

Section: Human Resources	Date: 1 July 2023 Reviewed by: Adam Wake
Policy Title: Child Safety and Wellbeing Code of Conduct and Policy v2.8	Next Review Date: 1 July 2024



Cottage by the Sea is committed to the safety and protection of children. We have zero tolerance for child abuse and discrimination.



Cottage by the Sea is proud to be accredited by the Australian Tourism Accreditation Program.

Accreditation indicates that we have been independently appraised and meet the requirements for the safe and reasonable operation of a campsite.

Respect Adventure Integrity Belonging Community

Respect **Adventure** **Integrity** **Belonging** **Community**

CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING CODE OF CONDUCT AND POLICY

1. PURPOSE:

It informs the Cottage by the Sea, Queenscliff Inc (CBTS) community of everyone's obligations to act safely and appropriately towards children and guides our processes and practices for the safety and wellbeing of children and young people across all areas of our organisation.

2. POLICY STATEMENT:

Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in leadership, governance and culture. Children and young people are informed and empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously. Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.

3. DEFINITIONS:

- Child – a person below the age of 18.
- Child Safety – responsibility, measure or activity undertaken to protect children from potential harm.
- Child Abuse and Neglect - All forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.
- Empowerment - the process of becoming stronger and more confident, especially in controlling one's life and claiming one's rights
- Vulnerable - (of a person) exposed to the possibility of being attacked or harmed, either physically or emotionally and in need of special care, support, or protection because of age, disability, or risk of abuse or neglect.

4. PROCEDURES:

- *Responding to disclosures and Mandatory Reporting as per this policy*
- *Digital Technology and Internet Use Agreement*
- *Annual review and sign off from all staff, volunteers and Board members.*

5. FORMS:

- *Incidents and Accidents Form*
- *Mandatory Reporting (detailed report, no pro forma required)*
- *Visitors Procedures*

6. RELATED POLICIES/INFORMATION:

- *Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)*
- *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)*

Respect

Adventure

Integrity

Belonging

Community

Contents

CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING CODE OF CONDUCT.....	5
1. Commitment and Purpose:	5
2. Staff, management, board of directors and volunteers are to comply:	7
3. Child Safe Principals and Expectations:	8
4. Concerns, Allegations and Reporting:	8
5. Staff and volunteers must not:	9
Signatures.....	10
Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.....	11
What Is Abuse?	11
2. Responsibilities	14
3. Reasonable Belief	15
4. Disclosures	16
5. Responding to a Disclosure or Allegation of Abuse	16
6. Reporting Reasonable Belief and Disclosures	17
7. Relevant Child/Young Persons Protection Authorities	18
8. Recruitment and Selection:	19
9. Risk Management	21
10. Failure to Comply with this Policy	24
Signatures.....	24

Respect

Adventure

Integrity

Belonging

Community

CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING CODE OF CONDUCT

Children and young people have the right to be emotionally and physically safe at all times. Cottage by the Sea, Queenscliff Inc (CBTS) is committed to protecting the personal worth, dignity, safety and wellbeing of all children and young people within our services. Management, staff and volunteers will treat all children with the utmost respect and understanding. We promote a happy, healthy work environment which supports diversity and equal opportunity and is free of disrespectful behaviour, offensive language, discrimination and workplace harassment, bullying and violence. Our belief is that: Children are capable of the same range of emotions as adults and their emotions are real and need to be accepted by adults.

CBTS employs a number of staff and volunteers who during the course of their duties work either directly or indirectly with children. CBTS acknowledges their responsibility to protect both children from harm and staff/volunteers from allegations of child abuse. The Child Safety and Wellbeing Code of Conduct and Policy is designed to assist in this process and ensure that all current legislative requirements are met.

CBTS respects all children, young people, staff and volunteers and is committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Children and those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and to provide a safe environment for children and young people with a disability.

CBTS understands the connection between disadvantaged and disempowerment, thus we take steps to ensure all children and young people are empowered and can speak up and be listened to. CBTS is committed to protecting children from exploitation and abuse.

This code of conduct aims to protect children and reduce any opportunities for child abuse or harm to occur. It supports child protection legislations, department policies, school policies and procedures and professional standards. It also assists in understanding how to avoid or better manage risky behaviour and situations.

It is to promote inclusion and the feeling of safety extending further than this Code of Conduct and Policy but also in the environment of CBTS itself by introducing inclusive signage as appropriate.

1. Commitment and Purpose:

Children can be extremely vulnerable, especially those who come to CBTS. They deserve higher standards of protection. CBTS takes its duty of care seriously, particularly in protecting children and young people.

