

SURF LIFE SAVING AUSTRALIA POLICY



Title:	Child Safe
Document Number:	6.04
Last Review Date:	May 2022
Next Review Date:	May 2023
Responsible Portfolio:	Integrity
Authority:	This Policy is made under clause 39 of the SLSA Constitution. It is binding on all Members of SLSA and is to be interpreted in accordance with the SLSA Constitution. It is a Membership directive under SLSA Regulation 4.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	OUR COMMITMENT	3
2	PURPOSE	3
3	DEFINITIONS	4
4	JURISDICTION	6
4.1	Who this Policy applies to	6
4.2	When this Policy applies	6
5	RESPONSIBILITIES & REQUIREMENTS OF RELEVANT PERSONS AND ORGANISATIONS	7
5.1	Responsibilities	7
5.2	Requirements of Relevant Persons	7
5.3	Requirements of Relevant Organisations	8
6	BREACHES OF POLICY, PROHIBITED CONDUCT AND REPORTING	8
6.1	Prohibited Conduct	8
6.2	Reporting	9
6.3	Policy Breach & Complaints	9
7	CHILD SAFE CODE OF CONDUCT	9
7.1	Sexual misconduct	10
7.2	Adhering to professional role boundaries	10
7.3	Use of language and tone of voice	11
7.4	Positive guidance and discipline	11
7.5	Supervision	12
7.6	Use of electronic or online communications	12
7.7	Photographs of CYP	13
7.8	Physical contact with children and young people	14

7.9	Overnight stays and sleeping arrangements	15
7.10	Change room arrangements	15
7.11	Use of, possession or supply of alcohol or drugs	16
7.12	Parent/Guardian Involvement	16
7.13	Transporting children	16
7.14	Drop Off and Pick Up of CYP	17
7.15	Giving gifts	17
8	RECRUITMENT AND SCREENING OF VOLUNTEERS AND EMPLOYEES	17
8.1	Advertising positions	17
8.2	Meeting/Interviews	18
8.3	Checks for Suitability to volunteer/work with CYP	18
8.4	International Criminal History Record Checks	20
8.5	Monitoring compliance with checks for suitability to volunteer/work with CYP	20
8.6	Identity check for Paid Positions	20
8.7	Undertaking reference checks	20
8.8	Parent Volunteers	21
8.9	External providers including contractors and consultants	21
8.10	Minors who volunteer or work with CYP	21
8.11	Records and documentation	21
	ANNEXURE A – CHILD ABUSE DEFINITIONS	23

1 OUR COMMITMENT

Surf Life Saving Australia (**SLSA**) and its member organisations comprise an organisation involving children and young people (**CYP**). SLSA operates across Australia and engages CYP through our programs and activities. SLSA takes seriously its responsibility to deliver a safe, fair and inclusive environment for CYP involved in Surf Lifesaving (**SLS**). SLSA promotes equity, respect and diversity by:

- actively anticipating CYP's diverse circumstances and responding effectively to those with additional vulnerabilities;
- providing all CYP access to information, support and reporting processes;
- empowering CYP by giving them a voice and encouraging them to speak up on decisions that affect them;
- creating a fun and positive environment for CYP to be involved in; and
- paying attention to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander CYP, CYP with a disability, CYP who identify as LGBTIQ and CYP from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

SLSA's Board endorses this commitment to keeping CYP safe from abuse and neglect.

Everyone in SLS, from Board to Executives to Staff and Volunteers, is responsible to:

- protect CYP from all forms of abuse, bullying and exploitation by our people;
- be alert to incidents of CYP abuse and neglect occurring outside of SLS that may have an impact on the CYP involved in our programs and activities;
- provide CYP with information, support and reporting processes; and
- create and maintain a child safe culture that is understood, endorsed and put into action by all the individuals who work for, volunteer or access our programs and services.

All people within SLS, regardless of role or level of responsibility, must act to keep CYP safe from such harm. They do this by adopting the practices and behaviour SLSA has set as its standard when carrying out their roles, and reporting any concerning behaviours or reasonable belief of abuse or neglect of which they become aware to a Person in Position of Authority (**PPA**) and/or to external authorities responsible for child protection or to Police, regardless of whether that abuse is being perpetrated by volunteers or employees within SLS, or by those outside SLS including those from the CYP's family, extended family, their family's extended network or strangers.

The extended SLSA Commitment to Child Safe and supporting resources can be found via <http://sls.com.au/childsafes>.

2 PURPOSE

SLSA and its member organisations seek to provide a safe, fair and inclusive environment for everyone involved in SLS.

This means providing everyone involved in SLS, including CYP, with a positive and enriching environment that promotes their participation and development.

SLSA is committed to keeping everyone involved in SLS, including CYP in its care and ensuring that they feel, and are, safe. Accordingly, SLSA seeks to ensure that our People strive for the highest possible standards with respect to keeping CYP safe from abuse and neglect. To that end, SLSA has developed this Policy to assist to identify and prevent behaviour that may be harmful to CYP.

SLSA's commitment to CYP is inclusive of those from all backgrounds and vulnerable groups. This includes but is not limited to CYP who are:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander;
- Living with a disability;
- LGBTIQ; and/or
- from Culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

A failure to meet the requirements within this Policy will be deemed misconduct and will attract appropriate disciplinary action. In addition to any internal disciplinary proceedings, SLSA will report to the Police, all instances in which a breach of the law has, or SLSA suspects may have occurred.

There may be exceptional situations where elements of this Policy do not apply, for example, in an emergency situation. It is crucial, however, that, where possible, authorisation is sought from a PPA within the relevant SLS Entity, prior to taking action that contravenes this Policy or that a PPA is advised as soon possible after the incident.

3 DEFINITIONS

Defined terms not otherwise defined in this Policy have been defined in and have the meaning given to them, in the SLSA Integrity Framework. In this Policy the following words have the corresponding meaning:

Abuse means any type of abuse (including physical, emotional, psychological, sexual and inappropriate use of power) that has caused, is causing or is likely to cause harm to a person's wellbeing, whether in person or as the result of a publication viewable by any other person by any means.¹

Australian Child Protection Legislation means all state/territory child protection legislation as amended from time to time, a summary of which is available [here](#).

