



**CHILD SAFETY & WELLBEING
POLICY**

JANUARY 2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section	Pages
1. OVERVIEW	3 - 4
2. POLICY STATEMENT	5 - 6
3. RESPONSIBILITIES	7 - 8
4. RECRUITMENT AND EMPLOYMENT	9 - 10
5. PARTICIPATION IN PROGRAMS	11 - 12
6. ONLINE AND SOCIAL MEDIA	13
7. REPORTING AND RISK MANAGEMENT	14 - 15
8. ACCESSIBILITY, REVIEW AND SUMMARY	16 - 17
9. APPENDIX 1 - PRINCIPLES AND STANDARDS	18 - 19



1. OVERVIEW

Purpose

This policy articulates The Push's commitment to child safety, providing safe environments for the children and young people who engage in our programs and to promote a child safe work culture.

The policy outlines The Push's values regarding child safety and wellbeing and provides information on how we work to create, maintain and improve the safety of our programs.

Scope

This policy relates to all staff, Board of Directors, program participants, volunteers and contractors working at The Push on behalf of the organisation.

Definitions

- *DFFH* - Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
- *WWCC* - Working with Children Check completed by the relevant authority in each state.
- *Staff* - Employees, including full-time, part-time and casuals as well as volunteers.
- *Child* - The words 'child' and 'children' in this guide refer to children and young people up to the age of 18 years. This definition is consistent with the national framework, Creating Safe Environments for Children - Organisations, Employees and Volunteers, the Commission for Children and Young People Act 2012, the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 and the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005.
- *Young People* - Any person between the ages of 18 and 25.
- *Aboriginal* - The term 'Aboriginal' in this policy is inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The Push's Obligations

The Push has obligations to safeguard children and provide an environment that fosters child safety and wellbeing under National and State-based legislation, regulations, principles and guidelines.

National Principles for Child Safe Organisations have been developed by the National Children's Commissioner to provide a nationally consistent approach to creating organisational cultures that foster child safety and wellbeing. Australian organisations are not legally required to adopt the National Principles, however, are considered best practice for fostering child safety and wellbeing culture and practice.

The 10 National Principles are set out in the Appendix to this policy. The Push complies with each of these 10 National Principles.



Victorian Child Safe Standards

Victoria has compulsory minimum Child Safe Standards that The Push is required to comply with. Under the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic) organisations that exercise care, supervision or authority over children, whether as part of its primary function or not are required to comply with the Victorian Child Safe Standards.

The 11 Child Safety Standards are set out in the Appendix to this policy.



2. POLICY STATEMENT

Policy

The Push views child safety and wellbeing in a holistic sense: we strive to create environments where young people's voices are valued, they are physically and psychologically safe, are encouraged to freely enjoy their cultural rights and their diverse needs are recognised and respected.

The Push understands the importance of the individual rights of the child - the right to be safe, to be respected, to be included, to have a say, to be heard and to have their views and opinions taken seriously.

The Push is committed to equity and inclusion. We aim to uphold equity for all young people and prevent child abuse and harm resulting from discrimination based on disability, race, ethnicity, religion, sex, intersex status, gender identity or sexual orientation.

The way we design our programs, recruit new people to the team and how we communicate serves The Push's commitment to creating safe spaces where young people can thrive.

Safety of all Young People

The Push works with people aged between 12 and 25 years old. While the term 'child safety' refers to the safety of young people under the age of 18, The Push is committed to the safety of all young people participating in our programs.

Cultural Expression and Cultural Rights

Valuing cultural safety means recognising the diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives of young people engaging with our programs.

Our staff support and encourage young people's ability to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights. All employees undertake Child Safety training which explores these themes so they can be applied in practice.

Our programs are designed in a way that is responsive and respectful to different cultural perspectives and celebrate the value that a diverse group of backgrounds and experiences bring to our work.

The Push captures data on the people who engage with us to ensure that our programs, staff and Board of Directors are reflective of the communities in which we work.

Aboriginal Culture

The Push actively supports and facilitates participation and inclusion of Aboriginal people and promotes a culturally safe and inclusive environment for Aboriginal children, young people, adults and their families.

Program application and participation by Aboriginal people is encouraged during the application process.



The Push's is committed to respecting and valuing Aboriginal children. Child Safety Training is provided to all staff that addresses these themes and provides skills for staff to apply.



3. RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities

All staff, board members, contractors, volunteers and agents of The Push are responsible for the care and protection of children and reporting information about child abuse.

