

## Child Safe Policy and Procedures

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Responsible Person:	Justine Lane	Scheduled Review:	31/3/2026

### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this Child Safe Policy and Procedures is to ensure the safety, protection, and well-being of all children and young people involved with the Brain Injury Association of Tasmania (BIAT). This policy establishes clear procedures for preventing and responding to any form of abuse, exploitation, or neglect, and defines the roles and responsibilities of BIAT personnel and the organisation as a whole.

This policy aligns with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (2018), the Tasmanian Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023, and other relevant legislation and frameworks (listed in the *Related Documents* section on page 12) to ensure best practice in child safety and well-being.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all BIAT personnel. It covers all aspects of BIAT's programs, services, and activities involving children (directly and indirectly) and young people, as well as interactions between employees, volunteers, and children. Individual programs may have additional and specific policies and procedures as required, but these fall under this overarching policy.

### 3. Definitions

Key terms used in this policy to ensure clarity and common understanding:

**3.1. BIAT personnel:** Employees, volunteers, students, contractors, and Committee of Management (CoM) members, undertaking BIAT activities.

**3.2. Child:** A person under 18 years of age, as defined in the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997 (Tas).

**3.3. Child Abuse:** Refers to any actions or ill treatment resulting in actual or potential harm to a child or young person. These activities may be sexual,

physical, emotional or psychological, and include neglect, exposure to family violence, grooming, and exploitation.

**3.4. Child Safety:** Protection of children from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

**3.5. Child Safety Concerns:** Concerns for the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person due to suspicions, signs or concrete evidence of harm, abuse, neglect or exploitation. This includes exposure to family violence.

**3.6. Cultural Safety:** An environment where children feel safe, valued, and respected for their cultural identity and background.

**3.7. Mandatory Reporting:** The legal obligation to report child abuse concerns to the appropriate authorities under Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997 (Tas).

**3.8. Reportable Conduct:** Harmful or abusive behaviour involving children and young people perpetrated by an employee or volunteer within an organisation. BIAT is legally obliged to report reportable conduct to the appropriate authorities under Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023 (Tas).

**3.9. Reportable event or incident** involves any occurrence that raises concerns about the safety or well-being of a child or young person. This includes instances of abuse, neglect, exposure to family violence, or any situation where there is a reasonable likelihood of harm. It also covers any incidents or near misses involving children or young people.

**3.10. Young Person:** means a child who is 16 or 17 years old, as defined in the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997 (Tas).

#### **4. Policy Statement & Commitment**

BIAT is dedicated to ensuring the safety and well-being of all children and young people involved with the organisation and its services.

BIAT actively:

**4.1.** Promotes, upholds and communicates the rights of children and young people as outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989.

**4.2.** Prioritises the best interests of the child and young person in all activities, services, and interactions.

**4.3.** Encourages participation by children and young people in decision-making processes that affect them.

**4.4.** Provides a welcoming and inclusive environment that is accessible, family friendly, culturally safe, respects diverse needs, and is free from discrimination.

**4.5.** Takes child safety concerns seriously, reporting child safety concerns and reportable conduct, and undertakes transparent investigations when

required.

## **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **5.1. Committee of Management Members**

- 5.1.1. Provide governance, oversight, and resources that support child safety initiatives.
- 5.1.2. Ensure child safety policies and procedures comply with legal and regulatory requirements.
- 5.1.3. Ensure child safety measures, training, risk assessments and management protocols are in place, and reviewed for their efficacy.
- 5.1.4. Review and act upon concerns and reports (internal and external), and oversee any investigations where required.