Bullying means a person or group of people repeatedly and intentionally using words or actions, or the inappropriate use of power, against someone or a group of people to cause distress and risk to their wellbeing.²

Child or **Children** or **CYP** means a child or young person, or two or more children or young persons, who is or are under the age of 18 years.

Child Abuse has the meaning given to it in **Annexure A** and includes the following as outlined in that Schedule:

- a. Physical Abuse
- b. Emotional or Psychological Abuse
- c. Sexual Abuse
- d. Neglect
- e. Exposure to Family Violence.

Child Safe Commitment refers to Relevant Organisations' commitment to child safety in SLS, as outlined in 6.04.A Child Safe Commitment.

¹ Refer to Annexure A of the Member Protection Policy for examples of behaviour that may constitute Abuse.

² Refer to Annexure A of the Member Protection Policy for examples of behaviour that may constitute Bullying.

Child Safe Practices refer to the child safety requirements and practices adopted and implemented by Relevant Organisations to help ensure the safety of Children participating in a SLS Activity as outlined in **Clause 7**.

Grooming refers to the process by which an adult establishes a trusting relationship with a child and those associated with the child's care and wellbeing, to create an environment in which abuse can occur.

Harassment means any type of behaviour towards a person that they do not want and that is offensive, abusive, belittling or threatening and is reasonably likely to cause harm to the person who is the subject of the harassment.³

Misconduct with a Child means any behaviour involving a Child that is objectively age inappropriate and/or places the Child at risk of harm.

MPP means the Member Protection Policy of SLS (Policy 6.05).

Policy means this Child Safe Policy including any schedules and annexures.

Prohibited Conduct means conduct in breach of **clause 6.1** of this Policy. Any breach will be handled under Policy 6.06 Complaints Resolution.

Recruitment & Screening means the child safety recruitment and screening requirements adopted and implemented by Relevant Organisations to help ensure the safety of Children participating in SLS, as outlined in **Section 8**.

Relevant Person means those people outlined in **clause 4.1(a)**.

Relevant Organisation means those entities outlined in **clause 4.1(b)**.

Sexual Misconduct means⁴:

- a. Sexual Harassment, which is any unwanted or unwelcome sexual behaviour where a reasonable person would anticipate the possibility that the person being harassed would feel offended, humiliated, or intimidated; and
- b. Sexual Offences, which include any criminal offence involving sexual activity or actions of indecency.

Unlawful Discrimination includes:

- a. Direct Discrimination, when a person or group of people is treated less favourably than another person or group, because of a personal characteristic; and
- b. Indirect Discrimination, when an unreasonable rule or policy applies to everyone but has the effect of disadvantaging some people because of a personal characteristic they share, where such personal characteristic is protected by applicable anti-discrimination legislation.⁵

Victimisation means subjecting a person, or threatening to subject a person, to any unfair treatment because the person has made, or intends to pursue their right to make, a complaint or lawful disclosure, including under applicable legislation or this Policy, or for supporting another person to take such action.⁶

³ Refer to Annexure A of the Member Protection Policy for examples of behaviour that may constitute Harassment.

⁴ Refer to Annexure A of the Member Protection Policy for examples of behaviour that may constitute Sexual Misconduct.

⁵ Refer to Annexure A of the Member Protection Policy for examples of behaviour that may constitute Unlawful Discrimination.

⁶ Refer to Annexure A of the Member Protection Policy for examples of behaviour that may constitute Victimisation.

Vilification means a public act, conduct or behaviour that incites hatred, serious contempt for, or revulsion or severe ridicule of, a person or group of people because of a particular characteristic they hold, as covered by applicable legislation, including their race or religion, or homosexuality, transgender or HIV/AIDS status.⁷

WWCC means a 'Working with Children Check' (however named) under the applicable legislation of a state or territory, a summary of which is available [here](#).

4 JURISDICTION

4.1 Who this Policy applies to

This Policy binds everyone who is involved in SLS, including but not only:

- a. **Relevant Persons** (members); and
 - i. persons appointed or elected to boards, committees and sub-committees
 - ii. volunteers
 - iii. support personnel
 - iv. all Members, including State Centres, SLS Entities, Individual Members, Life Members and members of Members where they may have their own membership categories
 - v. any other person involved in SLS including but not limited to Participants, parents, guardians, spectators, sponsors and licensees and other contracted parties to the fullest extent possible.
- b. **Relevant Organisations** (SLS Entities).
 - i. SLSA and State Centres
 - ii. SLS Entities including all Clubs & Branches.

This Policy will continue to apply to a person, even after they have ceased any involvement (subject to this Policy's terms) with an SLS Entity, if disciplinary action against that person has commenced.

If a person reports a breach of this Policy, against someone who is no longer a Member, that matter may proceed if (and when) the person is a Member at a later date.

4.2 When this Policy applies

- a. All Relevant Persons and Relevant Organisations to which this Policy applies must comply with this Policy (at all times whilst they are a Relevant Person or Relevant Organisation), including:
 - i. in relation to any dealings they have with a Child arising from the Relevant Person's, Relevant Organisation's, or the Child's involvement in any capacity with SLS.
 - ii. in relation to any dealings in relation to a Child that they might have with a Relevant Organisation or their staff, contractors, and representatives;
 - iii. when dealing with a Child or other Relevant Person or Relevant Organisation in their capacity as a Relevant Person or Relevant Organisation; and
 - iv. in relation to their Membership or standing as a Relevant Person or Relevant Organisation in general.

⁷ Refer to Annexure A of the Member Protection Policy for examples of behaviour that may constitute Vilification.

- b. Interactions between or involving a Relevant Person and a Child where there is no direct or indirect link to SLS or a Relevant Organisation are not within the scope of this Policy.

5 RESPONSIBILITIES & REQUIREMENTS OF RELEVANT PERSONS AND ORGANISATIONS

5.1 Responsibilities

All SLS Entities, including SLSA, State Centres (**State Centres**) and any other affiliated SLS entity (**SLS Entity**), are committed to the health, safety and wellbeing of CYP.

