

Child and Young Person Safety Policy

Our Commitment

At SASS, the safety and wellbeing of children and young people is a priority.

We are committed to providing services where children and young people feel safe, respected, listened to and supported. We believe every child and young person has the right to be protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation and harm.

Our commitment is guided by the Tasmanian Child and Youth Safe Organisations Framework and the Child and Youth Safe Standards. We continually work to create a culture where the safety and wellbeing of children and young people is at the centre of everything we do.

What You Can Expect from Us

When children, young people and their families access our services, we will:

- treat everyone with dignity, respect and kindness
- provide a welcoming, safe and inclusive environment
- listen to children and young people and take their views seriously
- support children and young people to participate in decisions that affect them, where appropriate
- recognise and respect each person's culture, identity, abilities and life experiences
- promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people
- provide information in ways that are accessible and easy to understand wherever possible
- respond promptly and appropriately if there are concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing.

How We Help Keep Children and Young People Safe

Creating a child-safe organisation involves everyone at SASS.

We work to keep children and young people safe by:

- ✓ creating environments that promote safety, wellbeing and respect
- ✓ supporting staff to understand and uphold child-safe practices
- ✓ taking all child safety concerns seriously and responding appropriately
- ✓ regularly reviewing and improving our policies, procedures and practices to strengthen child safety.

Listening to Children and Young People

Children and young people have the right to be heard.

We support children and young people to raise concerns, ask questions or tell us if they feel worried or unsafe.

We will listen respectfully, respond appropriately and support children and young people to express their views in ways that feel safe for them.

Respecting Diversity

Every child and young person deserves to feel safe, valued and included.

SASS values equity, diversity and inclusion. We treat all people with dignity, respect and fairness, and are committed to creating an environment where children and young people feel safe, respected and included.

We are committed to providing culturally safe services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.

If We Have Concerns About a Child's Safety

All SASS employees are mandatory reporters. This means that if we become concerned that a child or young person is experiencing abuse, neglect or harm, or is at risk of harm, we have a legal responsibility to report our concerns to the appropriate authorities. We also have a broader duty of care to take reasonable steps to help protect the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

Where it is safe and appropriate to do so, we will explain our concerns and discuss the reporting process with you. However, if doing so could place a child or another person at greater risk, we may need to make a report without telling you beforehand.

Any information shared will be limited to what is necessary to protect the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person and will be managed in accordance with our legal and professional obligations.

Raising a Concern or Making a Complaint

We encourage children, young people, parents, carers and families to speak with us if they have concerns about safety or the way our services are provided. We take all child safety concerns seriously and will respond appropriately.

If a concern relates to the behaviour of a SASS employee, volunteer or contractor, we will respond in accordance with our legal obligations and organisational procedures. You can also make a complaint through our Feedback and Complaints process if you are unhappy with any aspect of our service.

Our Commitment to Continuous Improvement

Keeping children and young people safe is an ongoing responsibility.

We regularly review our policies, procedures and practices to strengthen child safety. We use feedback from clients and employees, monitor potential risks, and continue to improve how we provide safe, respectful and inclusive services.

Our Child Safety Statement is also available on our website.