Child and Youth Safety Policy

Effective date:		Version: Approved	1
Drafted by:	Peta Titter	Date approved: 17-11-2024	
Approved by:	WHEN Board	Next review: November 2026	

PURPOSE:

This policy seeks to protect children and young people engaged with WHEN ensuring their safety, wellbeing, and rights are respected and upheld in line with the Tasmanian and National principle Child and Youth Safe Standards and the Reportable Conduct Scheme.

POLICY STATEMENT

Our commitment at WHEN is to prioritize the safety and wellbeing of children and young people above all else. We uphold the ten Child and Youth Safe Standards and recognize our responsibilities under the Reportable Conduct Scheme.

THE TEN NATIONAL PRINCIPLES: OUR COMMITMENTS

Principle 1:
Our leadership prioritizes child safety and wellbeing.

- All staff members adhere to our code of conduct and those belonging to AHPRA regulated occupations maintain active registration with AHPRA.

Principle 2:
We educate children and young people about their rights.

- We actively inform, involve, and empower children in decisions affecting them, ensuring their voices are heard.

Principle 3:
Our organization collaborates with families and communities.

- All board members and administrative staff must familiarize themselves with our child safety commitment statement, emphasizing our dedication to child and youth safety.

Principle 4:
Equity and respect are core to our operations.

- We value the individual needs of every child and young person. We treat them with dignity, respect, and fairness.

Principle 5:
Our staff and volunteers are suitably trained.

- Rigorous screening processes are in place, and we provide ongoing training to all members to ensure they uphold child safety standards.

- Working with children checks

- The board and senior management will complete the 11 e-learning modules from the Australian Human Rights Commission of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisation, volunteer will complete module 2 and 4.

-Clinical staff will complete modules from their respective governing body/union/federation, those modules should cover identify and responding to vulnerable children, mandatory reporting, and consent.

Principle 6:
Our complaint processes are child-centric.

- A clear channel for feedback and concerns is available on our website. All complaints are reviewed by our clinical governance committee, ensuring the child's voice is at the centre

Principle 7:
Continuous education and training are paramount.

- Staff and volunteers regularly undergo training to stay updated on best practices for ensuring child safety and wellbeing as per principle 5.

Principle 8:
Safe environments, both physical and online.

- Given our focus on health promotion, there is minimal physical interaction, but we ensure children and young people are safe in our promotional spaces and platforms.

Principle 9:
We commit to regular reviews.

- Our child safety practices are frequently assessed, and improvements are actively implemented.

Principle 10:
Documenting our dedication.

- Our procedures and policies related to child safety are transparent, accessible, and clearly documented for all to see on our website.

REPORTABLE CONDUCT SCHEME: OUR COMMITMENTS

- As mentioned, our staff abides by the professional conduct guidelines set by AHPRA. Any reportable conduct, as defined by the scheme, will be duly reported and reviewed.

SCOPE

This policy applies to everyone associated with WHEN, whether paid or unpaid. Every individual under this scope has a responsibility to uphold our commitment to the safety, wellbeing, and rights of children and young people.

RESPONSIBILITIES

All Staff, Board Members, Executive Leadership and Managers	• Report any instance of child abuse to the police. • Report any instance of a child at immediate risk of abuse to the appropriate state-based child safety organizations. For guidance on reporting, please refer to [https://www.childsafety.gov.au/make-report]. • Cooperate fully with any police/child protection investigation of child abuse or suspected child abuse. • Cooperate fully with any internal, WHEN investigation into child abuse or suspected child abuse. • Adhere to appropriate and respectful professional boundaries in all dealings with children. Specifically, they should avoid: - Giving or receiving gifts. - One-on-one online or SMS communication. - Physical contact. - Receipt Submission for Purchases During Youth Meetings: All staff and volunteers must retain and submit receipts for any drinks or other items purchased during meetings with youth at coffee shops or other venues. This requirement is essential to maintaining transparent documentation and safeguarding against potential allegations related to grooming. [Refer to Safeguarding Welfare and Transparent Documentation Policy for further details.] • Report any suspicion that a child's safety may be at risk to their supervisor. If their supervisor is involved in the suspicion, report to another responsible person in the organization. • Provide an environment that supports all children's emotional and physical safety.
WHEN Board	• Bear ultimate responsibility for the detection and prevention of child abuse within its operations. • Ensure that effective internal control systems are in place. • Ensure that suitable policies and procedures are established, including a Child Protection Code of Conduct.
Executive Leadership	• Handle and investigate reports of child abuse. • Ensure that all staff, contractors, and volunteers are aware of organizational policies and procedures, including WHEN's Code of Conduct. • Ensure the entire WHEN community understands their reporting obligations.

	• Ensure all personnel adhere to the Code of Conduct, particularly regarding child safety. • Provide support in discharging child protection responsibilities.
Managers	• Continuously promote child safety. • Assess and mitigate the risks of child abuse within their jurisdiction. • Provide education on preventing and recognizing child abuse. • Facilitate the reporting of inappropriate behaviour or suspected abuse. • Remain vigilant and familiarize themselves with potential abuse signs within their area of responsibility.
All Staff, including Volunteers, Trainees, Interns, Contractors and Consultants	• Share the responsibility for preventing and detecting child abuse. • -Maintain familiarity with and adhere to the Code of Conduct, WHEN's policies, and procedures related to child protection. • Report any reasonable suspicion of child safety risks to relevant authorities, such as the Police and/or state-based child protection service. • Fulfill all requirements and obligations as mandatory reporters.

COLLABORATION WITH EXTERNAL ENTITIES

- When collaborating with schools or any external entities, we verify their compliance with valid "Working with Children" policies to ensure consistency in child safety practices across collaborations.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed whenever changes to the law or WHEN's operating environment demand; and at least once a year