Position	Responsibility
President/Vice President/ Board Members/Executive/ CEO/General Manager/Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement policy and procedures across the SLS Entity. - Ensure personnel have access to and understand this policy and related procedures. - Ensure all supervisors/patrol captains/managers/trainers & assessors have access to support and advice to understand and implement policies and any supporting resources. - Communicate any updates to this document and supporting resources with relevant stakeholders. - Provide training and advice in the application of this policy and supporting resources.
Supervisors/Patrol Captains/ Managers/Age Managers/Trainers & Assessors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure the policy is followed and implemented. - Assist in the training and advice in the application of this policy and supporting resources.
Members/Volunteers/Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compliance with this policy and any supporting resources. - Report any breach of this policy by others or yourself.

This Policy sets out all SLS members' responsibility for reporting any child abuse and neglect.
All Persons:

- a. must immediately report a reasonable suspicion of abuse or neglect and any concerns about practices or the behaviour of volunteers and employees;
- b. comply with all legislative obligations that they are subject to in relation to reporting of suspected Child Abuse or a WWCC⁸;
- c. must follow a specified process when reporting abuse or neglect including who will receive reports; and
- d. who fail to report a reasonable suspicion of abuse or neglect are in breach of this Policy, and such breach constitutes serious misconduct.

5.2 Requirements of Relevant Persons

Relevant Persons must always:

- a. comply with the advice of Responding to Child Abuse Allegations outlined in the Child Safe Guidelines;
- b. comply with the Child Safe Code of Conduct as set out in Clause 7;

⁸ [Child Family Community Australia Working with Children Checks & Police Checks Resource Sheet.](#)

- c. report any concerns or allegations of Prohibited Conduct involving any Relevant Person or Relevant Organisation;
- d. provide true and accurate information during Recruitment & Screening;
- e. comply with all obligations that they are subject to under the Australian Child Protection Legislation; and
- f. comply with all legislative obligations that they are subject to in relation to reporting of suspected Child Abuse or a WWCC⁹.

5.3 Requirements of Relevant Organisations

Relevant Organisations must:

- a. adopt, implement, and comply with the:
 - i. Child Safe Commitment;
 - ii. Child Safe Code of Conduct; and
 - iii. Recruitment & Screening.

including reviewing and amending those requirements from time to time;

- b. comply with the advice of Responding to Child Abuse Allegations outlined in the Child Safe Guidelines;
- c. use best efforts to assist Relevant Persons to fulfil their responsibilities under this Policy;
- d. recognise any Sanction imposed under this Policy; and
- e. take all necessary steps to:
 - i. enforce any Sanction imposed under this Policy and the Complaints Resolution Policy; and
 - ii. procure compliance with the advice of Responding to Child Abuse Allegations outlined in the Child Safe Guidelines.

6 BREACHES OF POLICY, PROHIBITED CONDUCT AND REPORTING

6.1 Prohibited Conduct

A Relevant Person or Relevant Organisation commits a breach of this Policy when:

- a. they, either alone or in conjunction with another or others, engage in any of the following conduct against, or in relation to, a Child or Children in the circumstances outlined in clause 4.2:
 - i. Child Abuse;
 - ii. Grooming;
 - iii. Misconduct with a Child;
 - iv. request or infer that the Child keep any communication secret from their parents, guardian, carer, or other Relevant Person such as a coach or administrator, or Relevant Organisation;

⁹ [Child Family Community Australia Working with Children Checks & Police Checks Resource Sheet.](#)

- v. supply alcohol, drugs (including tobacco) or medicines, except with the consent of the parent, guardian, or carer of the Child and under a valid prescription for that Child and at the prescribed dosage; or
 - vi. supply medicines, except when permitted by law or with the consent of the parent, guardian, or carer of the Child and under a valid prescription for that Child and at the prescribed dosage; or
 - vii. commit any act that would constitute Prohibited Conduct under the Member Protection Policy;
- b. there is a breach of a requirement imposed under clause 5.2, or sub-clauses 5.3(a), 5.3(b) or 5.3(e)(ii));
 - c. they are involved in or have knowledge of and do not report a breach of clauses 6.1(a) or 6.1(b); or
 - d. they have engaged in an attempt to breach sub-clauses 6.1(a) (i), (ii), (iii) or (v).

6.2 Reporting

Where a Relevant Organisation becomes aware of an Alleged Breach and the information known about that Alleged Breach is such that it would cause a reasonable person to suspect that a Child is, or is at risk of, being abused and/or neglected:

- a. Relevant Organisations must comply with, and procure compliance with, the requirements of Responding to Child Abuse Allegations outlined in the Child Safe Guideline (Worksheet 3: Appendix A); and
- b. no further action under the Complaints, Disputes and Discipline Policy in relation to that Alleged Breach, except Provisional Action or Assessment, should occur unless/or until the obligations in 6.2(a) are complied with.

6.3 Policy Breach & Complaints

The Complaints Resolution Policy applies to any alleged Prohibited Conduct, including reports of breaches, of this Policy. Any matter relating to the abuse or suspected abuse of CYP, under the age of 18, must be reported. If you believe there has been a breach of the Child Safe policy, please report and submit details of the alleged breach in the SLS Reporting System (<https://reporting.sls.com.au/>).

SLS will have regard to the guide entitled “Complaint Handling Guide: Upholding the rights of children and young people” issued by the National Office for Child Safety in managing Complaints made on behalf of or involving Vulnerable Persons, currently available at [Complaint Handling Guide: Upholding the rights of children and young people \(pmc.gov.au\)](https://www.pmc.gov.au/complaint-handling-guide), or such other guide that may replace it.

If criminal activity has occurred or if you believe a child is at immediate risk of harm or danger, contact the Police (call 000) to report the matter prior to submitting a report through the SLS Reporting System.

7 CHILD SAFE CODE OF CONDUCT

SLS is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all Children that are involved in SLS. Our policies and procedures seek to address risks to child safety and to establish child safe culture and practices. Standards of behaviour are required of all persons involved in SLS. This Policy is underpinned by the following core values:

- a. act within the vision, mission and values of our organisation/movement;

- b. display respect and courtesy towards everyone involved and prevent discrimination and harassment;
- c. prioritise the safety and wellbeing of CYP involved in our organisation/movement;
- d. report any behaviour that is a breach of this Policy to help prevent the abuse of CYP in SLS; and
- e. encourage and support opportunities for participation of CYP in all aspects of SLS and empower them to have a voice.

