CHILD SAFEty and wellbeing CODE OF CONDUCT

[Service Name]

**STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT**

[Service Name] is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people as outlined in [Service Name]’s Statement of Commitment to the Child Safe Standards and [Service Name]’s Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing Policy. This includes encouraging a culture where the prevention and reporting of abuse is supported and encouraged. All staff and volunteers are responsible for promoting the safety, wellbeing, and empowerment of children.

The Child Safety and Wellbeing Code of Conduct operates alongside the Committee Member Declaration form.

PURPOSE

This Child Safety and Wellbeing Code of Conduct aims to protect children, reduce any opportunities for child abuse or harm to occur, and to ensure a response where there are concerns about abuse or harm. It also assists in understanding how to avoid or better manage risky behaviours and situations.

DEFINITIONS

* Child means a person under the age of 18 years (*Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*).

RESPONSIBILITIES

* The Committee of Management and staff at [Service Name] have a leadership role in ensuring safe, supportive, and enriching environments which respect and foster the dignity and self-esteem of children, and enable them to thrive in their learning and development.
* Committee members and staff are required to have a current Working with Children Check or to be registered by the Victorian Institute of Teaching.
* As part of [Service Name]’s plan for maintaining the requirements of the Child Safe Standards, the Committee will support the implementation and monitoring of this Child Safety and Wellbeing Code of Conduct.
* All Committee members and staff are required to comply with this Child Safety and Wellbeing Code of Conduct by observing expectations for appropriate behaviour as outlined below.

ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS

Committee members and staff are responsible for actively supporting and promoting the safety and wellbeing of children by:

* upholding [Service Name]’s Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing Policy
* taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
* treating everyone with respect, including listening to and valuing the ideas and opinions of all who come into contact with [Service Name]
* listening to children and taking action to report concerns if they are telling you that they, or another child, has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child
* being inclusive and welcoming of all children, families and carers who come into contact with [Service Name]
* promoting the cultural safety, participation, and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children
* respecting cultural, religious, and political differences and acting in a culturally sensitive way
* promoting the safety and participation of children with a disability
* complying with this code of conduct and [Service Name]’s Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing Policy when in contact with children, including physical and other forms of contact, ensuring that where contact occurs with children, that this happens in an open and transparent way, so other adults know what you are doing with children
* understanding and complying with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse
* ensuring as quickly as possible, if child abuse is suspected, that the child(ren) is/are safe and protected from harm
* reporting and acting on any breaches of this Code of Conduct, complaints, or concerns
* reporting allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the [Service Name]'s Child Safety Officer
* respecting the privacy of children and their families, and only disclosing information to people who have a need to know
* treating children and their families with respect, both within [Service Name]'s activities and during ordinary social and community interactions.

UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS

Committee members and staff must NOT:

* ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions, or disclosures of child abuse
* seek to use children in any way to meet the needs of adults
* develop a relationship with any child that could be seen as favouritism or amount to ‘grooming’ behaviour (for example, offering gifts or inappropriate attention)
* ignore behaviours by other adults towards children when they appear to be overly familiar or inappropriate
* treat a child unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, or ethnicity
* exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking site or email addresses with children who you come into contact with through your role at [Service Name]
* have unauthorised contact with children and young people who you come into contact with through your role at [Service Name] online or by phone
* photograph or video a child who you come into contact with through your role at [Service Name] except in accordance with [Service Name]’s policies.