

## **Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy April 2025**

If any person believes a child is in immediate risk of abuse, telephone 000.

*Kids in Philanthropy wishes to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the various lands on which we work, live and give. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders past and present, and honour their history, cultures, and traditions.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

This Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy is a reflection of KiP's commitment to promoting and protecting the wellbeing and safety of children. This includes how KiP keeps children safe from harm, including child abuse.

Everyone working at KiP, including volunteers, is responsible for the safety of children engaging with KiP's programs, including by reporting information about child abuse.

### **COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY**

All children who engage with KiP, regardless of their gender, race, religious beliefs, age, disability, sexual orientation, or family or social background, have a right to feel and be safe. We are committed to creating a child-safe and child-friendly environment where children feel safe, welcome and accepted.

The welfare of the children participating in our programs will always be our first priority and we have a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and harm. Child safety is a shared responsibility between all members of the KiP community, with the KiP Board holding ultimate accountability

KiP supports and respects all children, staff and volunteers. KiP is committed to supporting safety and wellbeing of all young people, including supporting the cultural safety of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children, and those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with disability or experiencing any form of disadvantage.

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to;

1. Maintain an organisational culture of child safety and wellbeing that proactively prevents risks to children including child abuse, any risks to physical or emotional safety, or wellbeing.
2. Ensure that all parties are aware of their responsibilities for finding, avoiding and stopping occasions for child abuse or other risks to children's safety and wellbeing, and for establishing relevant controls and procedures.
3. Communicate a commitment that any and all risks to child safety and wellbeing will be reported and fully investigated.

The **Board** of KiP has ultimate responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of children participating in KiP programs. The Board is responsible for ensuring that appropriate and effective internal control systems are in place to maintain an organisational culture of child safety and wellbeing that proactively prevents risks to children including child abuse, any risks to physical or emotional safety, or wellbeing. The Board is also responsible for ensuring that appropriate policies and procedures and a [Code of Conduct for Working with Children and Young People](#) are in place.

The **CEO** of KiP is responsible for:

- Dealing with and investigating reports of risks to child safety and wellbeing including child abuse;
- Ensuring that all staff, contractors, external providers, and volunteers are aware of relevant laws, organisational policies and procedures, and the organisation's Code of Conduct for Working with Children and Young People;
- Ensuring that all adults within the KiP community are aware of their obligation to report suspected risks to children or any abuse of a child in accordance with these policies and procedures;
- Ensuring that all staff, contractors, external providers, and volunteers are aware of their obligation to observe the KiP Code of Conduct for Working with Children and Young People (particularly as it relates to child safety);
- Providing support for staff, contractors, external providers and volunteers in undertaking their child protection responsibilities.

The Board, sub-committee members, external providers and KiP management should be familiar with the types of abuse and risks that might occur within their area of responsibility and be alert for any indications of such conduct.

All board and sub-committee members, staff, volunteers, contractors and external providers share in the responsibility for the prevention and detection of child abuse, and must:

- Familiarise themselves with the relevant laws, KiP's Code of Conduct for Working with Children and Young People, and KiP's policy and procedures in relation to 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 their supervisor (or, if their supervisor is involved in the suspicion, to a responsible person in the organisation); and
- Provide an environment that is supportive of all children's emotional and physical safety.

#### CHILDREN'S EMPOWERMENT AND PARTICIPATION

KiP is a child-centred organisation, focused on working with school-aged children. We actively seek to support young people to build their wellbeing, resilience, and capability and live more purposeful lives. Our programs incorporate the views of children. We work with all young

people, though we prioritise supporting young people experiencing hardship or disadvantage as this is where our programs have the most impact.

We are committed to making sure all KiP programs are a positive and supportive space. Our programs incorporate the views of children and we do not tolerate bullying, harassment or abusive behaviour towards children. Our volunteers and facilitators are trained to take action if any inappropriate or unsafe situations arise.

We respect the rights of children and provide them with information about their rights including the right to be respected throughout our programs. We communicate our commitment to ensuring that KiP programs are safe spaces, and we provide children with advice on what they can do if they feel unsafe or have concerns.