All persons should only wear their uniform while involved in delivering a service or as required by SLS, in line with [Policy 1.05 Patrol Uniforms](#). The wearing of the SLS uniform outside of these times is a breach of Policy 1.05.

7.1 Sexual misconduct

Under no circumstances is any form of 'sexual behaviour' to occur between, with, or in the presence of a CYP while participating in SLS programs or activities. Engaging in sexual behaviour while participating in SLS programs or activities is prohibited even if the CYP involved is above the legal age of consent.

Sexual behaviour must be interpreted widely, to encompass the entire range of actions that would reasonably be considered to be sexual in nature, including but not limited to:

- a. 'contact behaviour', such as sexual intercourse, kissing, fondling, touching an intimate part (buttocks, genitals or breast area) of a CYP's body, sexual penetration or exploiting a child through prostitution;
- b. 'non-contact behaviour', such as harassment, flirting, sexual innuendo, inappropriate text messaging, inappropriate photography or exposure to pornography or nudity;
- c. showing a CYP any offensive written material or images, whether in hard copy or electronic (e.g., any form of pornography including via social media platforms); and
- d. taking or displaying photographs of a CYP that are inappropriate, covert, and/or any images that are taken without the CYP's consent.

7.2 Adhering to professional role boundaries

All persons should not, of their own volition or at the request of any other party, act outside the scope of their duties (as specified in their position description) when involved in SLS programs/activities.

Volunteers and Employees must NOT:

- a. Provide unauthorised transportation to CYP, for example, from school to club. Authorisation must be provided to the SLS Entity by way of written permission or by using the Picking Up and Dropping Off Guideline and Approval Form located on [Members Area](#);
- b. Use a personal phone, camera, or video camera to take images of Children;
- c. Exhibit any type of favouritism towards a Child;
- d. Transport Children unless specifically approved;
- e. Give gifts/presents to Children other than the provision of official awards;
- f. Engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of Children;

- g. Discriminate against any Child, including on the basis of gender identity, culture, race, or disability;
- h. Provide any unwanted or inappropriate support to a CYP or their family, unrelated to SLS programs/activities;
- i. Seek contact with CYP (or former participants) outside authorised programs/activities, either via social media or any other means per **clause 7.6** of this policy;
- j. Engage in activities or one on one contact with a CYP who are participants of SLS programs/activities outside of authorised programs/activities, without the full knowledge and acceptance of the parent/guardian;
- k. Accept an invitation to attend any private social function at the request of a CYP who has participated, or is participating, in SLS programs/activities without the full knowledge, acceptance or invitation of the parent/guardian; and
- l. Invite a CYP who has participated, or is participating, in SLS programs/activities to attend any private social function without the full knowledge and acceptance of the parent/guardian.

If anyone becomes aware of a situation in which a CYP requires assistance that is beyond the scope of that person's role, they should undertake any or all of the following at the earliest opportunity:

- refer the matter to an appropriate support agency, such as the Police or relevant Child Protection Agency, if there is any risk to the CYP;
- refer the CYP to an appropriate support agency;
- contact the CYP's parent or guardian; and/or
- seek advice from the appropriate person in your State/Territory SLS Entity.

7.3 Use of language and tone of voice

Language and tone of voice used in the presence of CYP should:

- a. provide clear direction, boost their confidence, encourage or affirm them;
- b. not be harmful to CYP – in this respect, avoid language that is:
 - i. discriminatory, racist or sexist
 - ii. derogatory, belittling or negative, for example, by calling a CYP a 'loser' or telling them they are 'too fat'.
 - iii. intended to threaten or frighten
 - iv. profane or sexual.

7.4 Positive guidance and discipline

CYP participating in SLS programs/activities should be aware of the acceptable limits of their behaviour so that a positive experience can be provided for all participants. There are times, however, when personnel may be required to use appropriate techniques and behaviour management strategies to ensure:

- a. an effective and positive environment; and
- b. the safety and/or wellbeing of CYP or personnel participating in our programs/activities.

All persons in SLS should use strategies that are fair, respectful and appropriate to the developmental stage of the CYP involved. The CYP needs to be provided with clear directions and given an opportunity to redirect their misbehaviour in a positive manner.

Under no circumstances are any persons involved to take disciplinary action involving physical punishment or any form of treatment that could reasonably be considered as degrading, cruel, frightening or humiliating, including:

- emotional and/or psychological abuse or intimidation;
- physical intimidation and/or assault, such as pushing, striking, kicking, biting, pinching, choking and/or intentional physical harm of a CYP; and
- any punishment that causes pain or distress to a CYP.

7.5 Supervision

Children participating in SLS programs and services should always be supervised. Supervision should be constant, active, and diligent and requires Relevant Persons should always be in a position to observe each Child, respond to individual needs and immediately intervene if necessary. All persons delivering SLS programs/activities are responsible for supervising the CYP engaged in those programs/activities to ensure those participants:

- a. engage positively with SLS programs/activities
- b. behave appropriately toward one another
- c. are in a safe environment and are protected from external and internal threats.

All persons are required to avoid one-to-one unsupervised situations with CYP with whom SLS deals or to whom SLS provides services, and (where possible) to conduct all activities and/or discussions with them in view (sight and sound) of other people. Some services and programs may involve such circumstances (e.g., medical treatment and physical therapy) and in this case, these situations will need to be identified and recorded by the Relevant Organisation.

Any incident of one-to-one unsupervised contact should be immediately reported to the Relevant Organisations management within 24 hours of the incident occurring.

7.6 Use of electronic or online communications

Express permission of parents/guardian should be obtained, wherever possible, prior to electronic communication between volunteers/employees and CYP with whom SLS deals or to whom SLS provides services. Once permission is obtained, it should be recorded, electronically or in writing (noting in SurfGuard record) and provided to the relevant SLS Entity. Wherever possible, email and text messages sent to a CYP should be copied to their parent/guardian.

Volunteers and Employees are required to report to the relevant SLS Entity management, as outlined in clause 6, if a CYP is attempting to:

1. engage with them via electronic communication platforms without parental/guardian permission; or
2. send them inappropriate content.