Respect

Adventure

Integrity

Belonging

Community

- 1.1. **Legal and Moral** – CBTS has a responsibility to protect all participants at all ages within our care. This includes reporting information about suspected child abuse.
- 1.2. **Shared Responsibility** – Child Safety is a shared responsibility by everyone working together. All employees, board members, volunteers, associates and members of the CBTS extended community. All adults must be vigilant and aware of any indication of abuse or non-accidental injury. All personnel will meet the minimum standards of safety and wellbeing for children associated with our programs and organisation.
- 1.3. **Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO)** – All staff and volunteers must be aware of who the designated Child Protection Officer is. Report any suspicions immediately, no matter how small and trivial it may seem or who the alleged perpetrator and/or victim is to the DCPO, Supervisor/Manager or CEO.
- 1.4. **Training** – Each new employee and volunteer are trained in Child Safety and Wellbeing. Refresher training is completed and signed annually from staff, volunteers and Board members.

Abuse can take many forms, these are sometimes hard to recognise and they occur across all socio-economic groups. CBTS provides training for staff to assist in recognising the indicators of abuse, reporting of child abuse and the cultural wellbeing and safety for Aboriginal, Torres Strait Island children.

- 1.5. **Risk Management Approach** – While it is not possible to eliminate all risks of child abuse, CBTS will ensure risks of child abuse are identified, monitored and reasonably mitigated against in the assessment of all our activities.
- 1.6. **Work Practices** – Staff, management and volunteers are to adopt and adhere to these practices ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children and to minimise the possibility of allegations of child abuse and neglect being made against them. Where allegations are made CBTS will conduct a thorough investigation.
- 1.7. **Work Practices con't** –
 - 1.7.1. **Contractors:** Staff and Management are to ensure that upon arrival contractors are inducted with an overview of the Child Safety and Wellbeing principles and practices, provide a Working With Children Check, or be escorted when children are onsite and follow Visitors Procedures.
 - 1.7.2. **Visitors:** Staff, Management and Volunteers are to follow the Visitors Procedures guidelines.
- 1.8. **Empowerment** – CBTS is committed to provide a safe environment, recognise children's rights, encourage peer relationships, take children's experiences seriously, respond quickly and sincerely and value their contributions to our operations.

Respect

Adventure

Integrity

Belonging

Community

2. Staff, management, board of directors, volunteers, visitors and contractors are to comply with CBTS standards:

- 2.1. **Child's Rights** – As an organisation CBTS is committed to protecting the rights of all children to live safely, without fear of abuse or exploitation. We are committed to keeping children safe by all reasonable means.
- 2.2. **Zero Tolerance of Child Abuse** – CBTS will not tolerate any form of child abuse by anyone who is working within the organisation. CBTS will not permit representatives to work with children or access communities with whom we work if they pose an unacceptable risk to children's safety or wellbeing.
- 2.3. **Best Practice** – To protect children and young people regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, religion, family or social background from all forms of harm. CBTS has zero tolerance for child abuse.
- 2.4. **Respect** – CBTS is committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island children and those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and to provide a safe environment for children with all-abilities.
- 2.5. **Diversity** – CBTS will not tolerate any discriminatory practices. We support cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, LGBTQIA+, all-ability children and their families. We have a physical environment that actively celebrates the diverse cultures and recognises and appreciates cultural diversity.
- 2.6. **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders** – The traditional owners to where CBTS resides is on Wadawurrung Peoples land. We connect to indigenous culture in many forms to promote healing, strength, belonging and purpose.
- 2.7. **Child and Young Person Empowerment** – CBTS is committed in empowering children and young people to have a say, express ideas and concerns regarding measures set in place, be taken seriously, encouraging peer relationships and support. It is about building up children and young people and embedding this in CBTS culture helping them to have a greater confidence and to seek out support when they need it.
- 2.8. **Family Support** – CBTS provides access to the Child Safety and Wellbeing Code of Conduct and Policy and is open to receive feedback promoting child safety and wellbeing.
- 2.9. **Vulnerable People** – While all people must be protected from harm, there are additional legislative and ethical considerations for protecting vulnerable people. Vulnerable people are not limited to a charity's beneficiaries or the users of its services. They can include staff, volunteers and people in third parties, such as partners.

There are four key principles which we follow: Developing an empowering culture, fostering empowering relationships among children and young people with their peers and adults in the organisation, building awareness, skills and knowledge to recognise unsafe situations and raise concerns and supporting meaningful, positive participation.

Respect

Adventure

Integrity

Belonging

Community

3. Child Safe Principle and Expectations:

All staff, volunteers, management, board of directors are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of all vulnerable people. They are to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children, young people and the vulnerable.

These safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of vulnerable children, young persons, volunteer and staff as noted below.

- 3.1 Take all reasonable steps to protect children, young person and the vulnerable from abuse.
- 3.2 Treat all children, young people and vulnerable with respect, regardless of race, colour, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or other opinion, ethnic or social origin, culture, property, disability or other status.
- 3.3 Listen and respond to the views and concerns of children, young persons and vulnerable particularly if they are telling you that they or another person has been abused and/or worried about their safety or the safety of others.
- 3.4 Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children with no question on self-identification.
- 3.5 Promote cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds. Having zero tolerance of discrimination.
- 3.6 Promote safety, participation and empowerment of children with disability including personal care activities.
- 3.7 Actively promote cultural safety and inclusion.
- 3.8 Ensure as far as practicable that an adult is not left alone with a child.
- 3.9 Encourage children to 'have a say' and to participate in all relevant organisational activities where possible, especially on issues that are important to them.
- 3.10 Encourage peer friendships and support.
- 3.11 We spend time getting to know all children and young people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds on an individual basis. Communication on how they would most like to participate.
- 3.12 We create safe spaces for LGBTQIA+ where they are not discriminated against, judged or bullied.
- 3.13 Adhere to CBTS's Child Safety and Wellbeing Code of Conduct and Policy.

4. Concerns, Allegations and Reporting:

- 4.1 Report any child safety concerns to CBTS's designated Child Protection Officer / Management.
- 4.2 Report any allegations of child abuse to the CBTS Child Protection Officer / Management and Police.

Respect

Adventure

Integrity

Belonging

Community

4.3 If an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the child/ren are safe.

5. Staff and volunteers must not:

- 5.1 Develop any 'special' relationships with children and young people that could be seen as favouritism.
- 5.2 Touch a child unless required to do so in order to fulfil your duties (such as putting on wetsuits) and ensure that there is another adult present.
- 5.3 Avoid hugging, piggybacks, play fights, sitting on laps or any other physical contact.
- 5.4 Put children at risk of abuse, such as locking doors.
- 5.5 Do things of a personal nature that a child or young person can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes.
- 5.6 Allow inappropriate behaviour including ignoring, humiliating, isolating, threatening or verbal abuse by any adult, child or young person.
- 5.7 Engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children, such as social activities.
- 5.8 Use inappropriate language in the presence of a child or young person.
- 5.9 Express personal views on abilities, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity in the presence of a child or young person.
- 5.10 Have personal or online contact with a child, young person or their family outside of our organisation.
- 5.11 Promise to keep a secret about sensitive information that a child or young person may disclose to you.
- 5.12 Ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse.
- 5.13 Exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical.
- 5.14 Discriminate against any child, because of disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability sexuality or ethnicity.
- 5.15 Have contact with a child or their family outside of our organisation without our child safety officer's knowledge and/or consent (for example, no babysitting).
- 5.16 Have any online contact with a child or their family (unless necessary to fulfil your duty).
- 5.17 Treat a child unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity.

By observing these standards, you acknowledge your responsibility to immediately report any breach to CBTS Belinda Saya the designated Child Protection Officer, Supervisor/Management or CEO.

Respect

Adventure

Integrity

Belonging

Community

Signatures

I have read all 5 pages of the Child Safety and Wellbeing Code of Conduct. I have been given the opportunity to seek clarification if required. I understand and agree to adhere to the policy stated.

Employee\Volunteer Name: _____ Date: _____

Employee\Volunteer Signature: _____

Supervisor/Manager Name: _____ Date: _____

Supervisor/Manager Signature: _____

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

We aim to provide the children with the opportunity to develop to their full potential free from harm and abuse.

What Is Abuse?

There are many forms of Child Abuse that results in actual or potential harm to a child or young person. According to the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 mandated reporters, staff, management and volunteers must make reports if they suspect on reasonable grounds a child is at risk of harm because of:

- The child's basic physical or psychological needs are not being met or are at risk of not being met.
- The child has been, or is at risk of being physically or sexually abused or ill-treated.
- The child is living in a household where there have been incidents of domestic violence and they are at risk of serious physical or psychological harm.
- The parent's or other caregiver's behaviour means the child has suffered or is at risk of suffering serious psychological harm.

1. Indicators and Types of Abuse

There are common physical and behavioural signs that may indicate abuse or neglect. A child's behaviour is likely to be affected or there are visual signs. Abuse and neglect can be single incidents or ongoing, and may be intentional or unintentional.

