

TEACH US
* CONSENT

Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy

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| Policy Owner | Teach Us Consent Global |
| Point of Contact | HR Team |
| Date of Review | Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy v1.0 2025.03 |
| Review due | April 2026 |

1. Our Commitment to child safety

Teach Us Consent (TUC) is committed to creating a safe and supportive environment for all children and young people involved in our programs. As an organisation dedicated to eradicating sexual violence by educating young Australians, protecting children and young people from harm and empowering them is at the core of Teach Us Consent's function and the basis of our existence. We have a zero-tolerance policy for child abuse and aim to protect children's rights, ensuring their voices are heard and respected.

We do not tolerate child abuse, neglect, or exploitation. This policy sets clear expectations for all staff to create a safe environment for children and manage risks in their everyday work.

This policy follows the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, which provide guidelines for maintaining a child-safe culture.

Key Principles:

- Recognise and respect children's rights.
- Create and maintain a child-safe environment.
- Support and protect those who report incidents.

Failing to observe this policy and any supporting policies, procedures or codes of conduct may lead to disciplinary action in accordance with our disciplinary policy.

This policy is effective from 24 March 2025 and is not fixed. It is designed to be regularly reviewed and evolve where areas for improvement are continuously identified.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all individuals involved with **Teach Us Consent**, including staff (full-time and part-time and casual staff), volunteers, contractors, representatives, and service providers. It outlines the expectations for behaviour and the procedures to minimise risks, ensuring the safety and protection of children from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Service providers and third-party contractors funded by Teach Us Consent are also required to comply with the child safety terms set out in their contracts and agreements.

3. Relevant Legislation

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations, 1989)
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth) (AHRC Act)
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (AHRC Act Part III Schedule 3).
- Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2021
- Child Protection (Working with Children) Regulation 2013
- National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse Act 2018 (Cth)

4. Definitions

| Term | Definition |
|---------------------------|---|
| <i>Child or Children</i> | As per the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, a child is anyone under the age of 18 years. |
| <i>Child Exploitation</i> | Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">* Committing or coercing abuse against a child. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Possessing, producing, distributing, or transmitting child exploitation material. * Grooming or online grooming a child. * Using a child for profit, labour, sexual gratification, or personal/financial gain. |
| <i>Child Protection</i> | Activities designed to protect children from harm, especially child exploitation and abuse. |
| <i>Child-Related Work</i> | Work where regular (non-occasional) contact with children is expected or needed, or work that needs a Working with Children Check (WWCC). |
| <i>Emotional Abuse</i> | Inappropriate verbal or symbolic acts, or failure to provide emotional nurturing, potentially harm a child's self-esteem or social competence. |
| <i>Neglect</i> | Failure by a caregiver to provide essential conditions for a child's physical and emotional development and wellbeing. |
| <i>Physical Abuse</i> | The use of physical force causing harm to a child's health, survival, development, or dignity (e.g., hitting, kicking, choking, or poisoning). |
| <i>Sexual Abuse</i> | Child sexual abuse is defined as involving a child in sexual activity they cannot understand, consent to, or are developmentally prepared for. This can be perpetrated by adults or other children in positions of trust or power. |
| <i>Policy Non-Compliance Individuals</i> | Failure to adhere to the organisation's Child Safe policies. Includes employees, subcontracted individuals, volunteers, interns, trainees, and consultants working for an organization. |
| <i>Working with Children</i> | Engagement in activities where regular, non-incident contact with children is expected. |
| <i>Working with Children Check (WWCC)</i> | A screening process to assess whether an individual poses a risk to children, including checks on criminal history and child protection information. |
| <i>National Principles for Child Safe Organisations</i> | The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations are standards designed to help organisations create safe environments for children. They guide organisations in promoting child safety, preventing abuse, and ensuring children's rights are upheld through practices. |
| <i>Australian National Child Protection Reporting Framework</i> | Provides guidelines for consistently reporting suspected child abuse or neglect across Australia. It ensures a structured and legal process for identifying, reporting, and responding to child protection concerns, helping to safeguard children. |
| <i>Australian Human Rights Commission Child Safe Organisation Modules</i> | The Australian Human Rights Commission Child Safe Organisation Training Modules are educational resources that help organisations create safe environments for children by providing guidance on preventing abuse, identifying risks, and ensuring compliance with child safety standards. |
| <i>Complaint Handling Guide: Upholding the Rights of Children and Young People Section 273B of the Criminal Code Act 1995</i> | A guide published by the National Office for Child Safety, provides a framework for organisations to handle complaints from children and young people. Makes it an offence for Commonwealth officers to fail to protect a child from sexual abuse or fail to report known abuse, holding individuals accountable for neglecting child safety. |

5. Expectations for Individuals Engaged with Teach Us Consent

Teach Us Consent required all Individuals engaging with or representing the organisation to:

- * Show respect and uphold the dignity of children.
- * Maintain professional conduct, including appropriate language, behaviour, and physical interactions.
- * Avoid any form of abuse (physical, emotional, sexual, or neglect).
- * Obtain explicit consent before using children's images or personal information.
- * Comply with Working with Children Check (WWCC) requirements in their state or territory.
- * Report any child safety concerns or allegations according to legal and organisational procedures.