Board Members

The Board of The Push has ultimate responsibility for the detection and prevention of, and response to child abuse as part of its broader responsibility for:

- providing leadership for an organisational culture of accountability for child safety and wellbeing and is continuously reviewed and improved.
- ensuring that appropriate policies and procedures and a Code of Conduct are in place and regularly reviewed.
- ensuring that appropriate and effective prevention and risk management systems are in place.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

The CEO is responsible for ensuring that all personnel are aware of their obligations under this policy and the Code of Conduct, including:

- keeping up to date and complying with relevant changes in legislation and practices in relation to this policy and informing all personnel of any changes impacting their responsibilities under this policy.
- ensuring that all personnel are aware of their obligation to report suspected abuse of a child in accordance with this policy.
- providing support for all personnel in undertaking their child safety responsibilities, including providing adequate resources and training to assist all personnel to undertake their child safety responsibilities.
- ensuring recruitment and induction processes for all personnel are in line with this policy.
- receiving and ensuring The Push responds to reports of child abuse in accordance with this policy and applicable legislation and regulations.
- advising the Board of any child safety issues that have been raised (whilst respecting the confidentiality of the child involved) and any associated reports made to external parties (such as the police or Child Protection department)
- leading the review of this policy.



Board members, staff, contractors and volunteers

All board members, staff, contractors and volunteers must:

- ensure that they contribute to an organisational culture that promotes child safety, wellbeing and participation.
- maintain a current and valid Working with Children Check
- read and comply with this policy.
- read, comply with and acknowledge The Push Code of Conduct.
- report any inappropriate behaviour or suspected abusive activities in accordance with the reporting procedure.
- support an environment that promotes and values the physical, emotional and cultural safety of children, including by undertaking professional development as appropriate.

Child Safety Champions

The Push has appointed two Child Safety champions across the organisation.

Greg Chalmers
Head of Operations
greg@thepush.com.au

Lisa Lorenz
Manager, All-Ages Events
Lisa@thepush.com.au

The role of the Child Safety Champions is to work with the team to ensure a child safe culture is embedded and standards are met.

Key responsibilities include:

- Promote a Child Safety Culture - Promote a culture of listening.
- Providing support and guidance - Be a point of contact and provide guidance for child safety concerns.
- Train and educate - Provide child safety induction programs for staff, volunteers and participants.
- Monitor, review and report - Record child safety complaints and concerns and Coordinate child safety policy and practice reviews.

The Child Safety Champions meet with The Push CEO to discuss Child Safety outcomes monthly.



4. RECRUITMENT AND EMPLOYMENT

Working With Children Checks

All employees of The Push, board members and volunteers over the age of 18 are required to hold a valid Working with Children Check.

Although The Push is based in Victoria, employees may live interstate. These employees must hold a WWCC for the state which they reside.

Interstate employees delivering programs outside of home state are not required to hold a WWCC for that state unless the total number of delivery days exceed 30 per calendar year.

WWCC compliance is tracked via The Push's Customer Relationship Management software platform.

There may be times during event delivery, where questions may arise as to who is required to hold a WWCC. This may include technical crew, security and caterers.

In these cases, please refer to ['Do I need a Working With Children Check?'](#) page of the Victorian Government website or interstate alternative.

Child Safety Training

All staff are required to complete child safety training with ChildSafe Australia every two years. Completion of this training forms part of the induction process for new all staff.

Training compliance is tracked via The Push's Customer Relationship Management software platform.

Record Keeping

The Push collects the following information for the purposes of verifying WWC Checks, and retains this information for 7 years:

- Full name of person being checked,
- Date of birth of person being checked,
- Working with Children Check number or current application number for an appropriate clearance,
- Working with Children Check expiry date.

The Push also collects and records Child Safe Training outcomes when completed.

All information is stored on the employee record on The Push's Customer Relationship Management software platform.



Recruitment of New Employees and Board Members

The Push aims to build a team that shares the same values regarding the safety and wellbeing of the children we engage with. We do this by embedding our commitment to child safety across our recruitment processes.

The following has been implemented as part of the recruitment process for all new board members, volunteers and employees, including full-time, part-time and casuals:

- Position descriptions and job advertisements feature standard wording regarding The Push's commitment to child safety and the duties and responsibilities of the role in supporting child safety.
- Position descriptions and job advertisements include a statement positioning The Push as an equal opportunity employer with a zero tolerance to discrimination.
- The Push requires that all employees hold a current Working with Children Check. The Push will cover the cost of this check.
- New employees are required to supply a current National Police Check. The Push will cover the cost of this check.
- Our induction process includes reading and acknowledgement of our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and our Code of Conduct Policy which specifically outline expectations and obligations regarding child safety.
- All new starters will be required to complete Child Safety training with ChildSafe Australia.



5. PARTICIPATION IN PROGRAMS

Children as Participants

The Push regularly engages children across a range of roles including, but not limited to, program participant, performers, spokespeople and advisory group members.

