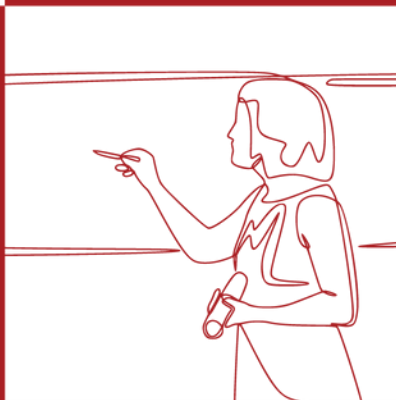


SA UNIONS CHILD SAFE POLICY



**POLICY REVIEW DATE
MAY 2030**



CHILD SAFE POLICY

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. To provide a framework for managing and reducing the risk of harm to the children and young people (under the age of 18) that SA Unions interacts with.
- 1.2. To set out appropriate standards of behaviour and practices for people working and volunteering with children and young people.
- 1.3. To increase staff awareness of the risk of harm to children and young people and the strategies in place to minimise them.
- 1.4. To demonstrate to staff, volunteers, parents, guardians, carers, children and young people that SA Unions is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.
- 1.5. To ensure we uphold both our legal obligations and best practice regarding the safety of children and young people.

2. COMMITMENT TO THE SAFETY OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- 2.1. SA Unions is committed to providing a safe environment to all children and young people. Our policy complies with the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017, the Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016 and aligns with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.
- 2.2. We value and respect children and young people and welcome them regardless of their abilities, sex, gender, or social, economic or cultural background. Bullying and harassment won't be tolerated.

3. SCOPE OF POLICY

- 3.1. This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, work placement students, contractors and Executive members referred to throughout the policy collectively as workers.

4. COMMUNICATION

- 4.1. This policy and related documents are available on our website and on request.
- 4.2. We encourage and respect the views of children and young people and involve them in decision making as appropriate. We provide clear age-appropriate or developmentally appropriate explanations to children and young people including their right to safety, their right to be listened to and that they can provide feedback or make a complaint if they have a concern, to any worker or ask their parent/guardian to do this on their behalf. We will listen to, and act upon any complaints or concerns that a child or young person raises with us.

5. CODE OF CONDUCT

- 5.1. Working with children and young people brings additional responsibilities for workers.

All workers are responsible for promoting and protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

- 5.2. Workers must:

5.2.1.1. Stick to the organisation's child safe policy at all times and take reasonable steps to ensure the safety and protection of children and young people;

5.2.1.2. Treat children and young people, and all others in the vicinity of children with dignity and respect regardless of race, ethnicity, sex, gender, age, language, religion, political or other opinions, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, birth or other status, and accordingly refrain from language or behaviour that is abusive, demeaning, or culturally inappropriate;

5.2.1.3. Be a positive role model to children and young people in all conduct with them;

5.2.1.4. Set clear boundaries and maintain appropriate behaviours with children and young people;

5.2.1.5. Listen and respond appropriately to the view and concerns of children and young people;

5.2.1.6. Be alert to bullying behaviours, in the presence of and/or directed to children and young people, and respond promptly and appropriately;

5.2.1.7. Ensure another adult is always present or in sight when engaging one-to-one with a child or young person;

5.2.1.8. Be alert to children and young people who have been harmed, or may be at risk of harm and report this quickly to the Child Abuse Report Line (13 14 78);

5.2.1.9. Respond quickly, fairly and transparently to any complaints made by a child, young person or their parent/guardian;

5.2.1.10. Encourage children and young people to 'have a say' on issues that are important to them.

- 5.3. Workers must not:

5.3.1.1. Engage in, or encourage others to engage in, rough physical games with children or young people;

5.3.1.2. Develop any 'special' relationships with children and young people that could be seen as favouritism such as the offering of gifts or special treatment;

5.3.1.3. Do things of a personal nature that a child or young person can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes;

5.3.1.4. Discriminate against any child or young person based on race, ethnicity, sex, gender, age, language, religion, political or other opinions, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, birth or other status;

