



CHILD SAFE POLICY



**Alannah & Madeline
Foundation**

Keeping children safe from violence



Commitment to Child Safety

The Alannah & Madeline Foundation is committed to child safety. This means that:

- We believe all children have a right to be safe, happy and empowered.
- We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the environmental and cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to ensuring safe environments for children with a disability.
- We support zero tolerance of child abuse by treating all allegations and safety concerns with the highest priority, immediacy and seriousness in accordance with our robust policies and procedures.
- We rigorously adhere to our legal, moral and ethical obligations to contact relevant authorities in the event of allegations of abuse or if we have concerns about a child's safety.
- We are committed to preventing child abuse by early risk identification and the removal or reduction of these risks.
- We are committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse indicators and risks.
- Our selection processes for all staff and volunteers are underpinned by robust human services and recruitment practices.
- We have, and will continue to develop, specific policies, procedures and training that support and direct our management, staff and volunteers to ensure we meet these commitments.

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000

Our Children

This policy is intended to ensure that all children who the Foundation have contact with or provide services for, are safe and empowered. We involve them when making decisions that directly affect them. We will genuinely listen to them and respect their views and opinions.

We promote diversity and tolerance, and in particular we:

- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander backgrounds
- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Ensure that children with a disability are safe and can participate equally.

We enhance our promotion of diversity and tolerance by establishing and maintaining partnerships and linkages with organisations providing services for children from Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and CALD backgrounds and for children with a disability.



We use these partnerships to further our understanding of the cultural and environmental needs of these children and as a resource for expertise and guidance.

We support children by having an allocated Child Safety Contact within the staff group. The Child Safety Contact has the skills, experience and training to provide advice, support and advocacy for young people relating to issues of child abuse, complaints or allegations.

The Child Safety Contact is also the contact point for any concerns relating to the conduct or actions of anyone associated with the Foundation.

The Child Safety Contact will also act as a resource, guide and trainer for staff to ensure application of correct processes and procedures when dealing with concerns of child abuse, allegations, complaints and identifying any potential risks to child safety.

The Child Safety Contact may also provide information to community members who have a question or concern about child safety.

Our Board, People Leaders, Staff and Volunteers

This policy informs the Alannah & Madeline Foundation board, management, staff and volunteers on how to behave with children who have contact with the organization. The policy also serves as a guide as to how these children will be safe, protected, heard and respected.

All staff and volunteers must sign and agree to uphold the Alannah & Madeline Foundation Code of Conduct which includes standards of conduct when working with children.

Staff knowledge and awareness of child safety

The Foundation believes that child safety is everyone's responsibility and support this by providing child safety information to all employees.

We take all reasonable steps to employ highly skilled people to work with children. We take all reasonable steps to employ staff who will be safe with children and have a strong commitment to children's wellbeing and happiness. Our selection criteria and advertisements clearly demonstrate our commitment to child safety, and awareness of our social and legislative responsibilities.

We actively encourage applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with a disability.

All people employed or volunteering are required to hold a Working with Children check. The Working with Children Check must be current at all times.



We carry out police record checks to help ensure we are not employing people who could pose a risk to children's safety. We use employment reference checks to check that the applicants past employment history is consistent with our commitment to child safety. We may require a staff member or volunteer to conduct a new police record check at any time.

During the employee and volunteer selection process we conduct face to face interviews and, where appropriate, include questions to test an applicant's understanding of child safety.

All employees and volunteers are required to read and sign the Foundation's Code of Conduct which contains a specific section on behavior and standards of conduct when working with or around children.

All employees are subject to a probationary period which includes intensive orientation, induction and monitoring by their people leader.

Information is also provided for staff to ensure that they understand legislative responsibilities including duty of care, mandatory reporting (where applicable), and the two relevant criminal offences: "failure to disclose" and "failure to protect". Information about these legislative responsibilities is also included in our Code of Conduct.

The Child Safety Contact provides in-house consultations and advice on child abuse, child safety and responses to allegations, complaints or concerns about child abuse.

We believe that regular quality staff supervision and performance monitoring are important measures in ensuring an organization is and continues to be, child safe.

Allegations, concerns and complaints

The Foundation takes all allegations and complaints seriously and has practices and procedures in place to investigate these thoroughly and quickly. We record all allegations of abuse, complaints and safety concerns using our Child safety Report, and we record investigation updates.

We ensure that all children, families, staff and volunteers know what to do and who to tell (including the Child Safety Contact) if they observe abuse or are a victim, and if they notice inappropriate behavior.

We recognize that we all have a responsibility, moral and legislated, to report an allegation of abuse if we have a reasonable belief that an incident took place. Our staff are trained to understand the different categories of child abuse and how to recognize possible physical and behavioural indicators.



If an allegation of abuse or a safety concern is raised, we provide updates to children and families on progress and any actions we take as an organization.

The safety and wellbeing of children is our primary concern. We are also fair and just to our personnel. The decisions we make when recruiting, assessing incidents, and undertaking disciplinary action will always be thorough, transparent and evidence based.

Risk Management

We will protect children when a risk is identified. In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, and organisational risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to our children.

We have risk management strategies in place to identify, assess, and take steps to minimize child abuse risks, which include risks posed by physical environments, and online environments.

Privacy

All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved, whether they be staff, volunteers, parents or children, unless there is a risk to someone's safety. We have policies and practices in place to ensure any personal information is protected. We are transparent in how any information is recorded, what is done with the information and who will have access to it.

Regular Policy Review

This policy will be regularly reviewed, particularly following significant events should they occur. During reviews of this policy we will seek the input of staff, children and their families. Where possible we will do our best to consult and seek the view of Aboriginal communities, culturally and/or linguistically diverse communities and people with a disability.



The Alannah & Madeline Foundation is registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) and is proud to display their charity tick of approval.

Thank You.



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