Where a parent is not included in the communication:

- a. Restrict such communication to issues directly associated with delivering SLS programs/activities, such as advising that a scheduled event is cancelled;
- b. Limit the personal or social content in such communications to what is required to convey the service-related message in a polite, friendly manner. Specifically, do not communicate anything that a reasonable observer could view as being of a sexual nature;
- c. Do not use such communication to promote unauthorised 'social' activity or to arrange unauthorised contact;

- d. Ensure such communication is devoid of any sexualised language;
- e. Do not request a CYP to keep communication a secret from their parents;
- f. Do not communicate with CYP using Internet chat rooms or similar forums such as social networking sites, game sites or instant messaging unless related to SLS matters and parent/guardian is aware and has been offered the opportunity to join; and
- g. Do not request to be linked to an individual CYP through social media or follow or make comments on their social media activities.

All persons are required to ensure appropriate monitoring of CYP when they use SLS electronic communication equipment to ensure that they do not inadvertently place themselves at risk of abuse or exploitation via social networking sites, gaming sites or through web searches, or inappropriate email communication.

7.7 Photographs of CYP

SLS Entities should only permit organisational photography within SLS programs/activities as outlined in the [SLS Membership Form](#), [Policy 6.02 Privacy](#), [Policy 6.20 Social Media](#) and [Policy 6.21 Photography, Digital Recording & Images](#). From time to time, SLS Entities may seek to promote SLS activities in publications, website etc. Images and media are managed and controlled by the relevant SLS Entity and should only be used for approved promotional and marketing purposes.

As outlined in the [SLSA Membership Form](#) a parent/guardian consents to the use of image of the child or young person. In signing they consent to the relevant SLS Entity(ies) of which the CYP is a member, using the name, image, likeness and also performance of the CYP in or of any SLS Activity at any time to promote the Objects of the relevant SLS Entity(ies), by any form of media. As per the Membership form the parent/guardian waives any rights they might have to or in such use of the CYP name, image or likeness by the relevant SLS Entity(ies).

[Play By the Rules](#) has produced guidelines to assist in these instances. SLSA supports and follows these guidelines. SLSA supports as follows:

- a. The SLS Entity, where possible, should obtain permission from the CYP's parent/guardian prior to the images of the CYP being published;
- b. The SLS Entity, should ensure that all persons relevant to the CYP's wellbeing are aware of the way in which the images are to be used and how long they are to be displayed;
- c. If an image of a CYP is to be used, the SLS Entity will avoid naming the CYP, without parent/guardian permission being granted;
- d. The SLS Entity, will not display information about a minor's hobbies, likes/dislikes, school, etc as this information has the potential to be used as grooming tools;
- e. The SLS Entity, should only use appropriate images of the CYP, relevant to SLS programs/activities, and ensure that the CYP is suitably attired. Images of CYP participating in activities that involve minimal clothing (e.g., swimming) or unusual body positions/poses have the potential to be misused;
- f. The SLS Entity, where possible, will reduce the ability for direct copying of pictures from a website or digital channel to another source (i.e., disable the 'right mouse click' function);
- g. The SLS Entity, should clearly outline in its written contracts with photographers any restrictions for use, distribution and sale. Contracts must outline the arrangements for any images taken and kept by the photographer including, arrangements made for negatives, retained digital files and proofs;

- h. The SLS Entity, must not distribute the images of the CYP to anyone outside SLS Entity, other than the child photographed or their parent/guardian, without management knowledge and providing approval; and
- i. The SLS Entity, should consider using models for promotional/advertising purposes.

Note: where a SLS activity is occurring in a public place, it is not illegal for anyone (including parents) to take photographs or digital recordings of activities without permission. For example, parents taking photographs of their children in a group; amateur or professional photographers shooting a crowd scene; or tourists photographing a beach. There are some exceptions to this rule depending on the state or territory law where an image is deemed indecent or offensive, and it may constitute an offence. For private property, the general rule is permission is required, and restrictions on photography can be imposed. Please refer to the appropriate State, Territory and Federal legislation for specifics and incorporate as necessary.

Images (digital or hard copy) are to be destroyed or deleted as soon as they are no longer required. If images (digital or hard copy) are to be kept, they must be stored securely in a manner that prevents unauthorised access. For example, if in:

- hard-copy form, in a locked drawer or cabinet; or
- electronic form, in a 'password protected' folder.

7.8 Physical contact with children and young people

Any physical contact with CYP must be appropriate to the delivery of SLS programs/activities such as technical instruction and based on the needs of the CYP, such as assisting with the use of equipment, technique, treatment by a health practitioner or administering first aid, rather than on the needs of SLS personnel.

Under no circumstances should any personnel have contact with CYP participating in SLS:

- a. involves touching of genitals, buttocks, or the breast area other than as part of delivering medical or allied health services
- b. would appear, to a reasonable observer, to have a sexual connotation;
- c. is intended to cause pain or distress to the child or young person - for example, corporal punishment;
- d. is overly physical (for example, wrestling, horseplay, tickling or other roughhousing);
- e. is unnecessary (for example, assisting with toileting when a child does not require assistance);
- f. is initiated against the wishes of the CYP, except if such contact may be necessary to prevent injury to the CYP or to others, in which case
 - i. physical restraint should be a last resort;
 - ii. the level of force used must be appropriate to the specific circumstances, and aimed solely at restraining the CYP from preventing harm to themselves or others; and
 - iii. the incident must be reported to management as soon as possible.

All persons are required to report to management any incident, especially physical contact initiated by a CYP that is sexual and/or inappropriate, for example, acts of physical aggression, as soon as possible, to enable the situation to be managed appropriately.

7.9 Overnight stays and sleeping arrangements

Overnight stays are to occur only with the written authorisation from the management of the relevant SLS Entity. Written approval from the parents/guardians of the CYP involved must be obtained. This approval needs to be prior and in writing. Volunteers and employees attending an overnight camp must be appropriately screened as set out in [Section 5](#).

Prior written approval includes electronic messaging formats such as email, SMS, or team messaging Apps, e.g., TeamApp. Attendance by CYP at formal events such as an annual awards event or State/Regional Conference, is only permitted with a parent/guardian travelling and attending with them or providing permission. Practices and behaviour by all persons involved during an overnight stay must be consistent with the practices and behaviour expected during the delivery of our programs/activities at other times.

