

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

1. Purpose

Australian Kookaburra Kids Foundation (AKKF) is committed to the safety and wellbeing of our young people. This policy outlines how AKKF will fulfil this commitment.

2. Commencement of Policy

This policy will commence on and from 01/09/2022.

3. Scope

This Policy and Procedure applies to AKKF as a whole.

It replaces all other Child Safety and Wellbeing policies/procedures of AKKF (whether written or not).

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment.

4. Our commitment to child safety

AKKF is committed to child safety.

- a) We want children to be safe, happy and empowered.
- b) We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers.
- c) We are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children.
- d) 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.
- e) We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously.
- f) AKKF is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early and removing and reducing these risks.
- g) AKKF has robust People and Culture recruitment practices to reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing board members, staff and volunteers.
- h) AKKF is committed to regularly training and educating our board members, staff and volunteers on child abuse risks.
- i) 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 all children .
- j) We have specific policies and procedures in place that support our board members, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments.

5. Our children

This policy is intended to empower children, who are vital and active participants at AKKF. 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 AKKF, and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome. In particular, we:

- (i) promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children
- (ii) promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- (iii) ensure that children with a disability are safe and can participate equally.

6. Our staff and volunteers

This policy guides our staff and volunteers on how to behave with children at AKKF. All 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 are given the opportunity to contribute to the development of the code of conduct.

7. Training and supervision

Training and education is important to ensure that everyone at AKKF 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.

7.1 Supervision

New staff and volunteers will be supervised regularly to ensure they understand AKKF'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 AKKF's code of conduct for information about appropriate behaviour). Any inappropriate behaviour (i.e any mandatory reporting) will be reported through appropriate channels, (relevant State/Territory child

protection service and applicable State/Territory Police, depending on the severity and urgency of the matter.

7.1.1 Functions of supervision

The four main functions of supervision are:

7.1.2. Management

This function is to ensure that the work for which the supervisee may be held accountable is carried out to a satisfactory standard. Discussion during supervision should include:

- The overall quality of the supervisee's performance and work output/timescales/outcome.
- The policies and procedures relating to their work and that these are understood and followed.
- The role and responsibilities of the supervisee and that these are clearly understood, including the boundaries and limits of their role.
- The development and monitoring of action plans/targets and objectives.
- Monitoring of the supervisee's workload.

7.2.2 Learning and Development

This function is to encourage and assist staff, volunteers or board members in reflecting on their own practice, identify their own learning and development needs and develop plans or identify opportunities to address those needs.

The learning and development function will be achieved through:

- Reflecting on supervisees learning style, facilitators and barriers to learning.
- Assessing development needs and identifying learning opportunities.
- Giving and receiving feedback.
- Encouraging the supervisee to reflect on learning opportunities and applying that learning to the workplace.

7.2.3. Support

This function recognises that supervisees may require support to carry out their role; this may be because of particular situations, specific incidents or personal issues that may temporarily impact on their work performance. By offering support within the supervision context supervisees should be given the opportunity to reflect on the impact of the work upon them and prevent issues adversely affecting them and their work.

This will be achieved through:

- Creating a safe, secure and effective environment within supervision.
- Clarifying the boundaries between support and counselling.
- Enabling and empowering expression of feelings in relation to the work role.
- Monitoring the health of the supervisee and referring to other support services when required.

7.2.4. Negotiation

This function is to ensure that the relationship between the supervisee, their team, the organisation and other agencies with whom they work are effective.

This will be achieved through:

- Dealing sensitively but clearly with concerns and complaints about colleagues and others with whom they work, in line with AKKF’s respective policies and procedures.
- Consulting and briefing staff on changes and developments that affect their area of work.
- Advocating between employee or team and other parts of the agency or with outside agencies.

7.3 Supervision Type & Frequency:

Position Description	Supervision Type	Supervision Frequency	Supervisor
Program Coordinator	1:1- onsite	Quarterly	Head of Operations or their delegate
	Group Supervision- online	Biannually	Clinical Services Practitioner
Program Assist	1:1- onsite	Quarterly	Program Coordinator
Clinical Services Practitioner	1:1- online	Monthly	Head of Clinical
Clinical Support	1:1- online	Monthly	Head of Clinical Services or their delegate
External Clinician	1:1- online	Quarterly	Head of Clinical Services or their delegate
Activity Day Volunteer	Group Supervision- onsite “check in forms”	Per Activity Day	Program Coordinator or Program Assist.