- 5.3.1.5. Be intoxicated or smoke/vape whilst knowingly within the vicinity or visibility of children or young people, with the exception of bona fide medicine;
- 5.3.1.6. Use physical punishment of any kind on anyone;
- 5.3.1.7. Hire children for domestic or other labour without the express approval of the Secretary;
- 5.3.1.8. Use inappropriate language - whether of an offensive, discriminatory, demeaning, abusive or sexual nature - when speaking with or whilst knowingly in the presence of a child.
- 5.4. Breaches or suspected breaches of the Code of Conduct should be reported as soon as practicable to management via email at saunions@saunions.org. Breaches or suspected breaches of the Code of Conduct will be taken seriously and dealt with quickly, fairly and transparently. Any worker who breaches the Code of Conduct may face disciplinary action and depending on the severity of the breach, the worker may have their employment terminated.

6. ENSURING A CHILD-SAFE ENVIRONMENT

- 6.1. The first objective of all SA Unions events and activities involving children and young people is the creation of a child-safe environment. No event or activity that is unsafe or does not follow the provisions of this policy will be permitted.
- 6.2. At all SA Unions events at which there are children in attendance unaccompanied by parents, guardians, or teachers there must be:
 - 6.2.1. Adequate supervision of children at all times;
 - 6.2.2. A worker with up to date Provide First Aid Training, CPR and Mental Health First Aid Training (youth preferred) present;
 - 6.2.3. A stocked first aid kit accessible;
 - 6.2.4. A risk assessment identifying any potential hazards not already included in the Risk Management Plan, and noting appropriate removal or mitigation strategies;
 - 6.2.5. An accessibility assessment identifying any potential barriers to accessibility, and noting appropriate removal or mitigation strategies.
- 6.3. Regarding photography of children and young people, SA Unions will:
 - 6.3.1. Obtain informed consent from the parent or guardian before photographing or filming a child, and as part of this, explain how the photography or film will be used;
 - 6.3.2. Ensure photographs and films present children in an honest, dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner - children should be adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive;
 - 6.3.3. Ensure file labels, meta data or text descriptions do not reveal identifying information about a child when sending images electronically or publishing images in any form except with the express consent of the child and their legal guardian;

6.3.4. Respect relevant cultural customs.

7. WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECKS

- 7.1. In accordance with the Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016, our organisation is registered with the DHS Screening Unit and we link all Working with Children Checks (WWCC) to our registration.
- 7.2. The following workers must hold a current, not prohibited WWCC issued by the Screening Unit of the Department of Human Service:
 - 7.2.1. All workers over the age of 14 years who will be working in a role with children and young people;
 - 7.2.2. All workers who hold a management position in the organisation the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of those services to children and young people;
 - 7.2.3. The Secretary.
- 7.3. Workers required to hold a WWCC must provide evidence of this prior to employment and renew their WWCC every 5 years. We will verify the accuracy of all WWCCs in the DHS Screening Unit portal as required by law.
- 7.4. We will immediately contact the Department of Human Services Screening Unit when we become aware of assessable information regarding any person involved with our organisation, including any serious criminal offence, child protection information, or disciplinary or misconduct information.

8. TRAINING, SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT FOR WORKERS

- 8.1. We have strategies in place to supervise, train and support workers to understand our organisation's child safe policy, their mandatory reporting obligations, how to build culturally safe environments and their responsibilities to create a child safe and friendly environment.
- 8.2. All workers who will be working in a role with children and young people must:
 - 8.2.1. Be provided with a copy of this policy document;
 - 8.2.2. Read and understand the Mandatory Reporting Information Booklet available at: https://dhs.sa.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/103179/CSE-Mandatory-notification-information-booklet.PDF ;
 - 8.2.3. Complete 'Responding to Risk of Harm, Abuse and Neglect' training every 3 years.

9. REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO HARM OR RISK OF HARM

- 9.1. We aim to ensure that children and young people are safe from harm and risk of harm. Section 17 of the Safety Act defines 'harm' to mean physical or psychological harm (whether caused by an act or omission), including harm caused by sexual, physical, mental or emotional abuse or neglect.
- 9.2. Mandated reporters in our organisation are workers who provide services to children and young people and those who hold a management position in the organisation the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of those services to children and young people.