Standards of conduct that must be observed by all persons involved during an overnight stay include:

- a. providing CYP with privacy when bathing, toileting and dressing;
- b. observing appropriate dress standards when children and young people are present – such as no exposure to any adult nudity or undressing;
- c. not providing access to CYP where they can be exposed to pornographic material, for example, through movies, television, the Internet, magazines or literature;
- d. not leaving CYP under the supervision or protection of unauthorised persons such as accommodation staff or friends;
- e. providing sleeping arrangements that do not compromise the safety of CYP such as unsupervised sleeping arrangements, or an adult sleeping in the same bed as a CYP. Having adults sleep in rooms adjacent to youth member's rooms (or as close as possible) affords easy monitoring of CYP's rooms;
- f. the right of CYP to contact their parent/guardian, or others, if they feel unsafe, uncomfortable or distressed during the stay;
- g. not removing a CYP's access to their mobile phone or ability to contact whilst away from their families/guardians; and
- h. an expectation that parents/guardian can, if they wish, make contact, with the CYP.

7.10 Change room arrangements

CYP have a right to privacy, and this must be balanced by all persons with the responsibility of supervising the safety of members whilst using change rooms. All persons in addition must:

- a. ensure adequate supervision in 'public' change rooms when they are used;
- b. not shower or change at the same time as supervising groups of Children;
- c. provide the level of supervision required for preventing abuse by members of the public, adult service users, peer service users, or general misbehaviour, while also respecting a CYP's privacy;
- d. avoid one-to-one situations with a CYP in a change room area; ensuring that they do not undress and avoid using a changing room with a CYP unless there are other people present;
- e. ensure female identifying persons do not enter male change rooms, and male identifying persons do not enter female change rooms;
- f. at a minimum ensure there are two Relevant Persons of the same gender as the group be present; and

- g. ensure phones, cameras and recording devices are not to be used in changing rooms and in particular whilst Children are getting dressed This includes photography, filming and live streaming.

7.11 Use of, possession or supply of alcohol or drugs

While on duty, involved in SLS activities/programs, or having supervision of CYP including overnight stays, all persons must not:

- a. use, possess or be under the influence of an illegal drug;
- b. use or be under the influence of alcohol;
- c. be impaired or incapacitated by any other legal drug such as prescription or over-the-counter drugs;
- d. supply alcohol or drugs (including tobacco) to CYP participating in our programs/activities; and
- e. supply or administer medicines, except when permitted by law or with the consent of the parent, guardian, or carer of the Child and under a valid prescription for that Child and at the prescribed dosage.

7.12 Parent/Guardian Involvement

SLS Entities must:

- a. ensure that a parent/guardian is involved in any significant decision, including the signing of any documentation in relation to their CYP's involvement in SLS;
- b. conduct all training sessions in open locations and allow parents/guardians to watch their Children during training; and
- c. make parents/guardians aware of the standard of behaviour required when watching their Child during training. Parents/guardians displaying inappropriate conduct may be asked to leave but may not be denied access for an undetermined amount of time.

7.13 Transporting children

CYP are to be transported only in circumstances that are directly related to the delivery of SLS programs/activities, for example, team transport to and from competition and training. CYP are to be transported only with prior authorisation from the relevant SLS Entity management or other persons designated with authority from the CYP's parent/guardian by providing written approval. Such approval needs to be in writing and provided to the SLS Entity as soon as practicable.

Gaining approval involves providing information about the proposed journey, including:

- a. the form of transport proposed, such as a private car, taxi, self-drive bus, bus with driver, train, plane or boat;
- b. the reason for the journey;
- c. the route to be followed, including any stops or side trips;
- d. details of anyone who will be present during the journey other than our personnel who are involved in delivering our programs/activities.

When transporting Children, Relevant Persons must drive responsibly, not be impaired by alcohol or any other mind-altering substances, have an unrestricted drivers' licence and to the extent practicable, not be alone in the car with a Child. Children may only be transported in a vehicle when the

manufacturer stated capacity is adhered to and seatbelts and child restraints must meet Australian Standards (AS/NZS1754).

7.14 Drop Off and Pick Up of CYP

SLS Entities must:

- a. ensure Children and their parent or guardian know the time and location of training and matches, including start and finish times;
- b. arrive before scheduled practice or game times to ensure that Children are not left unattended;
- c. have an accessible register of parent and guardian emergency contact numbers and an operational phone;
- d. ensure they are aware of alternative pick up arrangements for Children and that the parent or guardian has provided consent;
- e. ensure that if a parent or guardian is late, they make reasonable attempts to contact them. It is not the responsibility of Relevant Persons to transport Children home if their parent or guardian is late for pick up; and
- f. not leave the training or match until all Children have been collected by their parent or guardian.

7.15 Giving gifts

Gifts to CYP or to their families, involved in SLS programs/activities including rewards, treats, second-hand equipment or prizes awarded as part of authorised events or competitions must be approved by both the relevant SLS Entity and the parents/guardians of the CYP.

8 RECRUITMENT AND SCREENING OF VOLUNTEERS AND EMPLOYEES

All SLS Entities must ensure appropriate steps are taken to recruit and screen volunteers and employees appropriately, to ensure that they are suitable to provide SLS programs/activities to CYP. Positions assessed as 'child-related' must be appointed using the recruitment and screening process outlined in Clause 8.

A child-related position means a position that involves or may involve contact with children, either under the position description or due to the nature of the role. Relevant Organisations must fill out the relevant worksheet in the [Child Safe Guideline: Worksheet 6 & 7 - Appendix A](#).

Positions assessed as 'child-related' must be appointed using the recruitment and screening process outlined in the [Child Safe Guideline: Worksheet 6 & 7 – Appendix A-C](#). This extends to any child-related role at a Club including volunteer members.

8.1 Position Descriptions

Developing appropriate selection criteria for a position is a valuable first step to reducing the risk of appointing someone who poses a child safety risk.

Examples of appropriate selection criteria may include: 'Must have experience working with Children.' 'Must be able to demonstrate an understanding of appropriate behaviours when engaging with Children.'

8.2 Advertising positions

Where a position (volunteer or employee) is advertised at or by any SLS Entity, the advertisement should contain the following statement or similar, or where space is limited, an abbreviated form of the statement:

“Surf Life Saving is committed to protecting children and young people (CYP) from harm and promotes the safety, wellbeing and inclusion of all CYP. We require all applicants who are to volunteer or work with CYP to undergo a screening process prior to appointment, a process that may include, but is not limited to, reference checks, an identity check, a ‘working with children’ or equivalent check and/or a ‘national criminal history record’ check.”

