



# Child Safety Policy

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## 1. Purpose

This policy explains how CAN Community Support (CCS) keeps children and young people safe. It sets out what staff, volunteers, and community members must do to make sure every child who comes into contact with CCS feels safe, respected, and protected from harm.

## 2. Our Commitment

CCS is a child-safe organisation with zero tolerance for child abuse. Every child has the right to feel safe, happy, and respected. All staff and volunteers are expected to follow this policy and the CCS Child Safe Code of Conduct, complete training, and hold a valid Working with Children Check (WWCC) as required by *Working with Children Act 2005* and the Working with Children Regulations 2016.

## 3. Children's Rights and Participation

We welcome and respect children and families from all backgrounds, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, those from culturally diverse communities, and children with disabilities. We are committed to ensuring culturally safe and inclusive environments for all children and families, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, those from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, LGBTQIA+ children, and children with disabilities.

Children have the right to be heard and to contribute to decisions that affect them. CCS encourages children to share their ideas, express concerns, and speak up if they feel uncomfortable or unsafe. Staff and volunteers must listen carefully and act promptly.

## 4. Recruitment of staff and volunteers

All staff and volunteers must have a current WWCC and complete child safety training before starting work. Job descriptions and advertisements clearly state our commitment to child safety. A copy of this policy and the Code of Conduct must be provided during induction to all employees and volunteers by their program co-ordinator or manager. All who work or volunteer at CCS are required to:

- Sign the CCS Child Safe Code of Conduct committing to:
  - adhere to the CAN Community Support Child Safety Policies and Procedures, and

- actively ensure the safety, protection and wellbeing of children who come into association with CCS, and
- Hold a current Working with Children Check (WWCC).

All employees and volunteers' WWCC must be checked, sighted, signed (and dated) by the program co-ordinator or manager, registered on the CCS volunteer database.

Employee's and Volunteer's WWCCs can be made available at the request of Synod of Vic/Tas (see Volunteer Recruitment Policy).

## 5. Training and induction for Staff and Volunteers

CCS provides supervision, training, and support to help staff and volunteers understand their child safety responsibilities. All staff must undertake mandatory Child Safe training during their induction period. After any critical incidents, staff and volunteers are offered de-briefing with their program co-ordinator and/or the Executive Officer.

All CCS staff, volunteers and contractors have the responsibility to:

- familiarise themselves with the CCS Child Safe Policy (this document)
- sign and commit to the CCS Child Safe Code of Conduct (Attachment A), and
- undertake mandatory Child Safe training upon their induction into the organisation.

## 6. Reporting Child Safety Concerns

Any staff member or volunteer that believes a child is at risk or has been harmed must report their concerns immediately to their program co-ordinator and/or the Executive Officer. Following this they should:

- ensure the child is safe (if the child is in immediate danger call 000)
- stay calm, record what they observe, and inform the program co-ordinator or Executive Officer, and
- keep information confidential.

Any program co-ordinator/manager that has received a complaint/report must report it to the Executive Officer within 12 hours and complete a Critical Incident Report.

The Executive Officer supports staff to ensure the child is safe, informs parents or carers (when appropriate), and reports to Child Protection (DFFH) or Victoria Police (external agency) where necessary.

All information about child safety concerns or reports is treated as confidential and only shared with those directly involved in responding to or investigating the concern.

If a disclosure relates to past or historical abuse, it must still be reported using the same process as current concerns.

It is the responsibility of the Executive Officer to appoint a Child Safety Officer. It is the responsibility of the Executive Officer to ensure all policies and procedures are current and adequately address the issues of child safety.

Employees and Volunteers can refer to the CAN Community Support Child Safety Reporting Guidance Sheet for further guidance on what to do in a child safety crisis.

## 7. Risk Management

CCS recognises that we have a duty of care to protect the children in our programs. CCS regularly reviews its programs, physical spaces, and online environments to identify and minimise risks. Risk management includes checking venues for safety, maintaining supervision ratios, and keeping incident records up to date. The CCS Board keeps an up-to-date risk register and reviews mitigation strategies.