1.1. **Neglect:** is the continuous failure by a parent or caregiver to provide a child with the basic things needed for their growth and development, such as: food, clothing, shelter, medical and dental care and adequate supervision.

a) Indicators of Neglect:

- Poor standard of hygiene leading to social isolation
- Scavenging or stealing food
- Extreme longing for adult affection
- Lacking a sense of genuine interaction with others
- Self-comforting behaviours, e.g. rocking, sucking
- Untreated physical problems

1.2. **Physical Abuse:** is when a child has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, non-accidental trauma or injury, caused by another person. Physical violence can be inflicted in many ways including beating, shaking, burning or use of items as a weapon.

a) Indicators of Physical Abuse:

Respect **Adventure** **Integrity** **Belonging** **Community**

- Facial, head and neck bruising
- Lacerations and welts
- Explanations that are not consistent with injury
- Bruising or marks that may show the shape of an object
- Bite marks or scratches
- Multiple injuries or bruises
- Burns and scalds

1.3. Emotional and Psychological Abuse: occurs when a person harms a child's development by repetitively treating and speaking to a child in ways that damage the child's ability to feel and express their feelings. Through repeated rejection, isolation and threats or acts of violence. This may include: constant criticism, condescending, teasing of a child, ignoring, withholding admiration/affection, encouraging inappropriate or risky behaviours and exposure to family/domestic violence.

a) Indicators of emotional abuse:

- Feeling of worthlessness about them
- Inability to value others
- Lack of trust in people and expectations
- Extreme attention seeking behaviours
- Other behavioural disorders (disruptiveness, aggressiveness, bullying)

1.4. Sexual Abuse: is when someone involves a child or young person in a sexual activity or deliberately puts the child/young person in the presence of sexual behaviours that are exploitative or inappropriate to their age and development by using their authority over them or taking advantage of their trust. Children are often bribed or threatened physically and psychologically to make them partake in the activity. This includes the act of grooming of a child or young person.

Sexual abuse may include: Exposing the child to sexual behaviours of others, coercing the child to engage in sexual behaviour with other children, verbal threats of sexual abuse and/or exposing the child to pornography.

a) Indicators of Sexual Abuse:

- They describe sexual acts
- Age inappropriate behaviour and/or persistent sexual behaviour
- Self-destructive behaviour
- Bleeding from the vagina or anus
- Injuries such as tears to the genitalia

1.5. Family Violence: is a violation of human rights. It involves violent, abusive or intimidating behaviour carried out by an adult against a family member to control

Respect

Adventure

Integrity

Belonging

Community

and dominate that person. Domestic violence causes fear, physical and/or psychological harm. Living with family/domestic violence has a profound effect upon children and young people and may constitute a form of child abuse.

a) Indicators of Family/Domestic Violence:

- Show aggressive behaviour
- Develop phobias & insomnia
- Show symptoms of depression
- Have diminished self-esteem
- Demonstrate poor academic performance and problem-solving skills
- Have reduced social competence skills including low levels of empathy
- Show emotional distress
- Have physical complaints

1.6. **Racial, Cultural, Religious, Linguistic Abuse:** is a conduct which demonstrates contempt, ridicule, hatred or negativity towards a child because of their race, culture or religion. It may be obvious with direct racial vilification or discrimination, or it may be discreet by demonstrating a lack of cultural respect or awareness of their values. Failing to provide positive images or communication about another culture.

1.7. **LGBTQIA+ Abuse:** is when they experience homophobic or transphobic bullying. They feel pressure to suppress or change their sexuality. CBTS support children and young people's right to their sexuality and gender identity and the use of pronouns.

1.8. **Online Abuse:** Cyberbullying or cyber harassment is a form of bullying or harassment using electronic means. Cyberbullying and cyber harassment are also known as online bullying. It has become increasingly common, especially among teenagers, as the digital sphere has expanded and technology has advanced. CBTS limits use of electronics and children and young people only use devices if needed for a particular activity.

a) Indicators of online abuse or online bullying:

- They become upset or anxious when using their devices. ...
- They suddenly stop using their devices. ...
- They lose interest in things they used to enjoy, or struggle with mood changes. ...
- Unexpected changes in friendship groups. ...
- A decline in school work. ...
- Avoidance of school or clubs.

Respect

Adventure

Integrity

Belonging

Community

2. Responsibilities

Keeping children and young people safe from harm is a shared responsibility by all staff, management, volunteers and board of directors.

2.1 As an organisation:

- Strategies are embedded within the organisation which equip all members to acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and understand its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Indigenous children and young people.
- Measures are adopted to ensure racism is identified, confronted and not tolerated. Any instance of racism is addressed with appropriate consequences.
- CBTS pays particular attention to the needs of children and young people with disability, children and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who are unable to live at home, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children and young people.
- Ensuring Child Safety and Wellbeing is embedded at all levels.
- Provide strategies that empower all children and young people to encourage them to speak up if they feel unsafe.