KiP values feedback from children and will always act on safety concerns raised by children, their families or their responsible adults. KiP supports children's participation in the following ways:

- encouraging completion of a feedback survey at the end of programs. This feedback, where appropriate and possible, informs continuous improvement of program content.
- engaging Youth members of our Advisory Board
- seeking information from school and/or organisational partners ahead of program delivery, to ensure content and approach are tailored to the needs, context, diversity and age of the relevant group of children. Tailoring programs to young people may include adjusting program content and language, strategically selecting relevant facilitators with lived experience of disadvantage or similar backgrounds to participants, and the choice of activities

## FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY

KiP recognises the important role of families and community, who are encouraged to provide feedback and raise concerns with us at any time in person, through our website or via email.

KiP provides information to families and community about our child safe policies and practices including through:

- publishing this Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and our Code of Conduct for working with Children and Young People on our website
- providing information about our child safety approach to schools and other organisations, that can be shared with the school and/or broader community via the appropriate forums e.g. newsletters.

## CREATING CULTURALLY SAFE ENVIRONMENTS FOR ABORIGINAL AND/OR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CHILDREN

KiP is committed to creating environments where Australia's First Nations cultures are celebrated and First Nations children, families and community members are welcomed and included. Strategies to embed cultural safety for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children include:

- an Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of every program and on the KiP website
- providing facilitators with guidance on creating a culturally safe environment, including through researching the local area, sharing aspects of their own culture, and acknowledging the work of First Nations philanthropists
- finding opportunities to develop meaningful partnerships with First Nations charities
- acknowledging and celebrating key dates in the calendar such as NAIDOC and National Reconciliation Week, including through our online platforms and by referencing these in programs as relevant.

### VALUING DIVERSITY AND SUPPORTING INCLUSION

KiP values diversity and supports inclusion of all children in our programs by:

- providing appropriate onboarding to new facilitators about how to manage the diverse needs of children during our programs
- seeking to understand the diversity of the participating student cohort prior to conducting a program. This is done by seeking information from school and/or organisational partners ahead of program delivery, to ensure content and approach are tailored to the needs, context, diversity and age of the relevant group of children.
- welcoming and supporting the participation of all children in our programs.

### CODE OF CONDUCT

KiP has a Code of Conduct for Working with Children and Young People. Staff, volunteers, the Board, and third-party contractors must comply with the Code of Conduct at all times. Breaches of the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action including termination of a person's involvement with the organisation.

### RECRUITMENT

KiP considers child safety and wellbeing a priority in recruitment. KiP undertakes a comprehensive recruitment and screening process for all staff, Board and sub-committee members, and other volunteers which aims to:

- Promote and protect the safety of all children under the care of the organisation;
- Identify the safest and most suitable people who share KiP's values and commitment to protect children; and

- Prevent a person from working at KiP if they pose a risk to children.

KiP requires all board and sub-committee members/workers/volunteers to participate in the organisation's recruitment and screening processes prior to commencing their engagement with KiP.

KiP requires all new facilitators to provide a working with children check (WWCC) prior to commencement. In accordance with the law, this must be kept in-date for a facilitator to continue working as a facilitator for KiP.

KiP also requires other (non-facilitator) applicants to provide a working with children check and/or police check in accordance with the law and as appropriate, before they commence working at KiP and during their time with KiP at regular intervals.

KiP will undertake thorough reference checks as per the approved internal procedure.

KiP requires all new facilitators to undergo child safety training before delivering programs with children.

Further information about KiP's approach to recruitment can be found in our Recruitment Policy.

## EQUIPPING STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

KiP is committed to ensuring all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in relation to supporting the safety and wellbeing of children involved in our programs. Child safety considerations are a key factor in decision-making, with a focus on ensuring KiP programs give participants agency to make a difference in a safe and supportive environment.

All staff and volunteers engage in training related to child safety as part of their onboarding. Training includes a presentation and discussion on:

- Child Safety
- KiP and Child Safety
- KiP Child Safety Policy
- KiP Code of Conduct for working with children and young people
- Discussion of scenarios and actions to be taken

Staff and volunteers are provided with:

- KiP Child Safety Policy
- KiP Code of Conduct for working with children and young people

Through training, responsibilities are made clear and key contacts are identified.

Issues or concerns about behaviour of staff or volunteers toward children will be raised immediately and addressed in line with our Code of Conduct for Working with Children and Young People, our Complaint-handling policy and our Appropriate Behaviour Policy.