## 8. Online Safety (Family Learning Program)

On the occasion where tutoring occurs online:

- tutoring must be conducted via the CAN CS approved platform Zoom.
- a second adult must be present for the session.
- parents must provide written consent for children under 18 years to engage in online tutoring.
- approval must be provided by the Family Learning Program Manager, and
- the CCS Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct must be adhered to.

## 9. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Feedback from children, parents, staff, and volunteers is welcomed to keep it effective and relevant.

**Next review:** April 2027.

## 10. Further Resources

**UCA Child Safe Policy VicTas:** <https://safechurch.ucavictas.org.au/policies-procedures/>

**National Principles for Child Safe Organisations:** ([www.humanrights.gov.au](http://www.humanrights.gov.au))

**Child Wise:** <https://www.childwise.org.au>

**Commissioner for Children and Young People:** Recognising and defending the rights of children and young people

**Approved by:** CAN Community Support Board

**Date:** 22 October 2025 (Draft for Review)

**Next Review:** April 2027

**Drafted by:** Virginia Moebus-Nelson

*This policy aligns with the Uniting Church in Australia (VicTas) Child Safe Policy (2023) and supports the implementation of the Victorian Child Safe Standards.*

*This policy will be reviewed alongside the CAN Community Support Child Safety Reporting Guidance Sheet to ensure consistency with the UCA Child Safe Policy and Victorian Child Safe Standards.*

Reviewed for alignment with UCA Child Safe Policy (VicTas) – October 2025



# Child Safety Code of Conduct

(to be read in conjunction with the CCS Child Safety Policy)

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## Objective and scope

This Child Safety Code of Conduct acknowledges CAN Community Support's (CCS) commitment to ensuring it discharges the obligations and expectations contained in CCS' Child Safety Policy (Attachment A) and Victoria's Child Safe Standards 2 and 3 (Attachment B).

CCS recognises, respects and promotes its responsibilities to keep children safe from abuse and potentially harmful behaviour, and commits to ensuring the safety of children as a priority. CCS will not tolerate child abuse or discriminatory practices. This Code of Conduct aims to protect children and reduce opportunities for child abuse or harm to occur.

The Code of Conduct applies to all staff, volunteers, and contractors engaging with children and young people in CCS programs, activities, and digital environments. It complements CCS's related policies, including the Child Safety Policy (Attachment A), Volunteer Policy, Recruitment Policy.

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## Executive and management responsibilities

The Executive Officer and Program Coordinators **will**:

- Ensure the welfare and wellbeing of staff, volunteers, and program participants.
  - Maintain a duty of care towards staff, volunteers, and program participants.
  - Ensure CCS has nominated a Child Protection Officer to provide information and support on child safety matters.
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## Employee, volunteer, and contractor responsibilities

All employees, volunteers and contractors involved in the care of children **must**:

- Work towards achieving the aims and purposes of CCS.
- Take all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse and harm.
- Create and maintain a child-safe environment in every aspect of their work.

- Treat children and young people with respect, valuing their ideas and opinions.
- Act as positive role models, demonstrating fairness and honesty
- Be professional in their actions, attitude and speech.
- Respect the privacy of children and their families, teachers and carers.
- Disclose information about participants only with the child or family's permission, and only on a need-to-know basis.
- Comply with specific organisational guidelines on physical contact with children as set out in this document and the CCS Child Safety Policy and always comply with CCS Child Safety Policy.
- Work transparently — avoid private, closed, or unsupervised settings with children.
- Report any allegations, concerns, or suspicions of abuse immediately.
- Enact appropriate procedures as identified in the Child Safety Policy as soon as they believe a child may be at risk of immediate harm or upon the report of any allegations of child harm or abuse.
- Treat every child with dignity, fairness, and respect.
- Encourage children to share their ideas and participate in their learning.
- Act as positive role models in behaviour, language, and relationships.
- Maintain professional boundaries and clear lines of authority.