2.1. Board of Directors:

- Are legally responsible for ensuring appropriate policies and practices are in place to minimise the risk of child abuse and appropriately respond to suspected allegations.
- The Board has a Duty of care to children in the care of the organisation to take reasonable care to prevent harm and abuse from occurring.

2.2. CEO (Chief Executive Officer):

- Is accountable to the Board for ensuring that appropriate policies and practices are implemented, monitored, reported and evaluated in a timely and diligent manner. Including the review of the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policies and Practices annually.
- Ensures all staff and volunteers are aware of the relevant laws, organisational policies, procedures and Child Safety and Wellbeing Code of Conduct.
- Ensures that access to training and development and emotional support is provided to employees and volunteers.

2.3. DCPO (Designated Child Protection Officer):

- DCPO is Belinda Saya.
- Is required to understand and act in line with CBTS Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Code of Conduct. Including reporting any suspected child abuse to the relevant state/territory Child Protection Authority and/or the Police Department.

Respect

Adventure

Integrity

Belonging

Community

- Fully cooperate with all relevant state/territory child protection authorities or other recognised bodies in their investigations of suspected child abuse.
- Provide support for staff and volunteers in undertaking their child safety and wellbeing responsibilities.
- Must ensure that the Policies and Code of Conduct are easily accessible and are located in main office and in staff room.
- The Child Safety Reporting Process Flowchart is laminated and affixed to walls in the main office, dining room, art room and staff room.
- The 'responding to a child making a disclosure or allegation of abuse' is given to new and existing staff on induction, annual refresher and when updates occur.

2.4. Managers:

- Promoting Child Safety at all times.
- Educating employees about the prevention and detection of child abuse.
- Facilitate the reporting of any inappropriate behaviour or suspected abuse.

2.5. Staff and Volunteers:

- Be familiar with relevant laws, CBTS Child Safety and Wellbeing Code of Conduct and Policy and other relevant policies. Agree to adhere to all requirements.
- Report any reasonable belief that a child's safety is at risk to the relevant people and authorities.
- Provide an environment that is supportive of all children's emotional and physical safety and wellbeing.

3. Reasonable Belief

All adults must report where they form a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under the age of 16. Failure to disclose the information may be a criminal offence. The DCPO/CEO will notify Victoria Police as per legal requirements.

A reasonable belief is not the same as having proof. It is if a reasonable person, doing the same work, would form the same belief on those grounds, based on the same information.

Grounds for forming a belief are matters of which the person has become aware and any opinions in relation to those matters.

Reporters are not expected to have evidence or to be certain. Child Protection is responsible for assessing reports and deciding how to respond. A reasonable belief might be formed if:

- A child or young person states that they have been physically or sexually abused.
- A child or young person states that they know someone who has been physically or sexually abused. *It is possible in this case that the child is talking about themselves.*

Respect

Adventure

Integrity

Belonging

Community

- Professional observation of the child's behaviour or development leads a professional to form a belief that the child or young person may have been abused or is likely to be.
- Signs of abuse lead to the belief that the child or young person has been physically or sexually abused.

4. Disclosures

A disclosure of harm emerges when someone, including a child or young person, tells you about harm that has happened or is likely to happen. When a child/young person discloses that he or she has been abused, it is an opportunity for an adult to provide immediate support and comfort and to assist in protecting the child from the abuse. It is also a chance to help the child connect to professional services that can keep them safe, provide support and facilitate their recovery from trauma. Disclosure is about seeking support and your response can have a great impact on the child or young person's ability to seek further help and recover from the trauma.

5. Responding to a Disclosure or Allegation of Abuse

When receiving a disclosure of harm it is important to:

- Be CALM and patient. Allow the child/young person to be heard.
- Find a suitable place, free of distractions but still in view of others.
- Do not promise to keep a secret, explain that in order to keep them safe you will need to report their experience to trusted persons.
- REASSURE the child/young person it is OK they have told you what is happening.
- Acknowledge the child or young person's bravery and strength.
- Let the child or young person use THEIR WORDS.
- RESPECT that the child or young person may only reveal some details.
- Avoid asking leading questions or questions that could cause distress, confusion which could interfere with any later enquiries.
- Avoid 'quizzing' the child or young person about the details of the abuse.
- LISTEN supportively. Listening is more important than making comments. Be supportive.
- Do not act shocked or give any opinions. Remain CALM and supportive.
- Address any concerns about the child or young person's safety.
- REASSURE the child or young person that he or she is *NOT* at fault and *NOT* the cause of any distress you or others may feel.
- Avoid making promises you cannot keep in managing their situation.
- You must not attempt to conduct your own investigation or mediate an outcome between the parties involved.

