For Wild Places
ABN: 35 661 735 557
www.forwildplaces.com
hello@forwildplaces.com

Child Safety Policy

Our commitment to child safety

For Wild Places Foundation Limited is committed to child safety.
We want children to be safe, happy and empowered.
We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers.
We are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children.

We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our robust policies and procedures.

We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously.

For Wild Places Foundation Limited is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks.

For Wild Places Foundation Limited has robust human resources and recruitment practices to reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing board members, staff and volunteers.
For Wild Places Foundation Limited is committed to regularly training and educating our board members, staff and volunteers on child abuse risks.

We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

We have specific policies and procedures in place that support our board members, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments.
If you believe a child is at immediate risk, phone 000.

Our children

This policy is intended to empower children, who are vital and active participants at For Wild Places Foundation Limited. We involve them when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them. We listen to their views and respect what they have to say.

We promote diversity and acceptance at For Wild Places Foundation Limited, and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome. In particular, we:

- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children
- 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.

Our staff and volunteers

This policy guides our staff and volunteers on how to behave with children at For Wild Places Foundation Limited.

All of our staff and volunteers must agree to abide by our code of conduct which specifies the standards of conduct required when working with children. All staff and volunteers, as well as children and their families, are given the opportunity to contribute to the development of the code of conduct.

Training and supervision

Training and education is important to ensure that everyone at For Wild Places Foundation Limited understands that child safety is everyone's responsibility.

Our organisational culture aims for all board members, staff, volunteers, families and children to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns. We train our board members, staff and volunteers to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse.

We also support our board members, staff and volunteers through ongoing supervision to develop their skills to protect children from abuse and promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability.

New board members, staff and volunteers will be supervised regularly to ensure they understand For Wild Places Foundation Limited's commitment to child safety and that everyone has a role to play in protecting

children from abuse. This will include checking that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate (please refer to For Wild Places Foundation Limited's code of conduct for information about appropriate behaviour). Any inappropriate behaviour will be reported through appropriate channels, including the Department of Health and Human Services and Victoria Police, depending on the severity and urgency of the matter.

Recruitment

We take all reasonable steps to employ skilled people to work with children. We develop selection criteria and advertisements which clearly demonstrate our commitment to child safety and an awareness of our social and legal responsibilities. For Wild Places Foundation Limited understands that when recruiting board members, staff and volunteers, we have ethical as well as legislative obligations.
We actively encourage applications from Aboriginal people, people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with a disability.

Fair procedures for staff and volunteers

The safety and wellbeing of children is our primary concern. We are also fair and reasonable to all staff and volunteers. The decisions we make when recruiting, assessing incidents, and undertaking disciplinary action will always be thorough, transparent, and based on evidence.
We record all allegations of abuse and safety concerns using our incident reporting form. All records are securely stored. If an allegation of abuse or a safety concern is raised, we provide updates to children and families on progress and actions we as an organisation take.

Privacy

All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved, whether they be staff, volunteers, families or children, unless there is a risk to someone's safety. Everyone is entitled to know how this information is recorded, what will be done with it and who will have access to it. This is intended to protect reporters and to ensure that all members of For Wild Places Foundation Limitedare comfortable to disclose any allegations or concerns in relation to child safety without repercussions.

All people who are engaged in child-related work and who are not exempt, including volunteers, are required to hold a Working with Children Check and to provide evidence of this check. For more information, please refer to the Working with Children website

We carry out reference checks and police record checks to ensure that we are recruiting the right people. If during the recruitment process a person's records indicate a criminal history then the person will be given

the opportunity to provide further information and context.

Legislative responsibilities

For Wild Places Foundation Limited takes its legal responsibilities seriously, including:

- Failure to disclose: All adults in Victoria who have a reasonable belief that an adult has committed a sexual offence against a child under 16 have an obligation to report that information to Victoria Police
- Mandatory reporting: Any board members, staff or volunteers who are mandatory reporters (doctors, nurses, midwives, teacher, principals and police officers) must comply with their duties
- Failure to protect: People of authority in our organisation will commit an offence if they know of a substantial risk of child sexual abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so
- Reportable conduct: The head of our organisation must be made aware of any allegations of physical and sexual abuse, sexual misconduct, significant emotional or psychological harm or significant neglect by an employee or volunteer towards a child. We are also legally required to notify the Commission for Children and Young People of the allegation
- Duty of care: If a child is abused by an individual associated with our organisation, our organisation is presumed to have breached its duty of care unless it can prove that it took 'reasonable precautions' to prevent the abuse in question. For more information, please refer to the new organisational duty of care to prevent child abuse page on the Department of Justice and Regulation's website.

Risk management

In Victoria, organisations are required to protect children when a risk is identified. In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to our children.
We have risk management strategies in place to identify, assess, and take steps to minimise child abuse risks which include risks posed by physical environments and online environments.

Further information

Further information about the Child Safe Standards can be found on the Department of Health and Human Services (the department) website. This includes additional resources that have been designed for organisations that are funded and/or regulated by the department. In particular, an overview of the Victoria Child Safe Standards has information to help organisations to understand the requirements of each of the Child Safe Standards.

All organisations may also refer to the information and resources available on the Child Safety page on the Commission for Children and Young People's website.

Disclaimer

This resource provides general guidance only on the Child Safe Standards. The department does not guarantee that the examples provided in this document are sufficient for the purposes of an organisation's compliance with the Child Safe Standards.