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## Cultural safety and inclusion

All employees, volunteers, and contractors **must** actively promote cultural safety, particularly for:

- Aboriginal children and young people.
- Children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- LGBTQIA+ children.
- Children with disability.

Staff must act in ways that recognises and respects diversity in culture, gender, ability, and identity, and ensure that all children feel valued, included, and safe.

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## Child voice and participation

Children and young people have the right to be heard and to participate in decisions that affect their learning, wellbeing, and safety within CCS programs. All employees, volunteers, and contractors **must**:

- Listen carefully and take every concern seriously.

- Support children to express their views about their safety (i.e., without asking leading questions).
  - Involve children as much as possible in each step of the process in ways that are respectful and developmentally appropriate.
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### Staff, volunteers, and contractors must not:

- Shame, humiliate, or belittle children.
  - Discriminate against any child or young person for any reason.
  - Ignore or fail to act on concerns, suspicions, or disclosures of harm.
  - Engage in any behaviour that makes a child feel unsafe, fearful, or disrespected.
  - Initiate unnecessary physical contact or do things of a personal nature for a child that they can do themselves.
  - Develop “special” relationships or show favouritism.
  - Arrange private contact with children outside CCS programs.
  - Take photos or videos without consent from both the Program Coordinator and the child’s parent/guardian.
  - Post photos or videos publicly (including online and social media) without consent from both the Program Coordinator and the child’s parent/guardian.
  - Work under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
  - Use inappropriate or adult language or behaviour around children.
  - Engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature with or in the presence of children or speak negatively about a child in their presence.
  - Dress inappropriately — all staff and volunteers must present with modesty and professionalism – dress comfortably – runners/sport shoes and comfortable attire within the above parameter, shoulders/midribs/thighs covered.
  - Do anything in contravention of the organisation’s policies, procedures or this Code of Conduct.
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### Supervision and safety

All activities **must** be conducted in environments where staff and volunteers are visible and accountable. Private, closed, or isolated interactions are to be avoided wherever possible.

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### Reporting and accountability

All concerns, suspicions, or disclosures of harm **must** be reported promptly:

- to the Program Coordinator or Executive Officer; and
- to Emergency Services (dial 000) if a child is at immediate risk.

*Reports will be handled confidentially, consistent with CCS's Child Safety Policy and legal obligations.*

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## Consequences of breaching this Code of Conduct

Breaches of the Child Safety Code of Conduct may result in:

- Disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or engagement; and/or
  - Reporting to Police where criminal behaviour is suspected.
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**Approved by:** CAN Community Support Board

**Date:** 22 October 2025 (Draft for Review)

**Next Review:** April 2027

**Drafted by:** Virginia Moebus-Nelson

*Aligned with the CAN Community Support Child Safety Policy – October 2025.*



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### Acknowledgement

I [insert name] am an [employee/volunteer/contractor] with [program name] at CCS.

I acknowledge the following [tick box]:

- ☐ I have read the CCS Child Safety Policy, Code of Conduct, and Reporting Guide.
- ☐ I have a valid Working with Children Check and must ensure it is kept up to date.
- ☐ I have completed required Child Safe training or commit to completing such training within the first month of my engagement with CCS.
- ☐ I understand that the CCS Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct explain how CCS keeps children and young people safe.
- ☐ I understand that CCS has a zero-tolerance policy for child abuse and harm.
- ☐ I understand that CCS is committed to ensuring every child feels safe, respected and included, and I have a role to play in this.
- ☐ I understand that children have the right to be heard and that I must listen respectfully and take their concerns seriously including reporting any concerns about children or breaches of the Code of Conduct.
- ☐ I understand how to report any child safety concerns or incidents to my Program Coordinator or the Executive Officer.
- ☐ I understand that everyone, including myself has a role in protecting children from harm.
- ☐ I commit to upholding the responsibilities and behaviours outlined in the CCS Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness [must be a CCS employee]: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

All staff, volunteers, and contractors **must** read and agree to abide by this Code as a condition of their engagement.