Abbreviated:

“We are committed to protecting children and young people from harm. All applicants must undergo a screening process prior to appointment.”

8.3 Meeting/Interviews

All applicants for SLS Entity positions (volunteer or employee) that involve working directly with CYP must participate in at least one meeting or interview, preferably in person or on a videoconference. During the meeting/interview SLS Entities should discuss the following issues, where relevant, relating to the applicant’s suitability to work with CYP.

The Child Safe Guideline provides guidance on interview requirements and sample questions, but can cover topics such as:

- beliefs and values in relation to the treatment of CYP;
- professional experience, qualifications and competence relating to CYP;
- general awareness and understanding of child protection issues.
- if there would be any reason that they would be deemed unfit to work with children or young people.

During the interview, questions regarding the applicant’s suitability to work with Children must be included. SLS Entities should document an applicant’s responses and, if they are the successful applicant, keep a record of the documentation. Relevant Organisations must refer to the relevant worksheet in the [Child Safe Guideline: Worksheet 6 & 7 - Appendix B](#).

As part of the meeting/interview, SLS Entities must highlight the commitment to protecting CYP.

8.4 Checks for Suitability to volunteer/work with CYP

Australia has three types of checks for child-related positions, either volunteer or employee:

Working with Children Checks (WWCC)

- WWCC involves checking a person’s criminal history and, in some jurisdictions, disciplinary information to determine their suitability to engage in CYP-related work. Successful applicants are granted a clearance, which they can use as evidence of their suitability to engage in child-related work for a specified period.

Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP)

- WWVPs are similar to WWCCs. WWVPs assess a person’s suitability to work with vulnerable people in regulated activities. Children and disadvantaged adults (such as adults with a disability and adults who cannot communicate in English) are considered vulnerable people.

Criminal history assessments (Police Check)

- Under this type of check, organisations must ensure criminal history assessments are conducted before engaging people to work in particular positions. The onus is on the relevant jurisdictional legislation organisation to ensure the assessments are undertaken, not the individual.
- Criminal history checks are not monitored on an ongoing basis as they are in other jurisdictions; they are a point-in-time check only. Employers must ensure that assessments are conducted at least once every three years.

Where jurisdiction¹⁰ allows, an SLS Entity must not appoint any position (volunteer or employee) with direct involvement with CYP, until after completion of their WWCC or 'national criminal history record' check.

SLS Entities must meet the requirements of the relevant state or territory WWCC laws. Specific state and territory requirements can be found here: <https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/pre-employment-screening-working-children-checks-and-police-checks>

8.4.1 WWCC/WWVP

The SLS Entity responsible for recruiting volunteers and/or employees must sight the applicable WWCC/WWVP or equivalent as applicable (this may vary depending on the jurisdiction). The SLS Entity must keep a secure record of relevant details.

SLS Entities must not engage a person who does not have a satisfactory WWCC/WWVP in the relevant jurisdiction(s). It is a serious breach of this Policy if an individual, who has convictions that would make them ineligible to be granted a WWCC/WWVP, is put in a position with CYP who access our services, programs/activities, events or facilities.

It is a serious breach if an individual continues in their position (volunteer/unpaid or paid) if they have been charged or convicted of a crime that would make them ineligible to be granted a WWCC/WWVP. All volunteers and employees are advised that they must report, before their appointment to a position and during their tenure, any criminal conviction or charge that indicates that they present a potential risk to the children or young people to whom they help deliver service, as further outlined in the [SLSA Membership Form](#) and [Policy 6.16 Criminal Convictions](#).

8.4.2 National Criminal History Record Check

Depending on the relevant jurisdictional legislation and/or role, applicants (volunteer or employee) may also be required to complete a National Criminal History Record Check (also known as a Police Check) or where a WWCC is not possible.

Unless their criminal history suggests that they may pose a risk to CYP¹¹, a criminal history does not automatically preclude them from obtaining a position within SLS. If the information on their criminal history is relevant, the applicant must be provided with an opportunity to respond to the contents of their Police Check (if they wish to do so).

In such cases, the matter must be documented and referred to the SLS State Centre for assessment of the applicant's suitability in accordance with the requirements of the position for which they have

¹⁰ Refer to each State jurisdiction and legislation for specific requirements and exemptions. Note that in WA parents are not required to complete a WWCC unless involved in an overnight stay.

¹¹ For information about relevant criminal offences contact the SLS State Centre.

applied. The SLS Entity must keep a secure record of the police check (date and certificate number). The SLS Entity is not permitted to keep a copy of the police check and must return the original document (once sighted and recorded) to the applicant.

8.5 International Criminal History Record Checks

Any applicant who has resided in an overseas country for 12 months or more in the last ten years should contact the relevant overseas police force to obtain a criminal or police record check. CrimTrac accredited agencies do not conduct international police checks.

Some countries will not release information regarding an individual for personal or third-party purposes. Where police records checks cannot be made, referee checks must be conducted with at least two individuals who personally knew the individual while they were residing in the country outside of Australia. The applicant must be informed that referees will be asked whether they have knowledge or information concerning the applicant, which would adversely affect the applicant from performing the position, including any relevant criminal offences. The credentials of persons acting as referees must be verified and can include previous employers, government officials and family members. If the information on their criminal history is relevant, the applicant must be provided with an opportunity to respond to the contents of their International Police Check (if they wish to do so).

Overseas applicants should not commence positions, either volunteer or employee, with direct CYP involvement until this process is satisfactorily completed.

8.6 Monitoring compliance with checks for suitability to volunteer/work with CYP

SLS Entities must ensure that all volunteers and employees undergo a periodic WWCC/WWVP or equivalent to confirm that they do not have criminal charges and/or convictions that would pose a particular risk if they work with CYP.

Any SLS Member who undergoes a WWCC/WWVP, or equivalent must have this recorded in Surfguard.

8.7 Identity check for Paid Positions

If proof of identity document is not sighted as part of the WWCC/WWVP/Police Check process, or other recruitment processes, the identity of the applicant, who is preferred for the position, is confirmed by sighting original 'proof of identity' documents presented by the applicant.