Camp Volunteer	Group Supervision- onsite “check in forms”	Per Camp	Program Coordinator or Program Assist.
Connect Co Host Volunteer	Group Supervision - online “Connect refresh”	Biannually	Clinical Services Practitioner or their delegate.
Connect Host	Group Supervision - online “Connect refresh”	Biannually	Clinical Services Practitioner or their delegate.
New operational staff Members	Online: Operational supervision meeting	Weekly 6-8 weeks	Relevant supervisor

7.3.2 Onsite Supervision 1:1

Onsite supervision will occur onsite during a camp and/or activity day. Onsite supervision will be completed by supervisors outlined in section 7.3. *supervision type and frequency* respective of role/scope. Supervision will be recorded on an individual “supervision” form.

7.3.3 Operational Supervision

Operational supervision meetings aim to educate and orient new staff to the administration systems and processes. Operational supervision meetings aim to educate and orient new staff to the administration systems and processes at AKKF through an online meeting format. Operational supervision meetings will typically occur at the commencement of staff employment and will involve weekly 30-minute meetings with a senior member of staff or their delegate, for 6-8 weeks, or until the staff member is competent and feels confident in their knowledge of AKKF systems and processes.

7.2.4 Volunteer “check in” Supervision

Volunteer supervision referred to as volunteer “check in’s” will be a group supervision completed onsite (Activity Day or Camps). Supervision will be completed by the Program Coordinator or Program Assist and recorded on an individual “check in” form.

7.2.5 Connect Co Host “connect refreshers”

Connect Co Host supervision referred to as “connect refreshers” will be completed online as a group supervision. Supervision will be completed by a Clinical Services Practitioner or their delegate. Supervision are to occur biannually with attendance recorded through respective ELMO/ Better Impact platforms.

7.2.6 Connect Host “connect refreshers”

Connect Host supervision referred to as “connect refreshers” will be completed as a group supervision. Supervision will be completed by a Clinical Services Practitioner

or their delegate. Supervision are to occur biannually with attendance recorded through respective ELMO/ Better Impact platforms.

8. Child Safety protocols

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. AKKF understands that when recruiting board members, staff and volunteers, we have ethical as well as legislative obligations.

AKKF actively encourage applications from Aboriginal people, people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with a disability

8.1. Working with Children Checks

All people who are engaged in child-related work and who are not exempt, including volunteers, are required to hold a valid Working with Children Check (WWC) in their relevant state/territory and are required to provide evidence of this. AKKF will keep records of staff and volunteer WWC Checks and expiry dates within the Better Impact (Volunteers) and ELMO (staff) systems. All WWC are validated through state/territory respective validation processes.

Board members, staff and volunteers are required to notify AKKF immediately if their WWC is cancelled, revoked, suspended, or expires without being replaced. AKKF will not in any circumstance engage or continue to engage anyone in child-related work who does not have a valid WWC who is not exempt, or who have received WWC exclusion notification and not subsequently received a WWC card.

Where a volunteer or staff member is required to work outside their resident state/territory, they will be required to conform to relevant state/territory legislation. A summary of working with Children Check interstate legislative requirements is summarised in appendix one and will be made readily available to staff/volunteers.

Staff/Volunteers will be required to provide evidence of compliance to appendix one, before attending programs outside their resident state/territory. Appendix one will be updated from time to time to reflect legislative changes.

8.2 National Police Checks

AKKF carries out national police record checks before commencing employment, and every three years thereafter, to ensure that we are employing the right people. If during employment or through the recruitment process a person's record indicate a disclosable outcome, then the person will be given the opportunity to provide further information and context. This information will be reviewed by relevant parties which many include, the Head of the Department, Head of People and Culture, the CEO

and other relevant parties. Employment of staff and/or volunteers will be at the discretion of the CEO. Where there is a perceived risk to our young people, staff, volunteers or organisation, their application will not progress and/or employment will be terminated.

Board members, staff and volunteers are required to disclose to AKKF immediately, any changes in their circumstance, regarding their national police clearance status. National Police Clearance applications, outcomes and expiry dates will be stored within the Better Impact (Volunteers) and ELMO (staff) software systems/People and Culture files. Where a change is indicated or a notification received, the information will be reviewed by relevant parties which may include the Head of the Department, Head of People and Culture, the CEO and other relevant parties, employment of staff and/or volunteers will be at the discretion of the CEO. Where there is a perceived risk to our young people, staff, volunteers or organisation, their employment will be terminated.

8.3 Adult to Young Person Ratios

The safety and wellbeing of the children in our care is our primary concern. To maintain the safety of our children and to mitigate risk, AKKF has developed an Adult to Young Person Ratio policy. The policy clearly outlines the minimum adult to young person ratio requirements whilst on program, including Online Connect, Activity Days and Camp. AKKF Adult to Young Person Ratio policy is subject to change from time to time.

9. 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, in accordance with respective AKKF policies.

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 relevant Territory/State child protection department on progress and actions we as an organisation take.