- 9.3. Mandated reporters have a legal obligation to report direct to the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) on 13 14 78 as soon as practicable if they have a suspicion that a child or young person has been harmed or may be at risk of harm. If the child or young person is at immediate risk, report to South Australia Police (SAPOL) on 000 (triple zero).
- 9.4. Even if not a mandated reporter, any person can report harm or risk of harm to a child or young person. The non-mandated reporter who identifies the harm or risk of harm is encouraged to make the report to authorities and can request the support from another worker to do so if required.
- 9.5. Information about making appropriate reports of harm or risk of harm is available from the South Australian Department for Child Protection website: <https://www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/reporting-child-abuse>
- 9.6. All adult workers (even if not a mandated reporter) have a legal obligation to report child sexual abuse by another worker to the police and to protect a child from sexual abuse by another worker. Failure to meet these obligations may be considered a criminal offence.
- 9.7. Following a report being made to CARL or SAPOL, workers must make an internal report to management. We will be guided by the Department for Child Protection and/or SAPOL after a report has been made as to whether we can conduct an internal investigation.
- 9.8. Following a report to CARL or SAPOL, we will support the child or young person by:
 - 9.8.1. Referring the child, young person or their family to other appropriate services;
 - 9.8.2. Continuing to provide a service to the child, young person and their family and monitor their circumstances;
 - 9.8.3. Documenting all information received regarding the report and storing this securely in a separate file.
- 9.9. If a worker is reported to CARL or SAPOL for causing harm or risk of harm to a child or young person, SA Unions will take the following steps to minimise risk of further harm until all known investigations have concluded.
 - 9.9.1. Removing the worker from any role that involves working with any child;
 - 9.9.2. Directing the worker not to contact the child or be physically present in a location where the child is likely to be;
 - 9.9.3. Implementing reasonable measures to prevent the child's incidental or indirect exposure to the worker.

10. REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO GENERAL COMPLAINTS OR FEEDBACK

- 10.1. Providing opportunities for complaints and feedback ensures that children, young people and their families feel valued and respected and enables us to improve the quality of our service.
- 10.2. Compliments, complaints or feedback can be provided to management by email at saunions@saunions.org

10.3. We will deal with all complaints and feedback received promptly, sensitively and fairly. We will:

- 10.3.1. Listen to the complaint/feedback;
- 10.3.2. Advise the time expected for an outcome;
- 10.3.3. Respond to the complainant with an outcome in a timely manner;
- 10.3.4. Clearly document and securely store decisions and actions taken in response to complaints and feedback;
- 10.3.5. Make sure that procedural fairness is followed at all times.

10.4. If the child, young person or their family is not happy with the outcome from the complaints process they can contact:

- 10.4.1.1. Australian Human Rights Commission
Online: www.humanrights.gov.au Tel: 1300 656 419
- 10.4.1.2. South Australian Equal Opportunities Commission (for complaints relating to discrimination) Online: www.eoc.sa.gov.au Tel: 08 8207 1977

11. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 11.1. SA Unions is committed to the consistent management of risk as an integral part of child safeguarding. Our approach to risk management and our Risk Management Framework is outlined in our Risk Management Policy, which can be made available upon request.
- 11.2. The Young Workers Centre has a Risk Management Plan which describes specific risks to children and young people in the program and the actions SA Unions will take to minimise and manage each of those risks. These include wellbeing as well as physical risks. This Plan can be made available upon request.

12. POLICY REVIEW

- 12.1. SA Unions will, at a minimum, review this policy once every 5 years as required by the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017. We will also review this policy when:
 - 12.1.1. New or added risks are identified for children or young people, which may require a change in the policy or procedures;
 - 12.1.2. A critical incident where a child or young person has experienced harm through involvement in the organisation;
 - 12.1.3. Concerns are raised by anyone involved in our organisation about child safety or welfare in the organisation;
 - 12.1.4. Awareness or compliance to the child safe policy and/or procedures is low;
 - 12.1.5. In response legislative changes/requirements.
- 12.2. We will lodge a new child safe environments compliance statement with the Department of Human Services each time we review and update this policy.

Policy Date: MAY 2025

Review Date: MAY 2030



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