### **5.2. Executive Officer**

- 5.2.1. Lead a child-safe culture and ensure policy awareness and compliance.
- 5.2.2. Ensure training in child safety is provided and is completed by all relevant personnel. This includes procuring, facilitating and hosting the delivery of training, and any activities to support implementation, whether in-house or by external providers.
- 5.2.3. Provide supervision and support to program managers, ensuring understanding, skill and confidence in applying and complying with child safety responsibilities in their individual roles, as well as in the teams they oversee.
- 5.2.4. Ensure risk identification and management protocols are being implemented at all levels of the organisation.
- 5.2.5. Oversee reporting of child safety concerns (internal or external), including but not limited to incident reports, Mandatory Reporting, and notifications to the Office of the Public Regulator (Reportable Conduct Scheme). Ensure the CoM and any relevant authorities are notified, kept informed and are actively included where required.
- 5.2.6. Actively respond to concerns and reports and undertake investigations when required.
- 5.2.7. Continually monitor, review and improve BIAT's child safety practices.

### **5.3. Management Team and Line Managers**

- 5.3.1. Implement child safety policies and procedures in operational activities, including identifying and applying risk management protocols.

- 5.3.2. Oversee the team training schedules, ensuring completion of mandatory training and updating of compliance register.
- 5.3.3. Provide supervision and support to team members to ensure understanding, skill and confidence in applying and complying with child safety responsibilities in their individual roles.
- 5.3.4. Monitor and review child safety practices within BIAT's operations, and forward feedback and recommendations to the Executive Officer.
- 5.3.5. Respond to child safety concerns, ensuring efficient escalation and reports as required, and provide support to any investigations of concerns.

**5.4. All BIAT Personnel (Employees, Committee of Management, Volunteers, and Contractors) must:**

- 5.4.1. Foster a culture of respect, inclusion, and child empowerment.
- 5.4.2. Comply with all BIAT's child safety policies, procedures, and code of conduct.
- 5.4.3. Complete required training and apply measures to foster child safety within individual roles and activities.
- 5.4.4. Promptly report all child safety concerns as per mandatory reporting requirements, liaising closely with line managers, or the Executive Officer (or other delegated personnel) and support any investigations (internal and external).
- 5.4.5. Ensure that their Registration for Working with Vulnerable People (RWVP) is renewed or updated as required. This includes renewing the registration every five (5) years. In addition, BIAT personnel must alert the Consumer, Building and Occupational Services (CBOS) of any changes to their criminal history within ten (10) working days of being charged, convicted of, or found guilty of a relevant offence. A relevant offence is outlined in Section 3 of the [Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013](#). This includes;
  - I. alerting CBOS of any overseas offence details,
  - II. family violence orders,
  - III. restraint orders/apprehended violence order details,
  - IV. child protection orders.

CBOS is the Tasmanian Government's service that regulates the registrations to work with vulnerable people.

The Executive Officer must report any changes to the CoM President, and CoM Members must report to the CoM President and the Executive Officer.

## **6. Compliance with Policy**

All BIAT personnel are expected to read, understand and comply with this Child Safe Policy and Procedures document. All breaches will be treated seriously, investigated, and if required, disciplinary action will be taken. This may include termination of employment, contracts or referral to the relevant authorities.

## **7. Related Legislation**

- Child Protection (Offender Registration) Act 2004 (Tas)
- Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997 (Tas)
- Family Violence Act 2004 (Tas)
- National Principles for Child Safe Organisations 2018
- Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013
- Reportable Conduct Scheme
- Tasmanian Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023
- Tasmanian Children's Commissioner Act 2019
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989
- Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2020 (Tas)

## **8. Related BIAT Policies**

- 016 Child Safe Code of Conduct
- 003 Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- 010 Complaints Policy
- 101 Workplace Health and Safety Policy
- 102 Counselling and Discipline Policy
- 103 Grievances and Complaints Policy
- 104 Sexual Harassment, Discrimination, and Harassment Policy
- 105 Use of Internet, Emails and Social Media Policy
- 106 Recruitment Policy
- 108 Performance Review Policy

## **9. Review and Updates**

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with changing laws, best practices, and BIAT's operational needs. The policy will be reviewed every five years at a minimum, or as necessary, or in response to any significant incidents, changes in legislation, or evolving child safety practices.