Additionally, individuals interacting with children must also:

- * **Follow all child protection laws, including WWCC and mandatory reporting requirements.**
- * **Introduce themselves professionally and provide identification** to children and their parents/guardians.
- * Ensure another adult is present when working with or near children whenever possible.
- * Obtain informed consent from both the child and their parent/guardian before using their image for work purposes.
- * Ensure communications and materials respect children's dignity and privacy.
- * Never use technology (computers, phones, cameras, or social media) to exploit, harass, or access inappropriate content related to children.
- * Never misuse child-related data.
- * Avoid inappropriate, harassing, abusive, or culturally insensitive language or behaviour.
- * Maintain professional boundaries and avoid contact with children outside of work.
- * Report any child safety concerns or breaches immediately to a manager or the child safety officer.
- * Disclose any charges, convictions, or legal actions related to child exploitation or abuse to the organisation.

6. Accountability and Governance

Ensuring the safety, welfare, and well-being of children is a shared responsibility of all individuals involved with Teach Us Consent. Strong governance, clear policies, and proactive risk management are essential to maintaining a child-safe environment.

6.1 Organisational Responsibilities

Teach Us Consent is committed to fostering and enforcing a robust child-safe culture through the following measures:

- * Organisational leadership will provide guidance and oversight to ensure a strong child safety framework is upheld.
- * Teach Us Consent will seek the participation of XXX in its regular reviews of child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures and practices.
- * All personnel must complete **child safety training** and adhere to **mandatory reporting obligations**.
- * Policies and procedures will be **regularly reviewed and updated** to align with best practices and legal requirements.
- * A **risk management framework** will be implemented to identify and mitigate potential child

safety risks.

- * The organisation will **annually review and publish the Child Safe Policy** to maintain transparency and accountability.
- * An **annual risk assessment** will be conducted to evaluate child safety risks, assess levels of responsibility and contact with children, and implement strategies to mitigate potential harm.
- * A **statement of compliance** with the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework, including an overview of child safety risk assessments, will be published annually.
- * Both online and in-person interactions will be governed by stringent safety protocols to uphold child protection standards.
- * Policies and procedures will adhere to the Child Safety Organisation Commission's guidelines for online safety.
- * The organisation will **coordinate child safety training for staff** and actively monitor compliance.
- * A **record of child safety-related complaints** will be maintained and reviewed for continuous improvement.

6.2 Individual Responsibilities

All staff must actively contribute to a child safe environment by:

- * Integrating child safety considerations into risk management plans for any functions involving children or young people.
- * Ensuring child safety principles are embedded in the design of programs and policies impacting children.
- * Completing mandatory child safety training as directed by the organization.
- * Reporting any potential risks, breaches, or concerns related to child safety in a timely and appropriate manner.

7. Training

Individuals employed at Teach Us Consent are required to complete the Australian Human Rights Commission Child Safe Organisation training modules, and other training as directed by their manager or supervisor.

Children and young people will be informed of their rights and provided with accessible measures to seek assistance if they feel unsafe.

Continuous professional development will be implemented to enhance awareness of child safety risks and responses.

Teach Us Consent will provide staff with child safety training and conduct an annual competency check.

8. Reporting Suspicions of Child Abuse or Harm

Mandatory Reporting

Certain individuals are legally required to report suspected child abuse or neglect. Requirements vary by jurisdiction. For details, refer to your local child protection authority. Commonwealth officers must report suspected child sexual abuse under **section 273B of the Criminal Code Act 1995**.

Reporting Process

Suspected abuse, neglect, or misconduct must be reported immediately to the designated child safety officer.

Confidentiality

Reports will be handled confidentially, in line with legal and procedural guidelines.

Training

Staff, volunteers, and children will receive training to recognize and respond to child safety concerns appropriately.

Compliance

All reports will comply with the **National Child Protection Reporting Framework**.

9. Responding to Complaints or Disclosures

Teach Us Consent is committed to handling all complaints involving children with sensitivity, transparency, and in accordance with legal and best practice guidelines.

Investigation of Complaints

- * All complaints involving children will be **investigated in line with the *Complaint Handling Guide: Upholding the Rights of Children and Young People***, published by the **National Office for Child Safety**.