Respect

Adventure

Integrity

Belonging

Community

6. Reporting Reasonable Belief and Disclosures

If any person believes a child or young person is in immediate risk of abuse call 000 or the local Police station.

In the case where a disclosure is made to any staff or volunteer it is to be reported to the DCPO, Supervisor/Manager or CEO as soon as practical after the disclosure. Discuss concerns with the DCPO / Management. The DCPO/Manager/CEO will make an assessment on further action. Cottage by the Sea contact number 03 5258 1663. *Note: all staff have DCPO's contact number, who can be advised as soon as practical.*

Alternatively, report concerns about the immediate safety of a child or young person within their family unit to DFFH Child Protection, call the Child Protection Crisis Line on 13 12 78 (24 hours, 7 days, toll free).

If any person has ground to suspect abusive activity in CBTS they must immediately notify the appropriate child protection service and/or Victoria Police. They should also advise their line manager/supervisor, CEO or the DCPO about their concern.

In situations where a line manager/supervisor or DCPO is suspected of involvement in the activity or if the person having the suspicion does not believe that the matter is being appropriately addressed or dealt with, the matter should be reported to the highest level of supervision or ultimately to the CEO or Board Member.

Discuss any concerns about the safety and wellbeing of a child or young person with the Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO) or a member of management. The DCPO will then make an assessment about whether they should make a report about the child or young person and to whom the report should be made.

- 6.1 Child Safety complaints, disclosures and breaches of the Child Safety and Wellbeing Code of Conduct and any accidents and incidents will be archived on site at CBTS. Records will be kept securely in staff files, group files or CBTS history archives.
- 6.2 Do not promise to keep a secret about sensitive information that may be disclosed to you by a child or young person. Inform them you will need to tell relevant people to help with ensuring their safety and wellbeing.
- 6.3 Records will be kept of any actions taken, any internal investigations and any reports made to statutory authorities or professional bodies.
- 6.4 Keep comprehensive notes and DOCUMENT as much information in a non-judgmental and accurate manner as soon as possible so the details are accurately captured. It is important to include all details:
 - Time, date, and place of the disclosure.
 - Child/young person's name, DOB and address.
 - Note child/young person's account 'word for word'. What

Respect

Adventure

Integrity

Belonging

Community

happened and what was said. When making a report ensure you identify what the child/young person's words were and what is your information.

- Include any non-verbal reactions during the disclosure.
- When reporting reasonable belief, note the information of concern that led to the reason for the child/young person's safety. (ie. physical injuries, behaviour, etc.)
- The source of the information. (ie. observation, child, another person)
- The actions taken as a result of the concerns. (ie. consultation with DCPO, DFFH, etc.)
- Name, position of person making the report, the person receiving report and signatures.
- **DO NOT DELAY PROVIDING INFORMATION TO THE DCPO/Management.**
- Notification of all allegations must be reported to:
 - DCPO
 - CEO
 - President of the Board
 - Where allegations are made against a staff member, volunteer or contractor notify Insurance Company (Ansvar)

6.5 Once information has been given to the DCPO / Management there may be a need for the confidant to discuss matters further with child/young person to assist in making a decision and to assist Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) involvement. The propose for this is to ensure that the necessary information is gathered to assist in making a decision and to assist DFFH, should they be involved at a later time. Examples of what the confidant may be asked to find out with regards to the disclosure can include but is not limited to:

- When the alleged abuse last happened?
- Where was the child hit/other?
- What was used to hit the child (object, hand open, hand closed)?
- What were the events leading up to the alleged abuse?
- Who else is in the family unit / who lives at home?
- Who else knows?
- Have they spoken to anyone else about the alleged abuse?

7. Relevant Child/Young Persons Protection Authorities

If a child or young person discloses abuse, CBTS is to report it to the relevant authorities.

Respect

Adventure

Integrity

Belonging

Community

- Notify **Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO), Supervisor/Manager or CEO** as soon as the opportunity presents. Concerns that are life threatening: **Victoria Police 000**
- Concerns about the immediate safety of a child or young person within their family unit: **Child Protection Crisis Line (CPCL) 13 12 78** (24/7 access toll free within Victoria)
CPCL is an emergency service for weekends and after hours only and will pass on cases to relevant regions the following working day.

