

# Child Safe Policy – POL013

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## **Introduction:**

United Way Glenelg is committed to promoting and protecting the interests and safety of children. We have zero tolerance for child abuse.

This policy applies to all activities in the organisation which involve, result in, or relate to, contact with children.

The employees and volunteer Board members at United Way Glenelg are responsible for the protection of children and reporting information about child abuse.

All Board members and staff are required to have a valid Working with Children Check (WWCC) to ensure their eligibility to work with children, enhancing our organisational commitment to child safety.

## **Purpose:**

1. facilitate the prevention of child abuse within United Way Glenelg.
2. work towards an organisational culture of child safety.
3. ensure that all parties are aware of their responsibilities for identifying possible occasions for child abuse and for establishing controls and procedures for preventing and/or detecting such abuse when it occurs.
4. guide all people who conduct work for United Way Glenelg as to the action that should be taken where they suspect any abuse has occurred.
5. provide a clear statement to all people who conduct work for United Way Glenelg forbidding any such abuse.
6. ensure that any suspected abuse is reported.

## **Background:**

United Way Glenelg supports and respects all children, staff and volunteers.

United Way Glenelg is committed to promoting and protecting the best interests of children involved in its programs.

All children, regardless of their gender, race, religious beliefs, age, disability, sexual orientation, or family or social background, have equal rights to protection from abuse. United Way Glenelg is committed to the cultural safety of all children, and those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children living with a disability.

United Way Glenelg has zero-tolerance for child abuse. Child protection is a shared responsibility between all people who conduct work for United Way Glenelg in a paid and unpaid capacity. This includes Board members, employees and volunteers.

## **Definitions:**

**Child** means a person below the age of 18 years unless, under the law applicable to the child, maturity is attained earlier.

**Child protection** means any responsibility, measure or activity undertaken to safeguard children from harm.

**Child abuse** means all forms of physical abuse, emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse and exploitation, neglect or negligent treatment, commercial (e.g. for financial gain) or other

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exploitation of a child and includes any actions that result in actual or potential harm to a child.

## **Responsibilities:**

The Board of United Way Glenelg has a role to play in the detection and prevention of child abuse and is responsible for ensuring that appropriate and effective internal control systems are in place.

The Executive Officer (EO) of United Way Glenelg is responsible for: dealing with reports of child abuse, including reporting incidents to relevant authorities for investigation;

- ensuring that all staff and volunteers are aware of relevant laws, organisational policies and procedures, and the organisation's Code of Conduct (particularly as it relates to child safety);
- maintaining the WWCC and Code of Conduct registers
- ensuring that all people who conduct work for United Way Glenelg in a paid and unpaid capacity are aware of their obligation to report suspected sexual abuse of a child as required by law.
- providing support for staff and volunteers in undertaking their child protection responsibilities. Where the EO is implicated, the President must perform those roles.

All people who conduct work for United Way Glenelg in a paid and unpaid capacity including Board members, employees and volunteers share the responsibility for the prevention and detection of child abuse, and must:

- familiarise themselves with the relevant laws, the Code of Conduct, and United Way Glenelg's policy and procedures concerning child protection, and comply with all requirements;
- report any reasonable belief that a child's safety is at risk to the relevant authorities (such as the police and/or the state-based child protection service) and fulfil their obligations as mandatory reporters;
- report any suspicion that a child's safety may be at risk to the EO or, if the EO is involved in the suspicion, to the President of United Way Glenelg; and
- provide an environment that is supportive of all children's emotional and physical safety.

If any person believes a child is at immediate risk of abuse, they should telephone 000.

## **Privacy:**

All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved unless there is a risk to someone's safety. United Way Glenelg will have safeguards and practices in place to ensure any personal information is protected.

Everyone is entitled to know how their personal information is recorded, what will be done with it, and who will be able to access it.

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## **Employment of new personnel (including the recruitment of volunteer Board members):**

United Way Glenelg undertakes a comprehensive recruitment and screening process for all workers and volunteers that aims to:

- promote and protect the safety of all children involved in the programs of the organisation;
- identify the safest and most suitable people who share United Way Glenelg's values and commitment to protecting children; and
- prevent a person from working at United Way Glenelg if they pose a risk to children.

United Way Glenelg requires all workers/volunteers to pass through the organisation's recruitment and screening processes before commencing their engagement with United Way Glenelg.

United Way Glenelg requires applicants to provide a Working with Children Check under the law, and as appropriate before they commence working or volunteering at United Way Glenelg, and during their time with United Way Glenelg at regular intervals. This will be monitored by the Board as a regular agenda item.

United Way Glenelg will undertake thorough reference checks as per the approved internal procedure.

All employees and Board members are required to read and commit to the Code of Conduct.

Once engaged, workers/volunteers must review and acknowledge their understanding of this Policy.

## **Risk management:**

United Way Glenelg will ensure that child safety is a part of its overall risk management approach. United Way Glenelg has a risk register with clear risk management controls with relevant policies aligned.

## **Evaluation/Reviewing:**

This policy and its associated practices will be reviewed by the Executive of United Way Glenelg as part of its three-year review cycle, following every reportable incident, and in response to any changes in legislation.

## **Authorisation:**

President  
United Way Glenelg

Secretary  
United Way Glenelg

**Related documents/references:**

Code of Conduct register  
UWG Risk Register  
WWCC register.  
Recruitment Policy

This policy must be read in conjunction with:

Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005

<https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/child-wellbeing-and-safety-act-2005/035>

Child Safe Standards July 2022

<https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/compliance-child-safe-standards>