Where a Child is engaged for any activity, The Push must obtain a permission form from their appropriate parent and/or guardian.

Each child engaged must receive written correspondence outlining the rights and responsibilities of both the child and The Push with relation to important dates, attendance, recording and media activity, insurance and indemnity.

Each child will receive information on The Push's Child Safety policy and complaints handling process, written in easy-to-understand language.

These documents are also stored on The Push's website.

Sometimes, The Push brings together children both over and under the age of 18, to participate in our programs. If there are people over the age of 18 working with people under the age of 18, those over the age of 18 must hold valid volunteer Working with Children checks.

Children as Audiences

The Push creates opportunities for children to participate and thrive in Australian music. One way that children can participate is to be part of an audience for a live music event, workshop or networking gathering.

As we value the opportunity for children to engage with their community, events programmed by The Push will be focussed on children but welcome friends, family and the community who may be over 25 years old.

In these cases (and in accordance with Victorian government advice), we do not require audience members over the age of 18 to hold Working with Children checks when engaging as audience members.

Risk assessments should always prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children, with appropriate mitigations in place to ensure that our events are safe spaces for our community, both young and young at heart.

Children with Diverse Needs

The Push is committed to providing equity and inclusion for all children.

We value equity for all children. To achieve this, we:

- welcome and support participation of all children, including children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children from low-socio



economic backgrounds, children with disability, those who are unable to live at home, LGBTIQ children and First Nations children.

- offer students and families through our enrolment processes the opportunity to provide information about themselves, including any specific needs to participate fully in our programs.
- have zero tolerance of racism and other forms of discrimination.
- deliver programs that reflects the diversity of our students, their interests and cultures.
- strive to reflect the diversity of our community through representation in our staff and Board membership.

Mature Minors and Decision Making

Parents, guardians and carers play an invaluable role in supporting a child's learning and wellbeing through being actively informed and involved in decisions about a child's life. However, children under 18 may ask to make decisions on their own behalf without the involvement of their parents or carers. There are a range of reasons why this could be the case, including where a child is living independently, or has a history of family conflict or family violence.

The law recognises that as children become older and more mature, they are more capable of making their own decisions about a wide range of issues including decisions about their education, healthcare and wellbeing. The law recognises that a young person may reach this stage before they turn 18 years old, but there is no specific age when a young person may be sufficiently mature and capable of making their own decision. These young people are referred to as 'mature minors'.

Where a child under 18 asks to give consent or make a decision on their own behalf instead of their parent, guardian or carer, a team member can decide that the person is capable of making their own decision (i.e. that they are a mature minor for the purpose of making a particular decision).

To be considered a mature minor, The Push team must be satisfied that the child has sufficient maturity, understanding and intelligence to understand the nature and effect of their particular decision. A child can be considered capable of making some decisions but not others.

The Push will complete a 'Mature Minor Checklist' for all relevant cases.

The Push will maintain a 'Mature Minors Register' document.

6. ONLINE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Recording, Marketing and Social Media

The Push is committed to protecting the privacy of children involved in our programs.

The Push does not record, share or publish images, video or any other media depicting children engaged in The Push's programs activities on any platform without written consent from appropriate parents/guardians, generally through a program permission form.

In the case of a public event and capturing audience images and videos, signage must be present at all events notifying young people and children that the event is being captured and to notify an event staff member if they do not want their image used.

This helps ensure that images are not recorded of children who may be involved in child protection, family court or criminal proceedings.

Where The Push does share or publish imagery depicting children involved in The Push's activities it is solely for the promotion of The Push's programs, events or related activities.

Please see The Push Privacy Policy for further details.

Online Environments

The Push engages with children across Australia and relies on online communication channels to deliver elements of our programs.

To maintain a safe online environment, the following two things will be observed:

1. Employees should only engage with children using official channels of The Push.
2. There should always be more than two people involved in an online communication.

The Push has a range of social media channels and email addresses that employees utilise when a program requires online communications.

To ensure that there are always two people in an online communication, different strategies will be required depending on the communication channel.

For example, if you need to email a child individually, please CC in your manager or hello@thepush.com.au. If there is ever the event of only one person attending an online video conference, another employee should be invited to attend the conference. One-to-one communication between an employee and a child should always be avoided.

Personal social media channels will never be used to communicate with a child. Additionally, friend requests or follow requests to personal accounts should be denied.

If you're in doubt about online communications with a child, please speak to your manager.



7. REPORTING AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Reporting

The Push is a child safe organisation and does not tolerate incidents of child abuse.

If you form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child needs protection from physical injury or sexual abuse, you must report it to a nominated contact person (see below) to refer to the Victorian Government Department of Health and Human Services Child Protection Intake Line (1300 664 977) as soon as is practicable.