8. Recruitment and Selection:

CBTS follows a stringent selection and recruitment process to help us identify the most suitable candidates to work with children and young people in support of our zero tolerance for child abuse. The strict guidelines and recruitment process also deters unsuitable candidates from applying and being appointed either in a paid or voluntary capacity. Following the careful selection and recruitment guidelines, CBTS provides effective training to all staff and volunteers on this policy, the code of conduct and clear information as to what constitutes as child abuse. CBTS will provide effective management for all staff and volunteers through supervision and support. For all staff employees and volunteers from advertisement to commencement:

- Positions have a selection criteria identifying key skills, attributes, experience and qualifications that re required to undertake the duties and tasks.
- Advertisements clearly states that CBTS is a child safe organisation our commitment to child safety and wellbeing including a Child Safe and Wellbeing Code of Conduct and Policy.
- Interview with a panel of at least two key personnel with child safety questions and/or real life experience, such as:
 - Motivation to work with children?
 - Understanding of children’s physical and emotional needs?
 - Understanding of physical boundaries?
 - Attitudes to children and young people’s rights and how they can be upheld?
 - Values on honesty, integrity, reliability, fairness and non-discrimination?
 - Discuss applicants’ approach to Aboriginal cultural safety and inclusive practices for all children and their families.
- Screening and background checks conducted. Including one referee that is the applicant’s current or most recent employer. Questions such as:
 - Would you employ the person again?
 - Do you have any concerns about the applicant working directly with children?

Respect

Adventure

Integrity

Belonging

Community

- Are you comfortable knowing that the applicant might sometimes be working alone with children?
- Did the applicant have any disciplinary matters relating to child protection issues?
- Candidates provide a current Working With Children Check (WWCC) and Police Check. Excluding anyone with a criminal history of violence, abuse of children or serious drug or fraud charges.
- Evidence of identity must be verified (driver's licence or passport).
- Sight original certificates of qualifications.
- Clear understanding of CBTS Child Safety and Wellbeing Code of Conduct and Policy.
- Clear understanding of what constitutes as child abuse.
- Clear understanding of their responsibilities and 'duty of care' in relation to their position.
- Extensive induction process.
- Appropriate training to all staff and volunteers.

After appointment of staff and volunteer roles:

- Continual monitor of WWCC status.
- Continual CBTS supervision and support.
- Meet regularly with staff and volunteers.
- Support roles, provide training and resources.
- Raise performance issues and required improvements.
- Treat staff and volunteers with respect.