10. Policy Breach

If a worker is found to have breached this Policy, they may be subject to disciplinary action. The severity of the disciplinary action will depend on the circumstances of the case and seriousness of the breach. This will be determined by the Board. Examples of disciplinary action available to the Board include: a formal warning, demotion, suspension, termination of employment, notification of relevant authority body (e.g. police) that a law has been broken

11. Continuous Improvement and Policy Review

Teach Us Consent is committed to continuously improving our child-safe practices. We regularly review this policy, conduct training, and make necessary adjustments to improve our approach and meet the evolving needs of children and the community.

APPENDIX A: SUMMARY OF THE NATIONAL PRINCIPLES FOR CHILD SAFE ORGANISATIONS

- 1. Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.**
 - a. The organisation makes a public commitment to child safety.
 - b. A child safe culture is championed and modelled at all levels of the organisation from the top down and the bottom up.
 - c. Governance arrangements facilitate implementation of the child safety and wellbeing policy at all levels.
 - d. A Code of Conduct provides guidelines for staff and volunteers on expected behavioural standards and responsibilities.
 - e. Risk management strategies focus on preventing, identifying and mitigating risks to children and young people.
 - f. Staff and volunteers understand their obligations on information sharing and recordkeeping.

- 2. Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.**
 - a. Children and young people are informed about all their rights, including to safety, information, and participation.
 - b. The importance of friendships is recognised and support from peers is encouraged, to help children and young people feel safe and be less isolated.
 - c. Where relevant to the setting or context, children may be offered access to sexual abuse prevention programs and to relevant related information in an age-appropriate way.
 - d. Staff and volunteers are attuned to signs of harm and facilitate child-friendly ways for children to express their views, participate in decision-making and raise their concerns.

- 3. Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.**
 - a. Families participate in decisions affecting their child.
 - b. The organisation engages and openly communicates with families and the community about its child safe approach and relevant information is accessible.
 - c. Families and communities have a say in the development and review of the organisation's policies and practices.
 - d. Parents, caregivers and the community are informed about the organisation's operations and governance.

- 4. Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.**
 - a. The organisation, including staff and volunteers, understands children and young people's diverse circumstances, and provides support and responds to those who are vulnerable.
 - b. Children and young people have access to information, support and complaints processes in ways that are culturally safe, accessible and easy to understand.
 - c. The organisation pays particular attention to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with disability, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who are unable to live at home, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children and young people.

- 5. People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.**

- a. Recruitment, including advertising, referee checks and staff and volunteer pre-employment screening, emphasises child safety and wellbeing.
- b. Relevant staff and volunteers have current working with children checks or equivalent background checks.
- c. All staff and volunteers receive an appropriate induction and are aware of their responsibilities to children and young people, including record keeping, information sharing and reporting obligations.
- d. Ongoing supervision and people management is focused on child safety and wellbeing.

6. Processes for complaints and concerns are child focused.

- a. The organisation has an accessible, child focused complaint handling policy which clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of leadership, staff and volunteers, approaches to dealing with different types of complaints, breaches of relevant policies or the Code of Conduct and obligations to act and report.
- b. Effective complaint handling processes are understood by children and young people, staff, families and volunteers, and are culturally safe.
- c. Complaints are taken seriously and responded to promptly and thoroughly.
- d. The organisation has policies and procedures in place that address reporting of complaints and concerns to relevant authorities, whether or not the law requires reporting, and co-operates with law enforcement.
- e. Reporting, privacy and employment law obligations are met.

7. Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.

- a. Staff and volunteers are trained and supported to effectively implement the organisation's child safety and wellbeing policy.
- b. Staff and volunteers receive training and information to recognise indicators of child harm including harm caused by other children and young people.
- c. Staff and volunteers receive training and information to respond effectively to issues of child safety and wellbeing and support colleagues who disclose harm.
- d. Staff and volunteers receive training and information on how to build culturally safe environments for children and young people.

8. Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.

- a. Staff and volunteers identify and mitigate risks in the online and physical environments without compromising a child's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.
- b. The online environment is used in accordance with the organisation's Code of Conduct and child safety and wellbeing policy and practices.
- c. Risk management plans consider risks posed by organisational settings, activities, and the physical environment.
- d. Organisations that contract facilities and services from third parties have procurement policies that ensure the safety of children and young people.

9. Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved.

- a. The organisation regularly reviews, evaluates and improves child safe practices.

- b. Complaints, concerns and safety incidents are analysed to identify causes and systemic failures so as to inform continuous improvement.
- c. The organisation reports on the findings of relevant reviews to staff and volunteers, community and families and children and young people.

10. Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

- a. Policies and procedures address all national child safe principles.
- b. Policies and procedures are documented and easy to understand.
- c. Best practice models and stakeholder consultation informs the development of policies and procedures.
- d. Leaders champion and model compliance with policies and procedures.
- e. Staff and volunteers understand and implement policies and procedures.

Agreement

I accept the terms outlined in the following Agreement:

on.....

name.....

signed.....