



Child Safety Policy and Code

1. Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

ISA Student Advocates (ISA) is committed to child safety, all office staff, advocates and volunteers are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children and are required to uphold the company's commitment to child safety at all times. ISA has a zero tolerance of child abuse and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our policies and procedures.

ISA and guardians, volunteers, have a legal and moral responsibility to respond to situations involving:

- a) Any act committed against a child involving
 - i. A sexual offence; or
 - ii. An offence under section 49B (2) of the *Crimes Act 1958* (grooming); and
- b) The infliction, on a child, of
 - i. Physical violence; or
 - ii. Serious emotional or psychological harm; and
- c) Serious neglect of a child
- d) Child Abuse
- e) Allegations of child abuse
- f) Concern of potential child abuse

If a staff member, guardian or volunteer believes a child is at risk of abuse they are to contact the relevant Child Safe Officer and detail all concerns.

Any allegation of child safety concerns will be taken very seriously and will be dealt with according to ISA's policies and procedures and Ministerial Order 870.

2. Application

This Child Safety Policy and Code applies to all employees, such as office staff and guardians (all adults engaged in child-connected work) and volunteers.

Note: any reference to legislation in this policy includes a reference to the legislation as amended from time to time.

3. Acceptable Behaviours & Responsibilities

- 1) Taking all practicable steps to protect students from abuse and upholding ISA's commitment to the highest standards of child safety at all times
- 2) Promoting the safety, dignity, participation and empowerment of students with a disability or from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- 3) Not unlawfully discriminating against students for their age, gender, race or sexuality
- 4) Treating everyone with respect
- 5) Valuing the ideas and opinions of everyone
- 6) Being fair, considerate and honest with everyone
- 7) Respecting all ISA's community members' privacy
- 8) Understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the Crime Act 1958
- 9) Listening and responding immediately to the concerns or allegations made by students, either for themselves and/or others
- 10) Reporting any student safety concerns to the guardians, head office relevant staff or the national director of ISA before any suspected, alleged or actual child abuse is reported to the authorities (Police, Department of Health & Human Services) in accordance with ISA's Child Safety and Response Policy and Procedures (including Mandatory Reporting)
- 11) Using positive reinforcement and avoiding abusive, harassing or discriminatory language
- 12) Not developing any "special" relationships with students, which could be seen as grooming, favouritism, or misconstrued as unnecessarily physical

4. Unacceptable Behaviours

- 1) Ignoring or disregarding any suspected or disclosed child abuse
- 2) Developing any "special" relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism, for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children
- 3) Exhibiting behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical, for example inappropriate touching or sitting on laps
- 4) Engaging in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children, for example, personal social activities
- 5) Using inappropriate language in the presence of children, including swearing
- 6) Expressing personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
- 7) Discriminating against any child because of age, race, religion, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or disability
- 8) Photographing or videoing a child without the consent of the school, parent or children
- 9) Responsibility with children whilst under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs

5. Procedures:

Once the suspected issue happens, guardian must record the details in the students ISA file. They must immediately contact the relevant Child Safe Officer who will make an independent verification and follow up.

A register of all scheduled Child Protection Programs will be prepared annually for all staff. On delivery of each program, the register is to be updated to show the action completion date with verified sign-off by the applicable ISA national manager and national director.

The Child Safety Officer will conduct a sample audit annually to ensure that all aspects of this policy are being adhered to across all parties within ISA Community. The audit report will be presented to the national director on an annual basis.

6. Relevant law, regulation

All members must comply with this Code and all relevant laws, regulations, policies and procedures:

Crime Act 1958(Vic)

Child Safe Standards 2015

Ministerial Order No870- Child Safe Standards-Managing the risk of child abuse

All members must honestly report any actual or suspected breach of this Code, or any law, regulation, policy or procedure.

7. Recourse:

[Department of Justice: Betrayal of Trust Factsheet: The new -failure to disclose-offence.](#)

[Department of Justice: Betrayal of Trust Factsheet: The new -grooming-offence.](#)

[Department of Justice: Betrayal of Trust Factsheet: The new -failure to protect-offence.](#)

[VRQA Newsletter -New obligations to help protect children: Betrayal of Trust implementation-\(Edition 41\).](#)

8. Child Safe Officers:

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