contact with Children

Contact with children includes oral, written or electronic communication as well as face-to-face and physical contact.

### 9.2 Intentional Contact

**Intentional** contact with children occurs when an activity is specifically intended to engage children.

### 9.3 Incidental Contact

**Incidental** contact with a child occurs when the contact is not intended as a key component of the activity, and the direct contact with the child is purely fortuitous.

### 9.4 Working with Children Check

A WWCC is one obtained through the Department of Justice and Regulation (The Department) - refer appendix 1 – How to obtain a working with Children Check.

### 9.5 WWCC Register

The WWCC register is a register maintained by the Club Protection Officer recording members registration details including expiry date and copies of Notifications from The Department. Such notifications are to include that The Club is as an organisation associated with the member's registration.

## 10. Roles and Responsibilities

Roles and responsibilities are assigned as follows:



## 10.1 Club President

The Club President has personal responsibility for ensuring that this policy is fully applied by the Club.

## 10.2 Club Protection Officer

The Club Protection Officer (a member of the Club appointed from time to time) is to ensure that all members have the current accreditation as required by this policy and will follow up members who do not comply. Members refusing to comply are to be referred to the Club Board immediately.

## 10.3 Club Secretary

The Club Secretary (a member of the club appointed from time to time) has the responsibility for following up references as declared in the Rotary Youth Volunteer Information and Declaration.

## 10.4 Club Child Safety Champion

The Club Child Safety Champion is responsible for providing oversight to ensure that Club activities are Child Safe and to bring inadequacies to the attention of the Club President or the Board.

## 11 Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or from time to time when laws or District policy dictate.

## APPENDIX 1: How to Apply for a Working with Children Check

Registration for volunteers is free and a relatively simple process. To obtain a Working with Children Check visit the Victorian Government website:

<http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au>

and click on the “Apply for Check” tab on the right-hand side. Follow the process through by completing the various steps. Ensure that the Rotary Club of Hawthorn is nominated as an organisation with which you are associated with (“your employer”). The Club’s details are -

The Rotary Club of Hawthorn  
PO Box 33 Hawthorn VIC 3122

Once the application is submitted you will receive an email from The Department. Open the attachment to the email, present the application to a post office / post shop, together with proof of identity (e.g. Passport or Drivers Licence) the staff will take your photo and the application is complete. The review and approval process normally take 2-3 weeks to complete.

If you have completed your form fully as above, the Department of Justice will advise the Club directly when your registration is complete and a valid WWCC card has been issued.

## Appendix 2 Rotary Youth Volunteer Information and Declaration Form

### **Rotary Youth Volunteer Information and Declaration Form 3**

#### **(Mandatory Requirements)**

##### **Personal Details**

Name			DOB / /	Email
Phone	Work	Home	Mobile	
Address				Period at this address (years)
What will your role be in the Program				
<input type="checkbox"/> Member of Host Family		<input type="checkbox"/> Rotary Club Member		<input type="checkbox"/> District Committee Member
<input type="checkbox"/> Club Counsellor		<input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify		
Occupation			Employer	
Past involvement with youth				

##### **Personal References (Only one referee may be a Rotarian and none may be family members)**

1	Name			Email
Phone	Work	Home	Mobile	
2	Name			Email
Phone	Work	Home	Mobile	
3	Name			Email
Phone	Work	Home	Mobile	

##### **Police Check and Criminal History**

Working With Children Card	Number		Expiry Date		
1. Have you ever been charged with, been convicted of, or pled guilty to any crime(s)?				Yes ( )	No ( )
2. Have you ever been subject to any court order (including civil, family, and criminal courts) involving sexual, physical, or verbal abuse, including but not limited to domestic violence or civil harassment injunction or protective order?					
If yes, please explain. Also indicate date(s) of incident(s) and the country and state in which each occurred (attach a separate sheet, if needed).				Yes ( )	No ( )

##### *I certify the following:*

- All statements and information given on this form are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.
- I have never committed or been guilty or been accused of a crime against a child or young person of which I have not been cleared.
- I give my full permission for any of the people I have listed on this Form to be contacted by an authorised Rotary Officer to confirm my suitability as a Youth Program Volunteer.
- I certify that I have contacted my referees and all are happy for Rotary to contact them.
- I agree to abide unreservedly by the decision of the District's Rotary club reviewing my applications to my suitability as a Youth Program Volunteer.

In consideration of my acceptance and participation in the youth programs, I, to the full extent permitted by law, hereby release and agree to save, hold harmless, and indemnify all members, officers, directors, committee members, and employees of the participating Rotary clubs and districts and of Rotary International, from any or all liability for any loss, property damage, personal injury, or death, including any such liability that may arise out of the negligence of any of the Indemnites, or may be suffered or claimed by me as a result of any investigation of my background in connection with this declaration.

I have read and understood the above declaration and sign this form voluntarily.

Applicant	Name	Signature	Date
Rotary Witness	Name	Signature	Date