KiP has a designated Child Safety Officer who is responsible for overseeing child safety systems and processes and is the key contact if there is an allegation of child abuse or inappropriate behaviour with children. The Child Safety Officer may

- Distribute or promote the Child Safe policy and procedures to staff, facilitators and volunteers.
- Work with the KiP Board to assess risks to child safety and develop procedures to minimise these risks.

### REPORTING

Any board and sub-committee members, staff member, volunteer or contractor who has grounds to suspect abusive activity must immediately notify the appropriate child protection service or the police. They should also advise the Child Safety Officer or their supervisor about their concern.

In situations where the Child Safety Officer or supervisor is suspected of involvement in the activity, or if the person having the suspicion does not believe that the matter is being appropriately addressed or dealt with, the matter should be reported to the next highest level of supervision.

The Child Safety Officer and supervisors must report complaints of suspected abusive behaviour or misconduct to the CEO and also to any external regulatory body such as the police.

Reporting must comply with relevant State and Commonwealth legislation, including:

- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)

### MAKING A REPORT

**If any person believes a child is in immediate risk of abuse, telephone 000.**

Otherwise, call the relevant numbers below.

#### Department of Families, Fairness and Housing - Victoria

During business hours – contact the appropriate local government area:

North Division	1300 598 521
South Division	1300 555 526
East Division	1300 360 452
West Division	1300 360 462

**After hours and to report concerns about the immediate safety of a child:**

### INVESTIGATING

If the appropriate child protection service or the police decide to conduct an investigation of a report, all employees, contractors or volunteers must cooperate fully with the investigation.

Whether or not the authorities decide to conduct an investigation, the CEO will consult with the authorities to determine whether an internal investigation is appropriate. If it is decided that such an investigation will not conflict with any proceeding of the authorities, the CEO may decide to conduct such an investigation. All employees, contractors and volunteers must cooperate fully with the investigation.

Any such investigation will be conducted according to the rules of natural justice, while prioritising the safety of children and KiP staff.

The CEO will make every effort to keep any such investigation confidential; however, from time to time other members of staff may need to be consulted in conjunction with the investigation. In such cases, the relevant staff will also be required to keep matters related to the investigation confidential.

After an initial review and a determination that the suspected abuse warrants additional investigation, the CEO shall coordinate the investigation with the appropriate investigators and / or law enforcement officials. Internal or external legal representatives will be involved in the process, as deemed appropriate.

### RESPONDING

If it is alleged that a member of staff, contractor, external provider or a volunteer may have committed an offence or have breached KiP's policies or its Code of Conduct for Working with Children and Young People the person concerned may be stood down (with pay, where applicable) while an investigation is conducted.

If the investigation concludes that on the balance of probabilities an offence (or a breach of the organisation's policies or Code of Conduct for Working with Children and Young People) has occurred then disciplinary action may follow, up to and including dismissal or cessation of involvement with the organisation. The findings of the investigation will also be reported to any external body as required.

### RECORD-KEEPING AND PRIVACY

KiP is committed to making and keeping full and accurate records about all child-related complaints or safety concerns.

Records which may assist with the investigation of a complaint or safety concern will be identified and kept as part of the record of an investigation. Records will be kept even if an investigation does not substantiate a complaint.

We will record and keep the outcome of any investigations, and the resolution of any complaints. This includes findings made, reasons for decisions and actions taken.

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

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

### **RISK MANAGEMENT**

KiP will ensure that child safety is a part of its overall risk management approach. KiP has zero appetite for safeguarding risks. All staff are equipped to find, avoid, and stop risks to children. Training equips them to be aware of and identify potential risks and the appropriate actions to take to avoid potential risks and stop risks that may arise. KiP's Risk Management Strategy outlines KiP's approach to child safeguarding risks. KiP's risks are regularly reviewed by the Governance Committee and Board.

### **REVIEW**

Every year, and following every reportable incident, a review shall be conducted to assess whether KiP's child safety policies or procedures require modification to better protect children engaging in KiP's programs.

### **RELATED DOCUMENTS**

- [KiP Privacy Policy](#)
- [KiP Recruitment Policy](#)
- This policy must be read in conjunction with:
  - the law of the Commonwealth or of the relevant state or territory;
  - KiP's Code of Conduct for Working with Children and Young People

Authorised by	Date authorised	Date of effect	Review date
Board of Directors	30/4/2025	30/4/2025	April 2026