A belief is a “belief on reasonable grounds” if a reasonable person, doing the same work, would have formed the same belief on those grounds.

If you believe that a child needs protection or believe there has been an incident of child abuse, please contact one of our nominated contacts:

Kate Duncan
CEO
kate@thepush.com.au
03 9380 1277

Craig Rogers
Head of Programs
craig@thepush.com.au
03 9380 1277

These contact people are responsible for referring reports of child abuse made by staff to the Victorian Government Department of Health and Human Services Child Protection and will be contacted in the event a staff member becomes barred from child-related employment.

Where required, The Push will also make a report directly to the Police.

For more information, please see the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing website - <https://services.dffh.vic.gov.au/reporting-child-abuse>

Investigating

If the appropriate child protection service or police decide to investigate a report, all staff, volunteers and contractors must cooperate fully with the investigation.

Regardless of whether the authorities decide to conduct an investigation, one of our nominated contacts will consult with the authorities and the Board of Directors to determine whether an internal investigation is appropriate.

If it is alleged that an employee, volunteer or contractor may have committed an offence or breached the organisation’s policies, the person may be stood down (with pay, where applicable) while an investigation is conducted.



Responding

If the investigation concludes that offence or breach of the organisation's policies has occurred then disciplinary action may follow, including dismissal or cessation of employment or cessation of involvement with the organisation. The findings of the investigation will be reported to any external body as required.

Where an offence or breach of organisational policies has occurred, the relevant policies will be reviewed in light of the offence, regardless of their scheduled review date.

Barred Workers

If The Push becomes aware that a staff member in a child-related role has received a bar or interim bar from working with children, they will be immediately relieved of all child-related duties and may not engage in child-related work for the duration of their bar.

Risk Management

As part of project and program design, a risk management process is undertaken to identify and mitigate potential risks. As part of the risk management process, risks to the safety and wellbeing of children are identified as a priority.

In addition, The Push's board has a Finance, Audit and Risk, which regularly reviews the organisation's Risk Register and makes recommendations to the board to continually improve our approach to managing risk. As part of the review process, the subcommittee assesses our compliance against the relevant Child Safe Standards.



8. ACCESSIBILITY, REVIEW AND SUMMARY

Expectations and Practices

For information on how The Push meets the Victorian 11 Child Safe Standards or 10 National Principles, please reach out via email to hello@thepush.com.au and we will provide a copy of the relevant documentation.

Feedback

If you would like to provide any feedback on this policy or have any suggestions regarding how we can support the safety and wellbeing of the child in our communities, please email us on hello@thepush.com.au.

Review

In line with the Policy and Procedures Policy, this policy will be reviewed on a two-year cycle. In the case of an allegation or occurrence of child abuse, or a breach of this policy, will trigger a review of this policy outside the regular review schedule.

Public Access

The Child Safety Policy, Code of Conduct, Complaints Policy and Child Safety information sheets publicly available on The Push's website.

<https://www.thepush.com.au/child-safety>

Accessible Documentation

The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) provides accessible and translated resources to help understand the Child Safety requirements. These resources can be found on the DFFH Child Safe website;

<https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/resources-child-safe-standards>

Related Documents

This policy complies with The Push's obligations under the principal act of the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic.)*, in addition to other relevant legislation; *Child Employment Act 2003 (Vic.)*, *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic.)*, *Commission for Children and Young People Act 2012 (Vic.)*, *Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic.)* and *Commission for Children and Young People Child Safe Standards 2022 (Vic.)*.

Related Policies

Mature Minor Checklist

Mature Minors Register

Code of Conduct Policy

Complaints Policy



Authorisation

30/01/2024

Kate Duncan, CEO

Policy number	3	Version	002
Drafted by	Greg Chalmers	Approved by CEO on	30/01/2024
Responsible person	Kate Duncan	Scheduled review date	30/01/2026



9. APPENDIX 1 - PRINCIPLES AND STANDARDS

National Principle

National Principles for Child Safe Organisations have been developed by the National Children's Commissioner to provide a nationally consistent approach to creating organisational cultures that foster child safety and wellbeing.

The National Principles are as follows:

1. Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.
2. Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
3. Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
4. Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.
5. People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
6. Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.
7. Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.
8. Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.
9. Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved.
10. Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

Victorian Standards

Victoria has compulsory minimum Child Safe Standards that The Push is required to comply with.

- Standard 1: Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.
- Standard 2: Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.
- Standard 3: Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
- Standard 4: Families and communities are informed, and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
- Standard 5: Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.
- Standard 6: People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
- Standard 7: Processes for complaints and concerns are child focused.



- Standard 8: Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.
- Standard 9: Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.
- Standard 10: Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.
- Standard 11: Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people

For more information on the 11 Child Safe Standards, please visit the [Commission for Children and Young People website](#).