Respect

Adventure

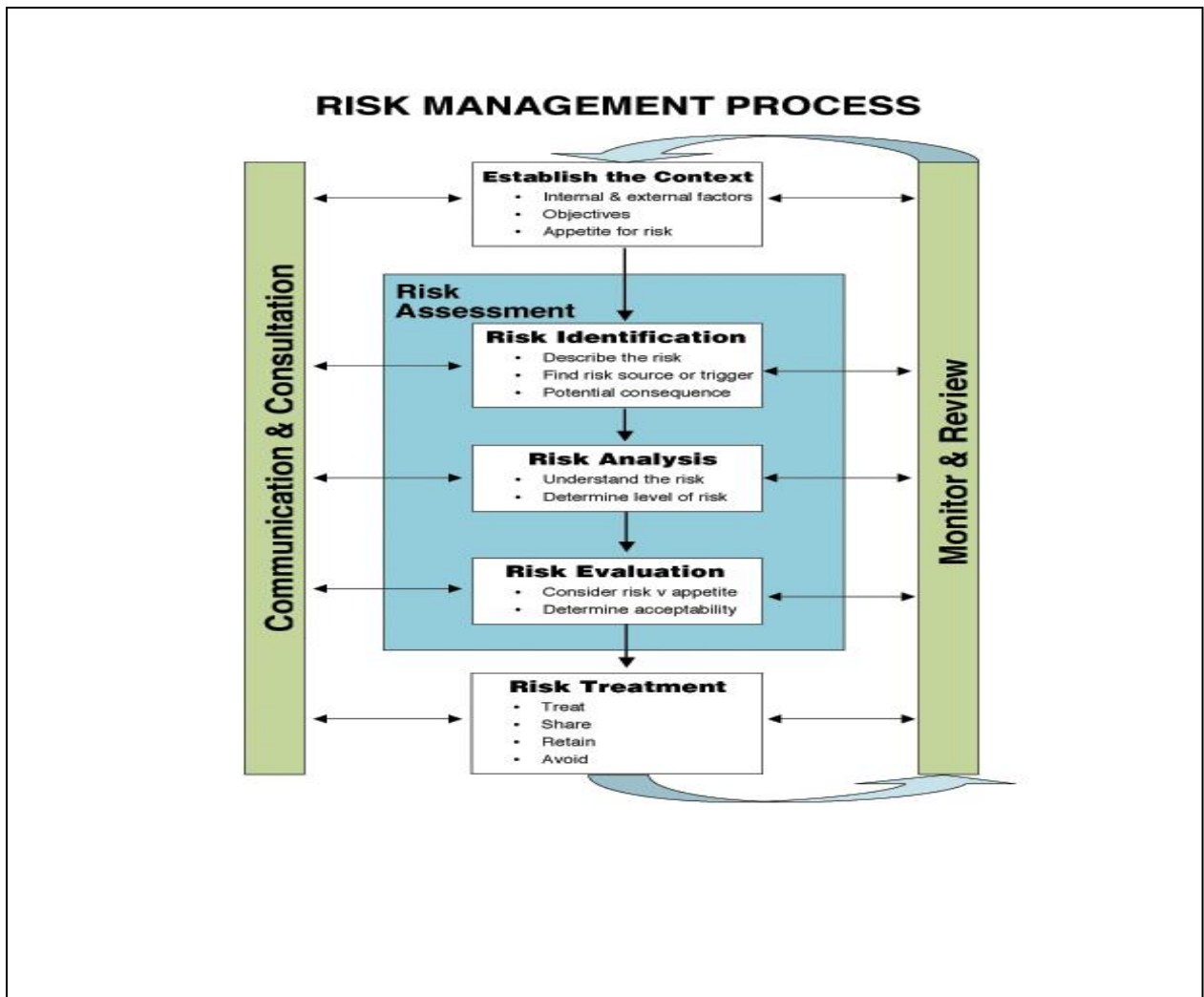
Integrity

Belonging

Community

9. Risk Management

To support strategic, operational and tactical risk management, the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy is in place to help ensure effective management of risk. The Risk Management Framework below ensures that risk is managed across Cottage by the Sea in a holistic manner.



Respect

Adventure

Integrity

Belonging

Community

Who can report?

Parent

Child

Staff member or volunteer

What to report?

Any child safety concerns, including:

- disclosure of abuse or harm
- allegation, suspicion or observation
- breach of Code of Conduct
- environmental safety issues.

Call 000 if a child is in immediate danger

How?

Face-to-face verbal report, letter, email, telephone call, meeting

Who to?

Designated Child Protection Officer, manager, supervisor

What happens next?

The Designated Child Protection Officer, manager or supervisor will:

- offer support to the child, the parents, the person who reports and the accused staff member or volunteer
- initiate internal processes to ensure the safety of the child, clarify the nature of the complaint and commence disciplinary process (if required)
- decide, in accordance with legal requirements and duty of care, whether the matter should/must be reported to the police or Child Protection and make report as soon as

Outcome

Investigation; outcome decided; relevant staff, volunteers, parents and child notified of outcome of investigation; policies, procedures updated where necessary.

Respect

Adventure

Integrity

Belonging

Community

If in Immediate Danger Call 000

Who can Report Safety and Wellbeing concerns?

- Parent
- Child
- Staff
- Volunteer
- Teacher
- Anyone

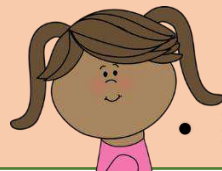


How can you report?

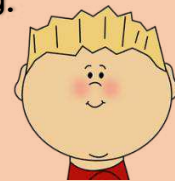
- Face to Face
- Letter
- Email
- Phone

What to talk about??

Any concerns of safety and wellbeing. Whether Seeing it or suspecting it:



- Bullying
- Abuse or Harm
- Rejection / Exclusion
- Breaking code of conduct rules



Who do you speak to?

- DCPO
- Staff
- Volunteer
- Teacher
- Any Adult



Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO):

Belinda Saya

What happens next?

The DCPO or Supervisor will:

- Offer support
- Ensure person is safe
- Clarify the concern and investigate
- Follow legal requirements for duty of care



Outcome

- Child, parents and relevant staff, notified.
- Others notified when necessary

10. Failure to Comply with this Policy

10.1 Any breach of this Policy will be regarded as misconduct and may result in disciplinary action (up to and including dismissal).

10.2 A breach of this Policy may also amount to a criminal offence under the state and federal regulations.

Signatures

I have read all 13 pages of the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy. I have been given the opportunity to seek clarification if required. I understand and agree to adhere to the policy stated.

Employee\Volunteer Name: _____ Date: _____

Employee\Volunteer Signature: _____

Supervisor/Manager Name: _____ Date: _____

Supervisor/Manager Signature: _____