On completion of the recruitment process, a record of the proof of identity documents must be stored securely by the SLS Entity. If a variation is required in relation to proof of identity requirements, such as an applicant being unable to provide specific documentation, advise President or relevant Executive, as outlined in Section 2 of this Policy, and seek approval for a variation.

8.8 Undertaking reference checks

For a position where a reference check is required, a minimum of two reference checks for the preferred applicant should be conducted to gather additional information about the applicant's suitability to work in the position for which they have applied. Relevant Organisations must refer to the relevant worksheet in the [Child Safe Guideline: Worksheet 6 & 7 - Appendix C](#).

Applicants being considered for appointment should, in the first instance, be asked to provide contact details for two professional referees who can provide information relating to the applicant's suitability to work with CYP. Selected referees must:

- should include a representative of the applicant's current or other recent employers; and

- must have had a direct managerial relationship with the applicant and be capable of commenting knowledgeably in relation to the applicant, and ideally have been the applicant's supervisor or line manager.

Personal referees are not recommended. However, if there is no option but to include a personal referee, then that referee:

- should not be related to the applicant;
- should have known the applicant for at least 12 months;
- should have knowledge on the applicant's suitability to work with CYP; and
- must be able to vouch for the applicant's reputation and character.

The referee checks undertaken must involve directly contacting the referee. Written character references are not sufficient unless also followed up and verified through direct contact. Difficulty in contacting referees, such as those based overseas, or those who have left an organisation, is no justification for accepting lower standards of scrutiny.

Checks must also be undertaken to verify educational or vocational qualifications or professional registration for preferred applicants.

8.9 Parent Volunteers

SLS Entities must inform prospective parent volunteers that, in the light of the above, SLS' approach is to take every precaution to protect the CYP in SLS.

Where jurisdiction allows, parents should undergo relevant checks (WWCC/WWVP/Police Check). SLS will comply with any legislation that specifically exempts parent volunteers from undergoing such checks.

8.10 External providers including contractors and consultants

Where SLS Entities make use of services of volunteers/employees for short periods, they must comply with the requirements under legislation (in relevant jurisdiction) with respect to WWCC/WWVP/Police Check. Recruitment, screening and induction requirements for external providers are dependent on their level of interaction with CYP both in terms of the level of unsupervised contact they may have and the duration of contact.

8.11 Minors who volunteer or work with CYP

If a person under the age of 18 is appointed to a child-related position in SLS, they must:

- comply with the relevant WWCC legislation;
- undertake appropriate screening (interviews and referee checks);
- ensure that they are aware that they are bound by the Child Safe Policy and the obligations associated with working with Children; and
- obtain information about any pre-existing relationships, especially where the Child-applicant interacts personally with another Child participant.

Where WWCC/WWVP legislation specifically exempts minors from undergoing such checks, we require those Minors who volunteer or work with CYP to undergo screening as detailed by the relevant State Centre on-the-job supervision.

8.12 Records and documentation

SLS Entities should maintain secure records of recruitment and screening processes, per each jurisdictions legislative requirements, including records of:

- Recruitment applications;
- Relevant details of WWCC/WWVP and Criminal History checks;
- Relevant Meeting/Interview details; and
- Reference and Proof of Identity checks, if required.

ANNEXURE A – CHILD ABUSE DEFINITIONS

These definitions set out the meaning of words used in, or referenced by, this Policy without limiting the ordinary and natural meaning of the words.

Child Abuse is the mistreatment of a Child that:

- causes, is causing or is likely to cause any detrimental effect so that a Child's physical, psychological, or emotional wellbeing; or
 - does, or is likely to, endanger that a Child's physical or emotional health, development, or wellbeing, whether through a:
 - single act, omission, or circumstance; or
 - series or combination of acts, omissions, or circumstances,
- and includes:

1. **Physical Abuse** occurs when a person subjects a Child to application of physical force, which may cause injury intentionally or inadvertently as a result of physical punishment or the aggressive treatment of a Child. Physically abusive behaviour includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. shoving, hitting, slapping, shaking, throwing, punching, biting, burning, kicking; and
 - b. harmful training methods or overtraining where there is the potential to result in damage to a Child's physical development.
2. **Emotional or Psychological Abuse** occurs when a Child does not receive the love, affection, or attention they need for healthy emotional, psychological, and social development or are exposed to violence/abuse against other Children or adults. Such abuse may involve:
 - a. repeated rejection or threats to a Child;
 - b. constant criticism, teasing, ignoring, threatening, yelling, scapegoating, ridicule, intentional exclusion, continual coldness, and rejection;
 - c. Bullying and Harassment;
 - d. harmful training methods or overtraining where there is the potential to result in damage to a Child's physical, intellectual, or emotional wellbeing and development.
3. **Sexual Abuse** occurs when an adult, or a person in authority (i.e., older, or younger but more physically or intellectually developed) involves a Child in any sexual activity. A child cannot provide consent, therefore even if 'consent' is given, it still constitutes sexual abuse.

Perpetrators of sexual abuse take advantage of their power, authority, or position over the Child for their own benefit. It can include making sexual comments to a Child, kissing, touching a Child's genitals or breasts, oral sex, or intercourse with a Child.

Sexual exploitation is a form of Sexual Abuse and occurs when Children are forced into or involved in sexual activities that are then unlawfully recorded in some way, or recorded without the consent of one or more parties, or used to produce child sexual abuse material. Such material can be in the form of photographs or videos, whether published or circulated on the internet or social media. Encouraging a Child to view pornographic videos, websites, or images, or engaging a Child to participate in sexual conversations over social media or otherwise is also considered sexual exploitation.

4. **Neglect** is the persistent failure or deliberate failure or denial to meet a Child's basic needs. Child Neglect includes the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, adequate supervision, clean water, medical attention, or supervision to the extent that the Child's health and development is or is likely to be harmed. Types of neglect include physical, medical, emotional, educational neglect and abandonment.
5. **Exposure to Family Violence** is any abusive behaviour used by a person in a relationship to gain and maintain control over their partner or ex-partner. It can include a broad range of behaviour that causes fear and physical and/or psychological harm. If a Child is living in a household where there have been incidents of domestic violence, then they may be at risk of significant physical and/or psychological harm.