

CHILD SAFE ORGANISATION

CODE OF CONDUCT

All children attending or visiting REED ECEC services, events or premises have the right to be safe from harm and abuse. The wellbeing of children and their right to feel safe, heard and understood is our priority. REED has a zero tolerance to child abuse and is committed to maintaining and embedding child safeguarding practices to create and maintain an environment where children feel valued, protected, and safe.

This Code of Conduct aims to provide a framework for all employees, students, volunteers, visitors, contractors, board members, partners and associates of Regional Early Education & Development (REED) to ensure an understanding of the standards of conduct and appropriate behaviour expected at all times. REED is committed to maintaining an environment that promotes the safeguarding of all children, underpinned by the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. All REED employees, students, volunteers, visitors, contractors, board members, partners and associates are responsible for promoting a culture of safety and wellbeing to minimise any risk of abuse or harm to children whilst promoting children's right to safety and belonging.

Children's Voices:

I feel safe when I am with my friends – aged 8

I feel safe at day care – aged 6

All REED employees, students, volunteers, visitors, contractors, board members, partners and associates will, at all times, maintain the following ethical conduct ideologies, and demonstrate positive interactions within the Service and the local community by:

- Committing to REED's philosophy and values, inclusive of best practice in early childhood education and care.
- Upholding REED's *Charter of Commitment to Children and Young People*, as this reflects what children and young people have told us they consider important characteristics of safety for them.
- Fostering a culture of child safety within REED Services by adhering to REED's policies and procedures, including but not limited to, *Child Safeguarding Policy*, *Child Protection Policy*, *Child Safe Environment Policy* and *Code of Conduct Policy* at all times and take all reasonable steps to proactively protect children from abuse and harm.

- Acting in a professional manner at all times, complying with Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations, and the National Quality Standard.
- Possessing a solid understanding of the *ECA Code of Ethics* and promoting ethical behaviour and maintaining professional boundaries in everyday practice.
- Promoting a commitment to a workplace that values and promotes the safety, health, and wellbeing of employees, students, volunteers, visitors, contractors, children, families and the community.
- Proactively contribute to ensuring a safe workplace by assisting to manage psychosocial hazards, including identification, reducing, and managing psychological and psychosocial hazards and risks within the work environment through risk assessments in line with WH&S legislation.
- Treating colleagues, children, and families with respect, contributing to a safe and inclusive environment free from bullying, discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment
 - Bullying or insulting behaviour, including verbal and non-verbal aggression, abusive, threatening, or derogatory language or intimidation towards other employees, children, visitors, or families is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
- Making a commitment to an Equal Opportunity workplace and culture that values the knowledge, experience, and professionalism of all employees, team members, and managers, and the diverse heritage of our families and children.
- Completing a comprehensive probation and induction orientation program for all new employees, volunteers and students to include awareness of their roles and responsibilities in relation to Child Safe practices.
- Participating in all mandatory training, including updating Child Protection training every 12 months, or sooner if there are changes to Child Protection Law.
- Seeking clarification from colleagues if they are uncertain or do not understand the content of any policy, procedure or training with which they must comply.
- Informing children and young people of their rights and upholding their rights according to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child using child friendly language.
 - <https://www.unicef.org.au/united-nations-convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child>
 - <https://www.ccyp.wa.gov.au/media/1216/poster-united-nations-january-2008.pdf>
- Exercising attentiveness in all interactions with children and young people and prioritising their needs.
- Ensuring all children and young people are heard and respected. Their views, opinions, questions and comments are believed, taken seriously and responded to appropriately, according to their age and developmental capabilities.

- Ensuring complaint processes are child friendly and children and young people know how to make a complaint and who to address the complaint to.
- Proactively listening and responding to the concerns of children and young people, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been or is being abused or they are worried about their safety or the safety of one of their peers.
- Promoting the safety of children and young people and protecting them from abuse by retaining the right to question any direction or act they believe to be unethical, illegal, unsafe or abusive, including physical, sexual or psychological abuse, ill-treatment, verbal and non-verbal aggression, neglect or grooming.
- Promoting the cultural safety, participation, and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander children to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights.
- Promoting the safety, participation, and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds to support children to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights.
- Promoting the safety, participation, and empowerment of children with a disability.
- Respecting the confidential nature of information regarding children and young people.

All REED employees, students, volunteers, visitors, contractors, board members, partners and associates will NOT engage in any of the following:

- Any unlawful activity or any activity that is likely to physically, sexually or emotionally harm a child.
- Inappropriately disciplining a child including, but not limited to; unnecessarily restraining, verbal or physical threats, physically dragging or pushing, excluding or isolating, negative labelling or shaming, using physical force or negative language and yelling.
- Unlawfully discriminating against any child or their family members, carers and/or guardians.
- Taking images of children on personal devices or sharing images of children outside of the service or on any unauthorised online platform.
- Providing or giving access to any inappropriate images or material to children.
- Using inappropriate language in the presence of children.
- Working with children while under the influence of alcohol or prohibited drugs.
- Ignoring or disregarding any suspected or disclosed child harm or abuse.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER AND NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL:

- Implement supportive and effective communication systems, keeping employees informed about essential information and any relevant changes and make all documents readily accessible to them.

- Ensure copies of the ECA Code of Ethics and Child Safe Standards are available to employees and families.
- Take appropriate action if a breach of the code of conduct occurs.
- Give encouragement and constructive feedback to employees, respecting the value of different professional approaches.
- Follow recruitment policies and procedures to ensure all potential candidates undergo appropriate background checks, including Working with Children Checks.
- Model and provide guidance to educators and staff to ensure compliance with a zero tolerance of racism within the service.

All employees are made fully aware that breaches of the Child Safe Organisations Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

All students, volunteers, contractors and associates are made fully aware that breaches of the Child Safe Organisations Code of Conduct may result in the cessation of their interactions with REED.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

<i>I have read and understood REED's Child Safe Organisation Code of Conduct and agree to abide by its terms and conditions at all times.</i>			
Staff Members Name		DATE	
Staff Members Signature			
Nominated Supervisor Name		DATE	
Nominated Supervisor Signature			

Document Tracking

Action	Approval	Date
Endorsed by Board	Board	21.10.2024