10. 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, AKKF has developed a Privacy Policy that clearly outlines how 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 AKKF are comfortable to disclose any allegations or concerns in relation to child safety without repercussions.

11. Legislative responsibilities

AKKF takes its legal responsibilities seriously, including:

- a) Failure to disclose: All adults 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 relevant State/Territory Police.
- b) 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. AKKF recognises that legislation varies between State/Territories and provides training to all board members, staff and volunteers about relevant state/territory legislative requirements and their obligations.
- c) 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.
- d) 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 relevant state/territory departments below and police.

- I. Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities (NT)
- II. Department of Child Protection (WA)
- III. Child and Youth Protection Services (ACT)
- IV. Child Safety Services (TAS)
- V. Department of Communities and Justice (NSW)
- VI. Child Safety Services (CSS) - Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs (QLD)
- VII. The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) (VIC)

- e) 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.

12. Risk management

Nationally, 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.

13. Allegations, concerns and complaints

AKKF takes all allegations seriously and has practices in place to investigate thoroughly and quickly. Our board members, staff and volunteers are trained to deal with allegations appropriately.

We work to ensure all children, families, board members, staff and volunteers know what to do and who to tell if they observe abuse or are a victim, and if they notice inappropriate behaviour.

We all have a responsibility to report an allegation of abuse if we have a reasonable belief that an incident took place. If an adult has a reasonable belief that an incident has occurred, then they must report the incident. Factors contributing to reasonable belief may include:

- (i) a child states they or someone they know has been abused (noting that sometimes the child may in fact be referring to themselves)
- (ii) behaviour consistent with that of an abuse victim is observed
- (iii) someone else has raised a suspicion of abuse but is unwilling to report it
- (iv) observing suspicious behaviour.

14. Regular review

This policy will be reviewed annually and following significant incidents if they occur.

15. Policy Document Control

Policy Authority	AKKF Board
Sub-Committee Responsibility	Clinical Governance & Operations Committee
SLT Responsibility	CEO

Documents related to this policy
1.6 Information Management Policy
5.3.1 Code of Conduct
5.3.4 Internet & Email Policy

Policy review and version tracking		
Date Approved	Version Number	Approved by
25.10.22 CGOC then 29.11.22 by Board	Version 1	Board

APPENDIX 1:

WWCC Interstate Compliance Requirements- (as of June 2022).

State	Can interstate workers with valid other state's WWCC work in this state	Rules on visiting workers with WWC from other states
ACT	Yes – see rules >	If they are engaged in the activity for not more than— 3 days in any 4-week period; and 7 days in any 12-month period <u>CAMPS</u> – Not exempt. Anyone working with children on overnight stays must have ACT WWVP clearance.
NT	Yes - see rules >	14 days in a year in total but MUST also be supervised by someone with a valid NT WWC Ochre Clearance <u>CAMPS</u> – Not exempt. Anyone working with children on overnight stays must have NT WWCC clearance.
NSW	Yes – see rules >	No more than 30 working days in a calendar year. <u>CAMPS</u> - Not exempt volunteers and staff MUST hold valid NSW WWCC Clearance.
TAS	Yes – see rules >	Can only work or volunteer for a maximum of 7 days or less per calendar year. <u>CAMPS</u> – Not exempt. Anyone working with children on overnight stays must have TAS WWVP clearance.
QLD	Yes – see rules >	Maximum of 7 days total per calendar year (1 January to 31 December). A day is for 'any period of time' in one day irrespective of whether it is a part-day or full-day. <u>CAMPS</u> – As above 7 days total per calendar year - organisations also need to have a 'Youth and Risk Management Strategy' in place.

State	Can interstate workers with valid other state's WWCC work in this state	Rules on visiting workers with WWC from other states
SA	Yes	<p>Maximum of 7 days total per year. The 7-day exclusion no longer applies if a person works with children for more than 7 days. Does not apply if worker will have close personal contact with children with a disability.</p> <p><u>CAMPS</u> – Not exempt. Anyone working with children on overnight stays must have SA WWCC clearance.</p>
VIC	Yes – see rules >	<p>If you normally live outside of Victoria <u>and hold an equivalent check in your own state/territory</u> you can do child related work without a Victorian WWCC for a maximum of 30 days in the same calendar year which can comprise of one or several events and occasions.</p> <p><u>CAMPS</u> - 30 days in the same calendar year which can comprise of one or several events and occasions.</p>
WA	Yes – see rules >	<p>*Only <u>one event or occasion without WA WWCC</u> for Short Term Visitors to WA - applied to work carried out by visitors to WA, where the person is not ordinarily a resident in WA; and only applies during the two-week period after the person arrives in WA and cannot exceed a total of two weeks in any period of 12 months.</p> <p>CAMPS - Emailed to WA WWCC asking specifically about overnight camps reply referred us to the above legislation.</p>