

Child Safety Code of Conduct

Purpose And Scope

All individuals coming under the scope of the VICSEG New Futures Child Protection Policy are responsible for the safety and wellbeing of children and young people who engage with VICSEG New Futures, and are expected to act in accordance with this Code of Conduct in any (physical and online) interactions with children and young people under the age of 18 years.

We are committed to having a VICSEG New Futures that is safe for all children where child abuse and harm are not tolerated. Child safety is a priority for VICSEG New Futures and the prevention and reporting of abuse is supported and encouraged. All staff, volunteers and contractors are responsible for promoting the safety, wellbeing and empowerment of children. VICSEG New Futures recognises that discrimination can harm children and we treat all children with dignity and respect.

This Code of Conduct sets expectations for how staff, volunteers and contractors at VICSEG New Futures should behave around children. This helps children participate safely in our academy and have fun.

All VICSEG staff are required to read and comply with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Code of Conduct.

Procedure

Under the Executive Director, management will:

- Be responsible for the overall welfare and wellbeing of staff, contractors and volunteers;
- Be accountable for managing and maintaining a duty of care towards staff, contractors and volunteers; and
- Nominate a Child Protection Officer to provide information and support to all staff, contractors, volunteers, children, young people and their carers regarding child protection matters.

All people involved in the care of children on behalf of VICSEG New Futures will:

- Act in accordance with VICSEG New Futures's child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures at all times.
- Establish and maintain a child-safe environment in the course of their work;
- Be fair, considerate and honest with others;
- Treat children and young people with respect and value their ideas and opinions;
- Act as positive role models in their conduct with children and young people;
- Be professional in their actions;

- Maintain strict impartiality;
- Comply with specific organisational guidelines on physical contact with children;
- Respect the privacy of children, their families and teachers/carers, and only disclose information to people who have a need to know;
- Maintain a child-safe environment for children and young people;
- Operate within the policies and guidelines of VICSGE New Futures;
- Behave respectfully, courteously and ethically towards children and their families and towards other staff.
- Inform all students about their rights and how to raise safety concerns. This includes making sure students are aware of 'sexual abuse prevention programs' (*Refer to Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure*)
- Listen and respond to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they communicate (verbally or non-verbally) that they do not feel safe or well.
- Promote the human rights, safety and wellbeing of all children in VICSEG New Futures.
- Demonstrate appropriate personal and professional boundaries.
- Consider and respect the diverse backgrounds and needs of children.
- Create an environment that promotes and enables children's participation and is welcoming, culturally safe and inclusive for all children and their families.
- Contribute, where appropriate, to VICSEG New Futures 's policies, discussions, learning and reviews about child safety and wellbeing.
- Identify and mitigate risks to children's safety and wellbeing as required by VICSEG New Futures 's risk assessment and management policy or process.
- Respond to any concerns or complaints of child harm or abuse promptly and in line with VICSEG New Futures 's policy and procedure for receiving and responding to complaints.
- Report all suspected or disclosed child harm or abuse as required by legislation and by VICSEG New Futures's policy and procedure on internal and external reporting.
- Comply with VICSEG New Futures's protocols on communicating with children.
- Comply with all relevant legislation and VICSEG New Futures's policies and procedures on record keeping and information sharing.
- Contact the police if a child is at immediate risk of abuse (telephone 000).

No person shall:

- Shame, humiliate, oppress, belittle or degrade children or young people;
- Unlawfully discriminate against any child;
- Engage in any activity with a child or young person that is likely to physically or emotionally harm them;
- Initiate unnecessary physical contact with a child or young person, or do things of a personal nature for them that they can do for themselves;
- Be alone with a child or young person unnecessarily and for more than a very short time;
- Develop a 'special' relationship with a specific child or young person for their own needs;

- Show favouritism through the provision of gifts or inappropriate attention;
- Arrange contact, including online contact, with children or young people outside of the organisation's programs and activities;
- Photograph or video a child or young person without the consent of the child and his/her parents or guardians;
- Work with children or young people while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs;
- Engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children;
- Use inappropriate language in the presence of children; or
- Do anything in contravention of the organisation's policies, procedures or this Code of Conduct.
- Engage in any unlawful activity with or in relation to a child.
- Engage in any activity that is likely to physically, sexually or emotionally harm a child.
- Unlawfully discriminate against any child or their family members.
- Arrange personal contact, including online contact, with children I am working with for a purpose unrelated to the organisation's activities.
- Disclose personal or sensitive information about a child, including images of a child, unless the child and their parent or legal guardian consent or unless I am required to do so by VICSEG New Futures's policy and procedure on reporting.
- Use inappropriate language in the presence of children, or show or provide children with access to inappropriate images or material.
- Work with children while under the influence of alcohol or prohibited Drugs.

If I think this Code of Conduct has been breached by another person in VICSEG New Futures I will:

- Not ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child harm or abuse.
- Act to prioritise the best interests of children.
- Take actions promptly to ensure that children are safe.
- Promptly report any concerns to my manager, VICSEG New Futures's Child Safety Officer, the Chief Executive Officer or another manager or leader in VICSEG New Futures.
- Follow VICSEG New Futures's policies and procedures for receiving and responding to complaints and concerns.
- Comply with legislative requirements on reporting if relevant, and with VICSEG New Futures's policy and procedure on internal and external reporting.

Complaints about a breach of this Code of Conduct must be reported to our Child Safety Person, that can be conducted on:

Kiran Rajesth

Mon - Fri 9.00 am - 5.00 pm

T: 9383 2533 | D: 8398 5009

W: vicsegnewfutures.org.au

Some breaches of this Code of Conduct may need to be reported to the Victorian Police, or to the Commission for Children and Young People.

Staff and volunteers who breach our Code of Conduct may also be subject to disciplinary action. This can include increased supervision, appointment to an alternative role, suspension or termination from the organisation. Detailed descriptions of breaches are found in our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy. This can be found by asking at the front desk. It is also available as a link on our website.

PLEASE NOTE:

If any person in a position of authority within our organisation becomes aware of a substantial risk that a child may become the victim of a sexual offence committed by an adult associated with the organisation (for example, an employee, contractor or volunteer), and they have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, then they must take all reasonable steps to do so. A person in authority who negligently fails to take appropriate action to address the risk may be charged with the criminal offence of ‘failing to protect’ and may face a term of imprisonment.

If an adult reasonably believes a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under the age of 16, they must report it to Victoria Police by calling 000 or going to their local police station. Failure to disclose the information may be a criminal offence.

Relevant Standards and legislations:

- ✓ Child Protection Act 1999
- ✓ Child Safe Standards
- ✓ VRQA Guidelines for VET providers/ Guideline 6 Child Safe Standards

Related Documents:

- ✓ Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- ✓ Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedure
- ✓ Governance Policy

Last Updated: February 2023