

Procedure

Commitment to Child Safety and Reportable Conduct

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Review Cycle	3 years
Responsible Person	Executive Director

Statement of Child Safety

At Footscray Community Arts:

- We want children to be safe, happy and empowered.
- We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers.
- We are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children.
- 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.
- We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously.
- We are committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks.
- We have robust human resources and recruitment practices to reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing board members, staff and volunteers.
- We are committed to regularly training and educating our board members, staff and volunteers on child abuse risks.
- 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 for children with a disability.
- We have specific policies and procedures in place that support our board members, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments.

Principles

Footscray Community Arts has reviewed our procedures to ensure they adheres to the Australian and Victorian Child Safe Standards.

At the core of Footscray Community Arts' vision and mission is an ongoing commitment to provide a safe space in Melbourne's West for local communities; those who experience disadvantage and

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inequality; to facilitate opportunities for our communities to be part of the civic narrative; and to champion accessibility and visibility of the art made by our communities.

Footscray Community Arts observes the right of every person to be able to attend and participate in our programs without being subjected to any form of discrimination, bullying, harassment, abuse and / or neglect.

In addition to this, we aim to deliver an equitable organisation that takes positive steps to identify and overcome past discrimination, bullying, harassment, abuse and / or neglect and to imbed practices that prevent those behaviours in the future.

Specifically, in the area of child protection, Footscray Community Arts affirms a commitment to:

- a zero tolerance approach to child abuse;
- facilitating platforms where children and young people are empowered to be leaders, and for their voices to be part of the greater civic narrative;
- maintaining and reviewing systems to protect children from abuse;
- taking all allegations and concerns very seriously and responding to them consistently in line with policies and procedures; and
- promoting cultural safety for Aboriginal children, cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

Footscray Community Arts requires all people working with children and young people to hold a current 'Working with Children' check and provides ongoing training and supervision for all people working in that context.

Reportable Conduct Scheme

The Reportable Conduct Scheme seeks to improve organisations' responses to allegations of child abuse and neglect by their workers and volunteers. The scheme is established by the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005.

The scheme is established by the Act and it seeks to improve how organisations identify and respond to allegations of child abuse and neglect by their workers and volunteers. These allegations are called reportable allegations.

What are reportable allegations?

A 'reportable allegation' means any information that leads a person to form a 'reasonable belief' that a person has committed reportable conduct. The Act sets out the five types of reportable conduct, which are:

- sexual offences (against, with or in the presence of, a child)
- sexual misconduct (against, with or in the presence of, a child)
- physical violence (against, with or in the presence of, a child)
- behaviour that is likely to cause significant emotional or psychological harm
- significant neglect.

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Reporting

Any allegations of abuse or neglect are managed directly by Executive Management, and follow the process outlined below.

1. ensure that the organisation has systems in place in relation to the scheme, including systems for the prevention of reportable conduct
2. notify the Commission when a reportable allegation has been made
3. investigate the reportable allegation (this could include permitting a regulator or independent external investigator to investigate a reportable allegation)
4. provide information or documents relating to a reportable allegation to the Commission
5. ensure that the Commission (or independent investigator engaged by the Commission) is given 'any assistance' in connection with the reasonable performance of their functions
6. provide detailed information about a reportable allegation to the Commission
7. provide details of the outcome of an investigation into a reportable allegation and any proposed disciplinary actions.