

## Child Safe Standards – Code of Conduct

**Responsible Reviewer:** CEO

**Department:** Governance

**Section:** Legislative Compliance

**Endorsing Committee:** Board of Directors

### Purpose

To provide guidance to all employees and volunteers on appropriate standards of behaviour towards children and to document Omeo District Health's commitment to child safety and the Victorian Child Safe Standards. For the purposes of this policy, a child is an individual under the age of 18 years.

### Target Audience

All staff, Directors, contractors and volunteers

### Guideline

We are committed to having an organisation that is safe for all children where child abuse and harm are not tolerated. Child safety is a priority under our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, and the prevention and reporting of abuse is supported and encouraged. All staff and contractors involved with our business are responsible for promoting the safety, wellbeing and empowerment of children. We recognise that discrimination can harm children and we treat all children with dignity and respect.

This Code of Conduct sets expectations about how staff and contractors should behave around children. This helps children engage safely with our organisation.

Having behavioural standards to manage risks to children is important. This Code of Conduct identifies positive child safe behaviours that we ask staff and contractors to demonstrate. It also identifies behaviours that we consider unacceptable and not permitted in our organisation.

Not following standards of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour is a breach of this Code of Conduct and may result in disciplinary or corrective action. This can include increased supervision, appointment to an alternative role, or suspension/termination from the organisation.

Should a contractor breach this Code of Conduct it will be dealt with by corrective action on a case-by-case basis.

Some behaviours on their own may not be a serious breach of the Code of Conduct but together may indicate a concerning pattern of behaviour that poses a risk to the safety of children. The standards of behaviour to be followed at all times are attached in Table 1 below.

Any breach of this Code of Conduct must be reported to Omeo District Health Chief Executive Officer or Director of Nursing. Contacts for the CEO or Director of Nursing can be obtained from ODH reception by calling 03 5159 0100 or emailing [reception@omeohs.com.au](mailto:reception@omeohs.com.au). If a complainant can't utilise this process, then they can contact the Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP) directly on 1300 782 978; <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/contact/>

breaches of this Code of Conduct may by law need to be reported to Victoria Police, or to the Commission for Children and Young People. Our Complaint Handling Policy provides more information about obligations to report matters to external authorities as well as describing protections and confidentiality provisions for anyone making a report.

The Complaint Handling Policy can be obtained by email from [reception@omeohs.com.au](mailto:reception@omeohs.com.au) or by phone (03) 5159 0100.

## 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 or contractor), 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 such information may be a criminal offence.

Table 1. Expected standard of behaviour

<b>All staff must follow these standards of behaviour at all times. Contractors are required to follow the (*) asterisked standards while on our premises or vehicles.</b>	<b>Staff must not do the following things. Contractors must not do the (*) asterisked things.</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• take all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse</li> <li>• take disclosures of harm or abuse made by a child seriously</li> <li>• * raise concerns with management if risks to child safety are identified</li> <li>• * report and act on any concerns or observed breaches of this Code of Conduct and expected behaviour</li> <li>• participate in training on child safety and wellbeing</li> <li>• * treat all children and young people with respect, regardless of race, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or other opinion, nationality, cultural background, financial situation, disability or other characteristics</li> <li>• consider the different needs of all children, support them to engage with our services and help them and their families feel included</li> <li>• make Aboriginal children and families feel included and welcome and support Aboriginal children to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights</li> <li>• * never be racist towards anyone and report any instances of racism you become aware of</li> <li>• help our organisation to be a place where people of all cultures feel safe and included</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• * condone or participate in illegal, unsafe, abusive or harmful behaviour towards children – this includes physical violence, sexual abuse, emotional or psychological abuse, grooming, neglect or sexual misconduct</li> <li>• ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse or harm</li> <li>• * exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues</li> <li>• * use hurtful or offensive behaviour or language with children</li> <li>• * fail to report information to police if I know a child has been abused</li> <li>• touch children in a way that is unnecessary or unsuitable and falls outside what is reasonable to assist a student with a temporary or permanent disability to board, travel or alight from the bus service</li> <li>• * persistently criticise and/or denigrate a child</li> <li>• * verbally assault a child or create a climate of fear</li> <li>• * offer children and young people alcohol, cigarettes or other drugs</li> <li>• * show children pornographic images</li> </ul>

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• listen to children and respond to them if they feel unsafe</li> <li>• value children and young people's ideas and opinions</li> <li>• promote friendships and encourage children and young people to support their peers</li> <li>• * report any conflicts of interest I have (such as an outside relationship with a child) that may affect my ability to perform my role</li> <li>• * respect the privacy of children and their families, including keeping all personal information confidential unless required by law to share it</li> <li>• inform parents and carers if there are situations that need to be safely managed but are outside the boundaries of this Code of Conduct (such as driving a child to a performance or competition or undertaking one-on-one training sessions)</li> <li>• * comply with all relevant Australian and Victorian legislation and our child safe policies and procedures</li> <li>• uphold children's rights and always prioritise their needs</li> <li>• * if a contractor, report any inappropriate behaviour to the operator or the appropriate authority</li> <li>• * report breaches of this Code immediately</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• * share details of sexual experiences with a child</li> <li>• * use sexual language or gestures in the presence of children</li> <li>• * initiate unnecessary physical contact with children or do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves</li> <li>• * develop 'special' relationships with specific children or show favouritism through the provision of gifts or unnecessary or unsuitable attention</li> <li>• * have unauthorised contact with children online, on social media or by phone</li> <li>• * take photographs, screenshots or share images of children that are not authorised by the child or child's representative (not related to CCTV)</li> <li>• * be alone with a child when there is no professional reason for doing so</li> <li>• * engage in babysitting, mentoring and/or tutoring a child out of work hours (without managerial approval for this kind of secondary employment)</li> <li>• * enter changing facilities without first knocking.</li> <li>• * fail to report breaches of this Code immediately</li> </ul> |
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### Evaluation

Regular document revision and review of relevant 'RiskMan' Reports

### Key Aligned Documents

[Working With Children Policy](#)  
[Vulnerable Children / Child at Risk / Failure to Disclose Policy](#)  
[Confidentiality](#)

### Key Legislation, Acts & Standards

Child Wellbeing and Safety (Child Safe Standards Compliance & Enforcement) Amendment Bill 2021

### References

CCYP | Child Safe Standards <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/>

### Author / Contributors

Position Title	Service/Program
Quality & Risk Manager	
PCBM	
Facilities Officer	Operational Compliance