

# SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

A COMMITMENT  
TO ENSURING  
A CHILD-SAFE ENVIRONMENT  
FOR ALL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE  
IN YMCA PROGRAMS



YMCA OF BRISBANE  
AND  
Y-CARE (SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND) INC.



Maintaining accreditation  
as a child-safe organisation through  
The Australian Childhood Foundation

MARCH 2018

**POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

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The YMCA of Brisbane and Y-Care (South East Queensland) Inc. will be referenced throughout this document as “**YMCA**”. The Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Procedures will be referenced throughout this document as the “**SCPP**”.



**IF YOU SEE SOMETHING – SAY SOMETHING**

# 1. COMMITMENT TO SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

## 1.1 Policy Purpose

The YMCA strives for an inclusive society where everyone has the opportunity to reach his or her potential. It is a Movement committed to providing opportunities for all people to grow in body, mind and spirit.

It is part of the very fabric of the YMCA Movement to promote the healthy development of children and young people who access its programs and services. The safety and protection of children and young people is paramount.

YMCA Australia and all of its Licensed Member Associations, Board Directors, staff and volunteers have a legal, moral and Mission-driven responsibility to:

- Protect children and young people from all forms of abuse, grooming, bullying and exploitation;
- Create and maintain a child safe culture that is understood, endorsed and put into action by all the individuals who work for, volunteer, govern or access a YMCA program, service or managed facility;
- Acknowledge that protecting children is everyone's business;
- Ensure all YMCA people understand their obligations in accordance with the intent and principles of YMCA Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and its implementation at a local level;
- Ensure that the YMCA Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy is complied with;
- Ensure that localised policies, codes of conduct and procedures support compliance to the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy;
- Adhere to the YMCA Licensing Standards in place at the time;
- Provide to YMCA Australia an annual child safety assessment referencing the requirement of the policy via a self-reporting process;
- Allocate adequate resources to enable the effective implementation of local policies and operational procedures that are compliant with the YMCA Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy;
- Support the YMCA Child Safety Strategy;
- Achieve and maintain accreditation with an agreed independent child protection specialist organisation;
- Provide YMCA Australia with the outcome reports of independent audits on a three year cycle as a minimum;
- Advocate for and promote the rights of children and young people at a local level;
- Empower and engage children and young people in support of this policy;
- Develop opportunities for regular discussion at all levels of the Association to support a culture of continuous improvement and accountability for the protection of children and young people;
- Communicate with YMCA Australia in the event of a breach of this policy;
- Ensure children, staff, volunteers, Board Directors and families are listened to and have a way of being heard in regards to child protective practice;
- Empower and engage children and young people in local policy and/or operational procedure development that has a direct impact on them.

## 1.2 Endorsement

The Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures were endorsed by the Board of Directors of the YMCA of Brisbane and the Management Committee of Y-Care (South East Queensland) on 28 March 2018.

## 1.3 Our Commitment

### Our Commitment to Children and Young People

- We commit to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people who access any of our programs, services or facilities. **[Article 19 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child]**
- We commit to providing children and young people with positive and nurturing experiences via safe relationships with our YMCA people.
- We commit to developing the skills and capacity of children and young people to identify ('Know'), assess ('See'), and manage ('Respond') to unsafe situations. **[Article 13 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child]**
- We commit to listening to children and young people and empowering them by taking their view seriously and addressing any concerns that they raise with us. **[Article 12 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the child]**
- We commit to consulting with children and young people (and their families) who have additional needs or who are from diverse backgrounds.
- We commit to cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people and respect and understand that our indigenous culture will be promoted to and with others.
- We commit to cultural safety for children, young people and their families from cultural and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and will provide child safety resources in alternative languages and images whenever possible.
- We commit to responding appropriately to the needs of children and young people with a disability and provide a safe environment for them which includes educational resources, strategies and support to help them improve the capacity of children, young people and their families to identify and respond to harm.
- We commit to supporting all forms of diversity, including children, young people and their families who identify as being LGBTQIA.
- We commit to taking action to ensure that children and young people are protected from exploitation, abuse or harm. **[Article 3 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child]**
- We commit to supporting families and communities to promote children's healthy development and wellbeing.

### Our Commitment to Parents and Caregivers

- We commit to supporting parents and caregivers to protect their children. We will offer assistance that builds on a family's strengths and empowers them to meet the changing needs of their children.
- We commit to communicating honestly and openly with parents and caregivers about the wellbeing and safety of their children.
- We commit to engaging and listening to parents and caregivers' views in regards to our child protective practice policies and procedures.
- We commit to transparency in our decision-making with parents and caregivers where it will not compromise the safety of children or young people.

**YOUR YMCA IS A CHILD SAFE ORGANISATION**

**Keeping children safe is**  
**everyone's business**

## **Our Commitment to YMCA People**

- We commit to having a management structure that supports and develops staff in their roles.
- We commit to providing all YMCA people with the necessary support to enable them to fulfil their roles. This will include regular and appropriate development opportunities and supervision.
- We commit to providing regular training for staff which includes the indicators of abuse, high risk environments and situations, the characteristics and stereotypes of victims and offenders, grooming and how to respond to children and young people that disclose abuse. Our YMCA people will be trained in how to 'Know, See and Respond' to child abuse.
- We commit to providing regular opportunities to clarify and confirm policy and procedures in relation to children's and young people's protection and welfare. This will include annual training with regards to understanding the principles and intent of the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy.
- We commit to implementing strategies to support staff retention and therefore provide consistent and skilled staff that foster positive relationships.
- We commit to listening to all concerns voiced by YMCA people in regards to keeping children and young people safe from harm.
- We commit to providing YMCA people with access to other services that support safety and welfare.
- We commit to providing opportunities for YMCA people to receive formal debriefing and counselling arising from incidents of child or young person abuse.

## **Our Commitment to Ensuring a Child Safe Organisation**

- We commit to using best practice standards in the recruitment, screening and employment (including (but not limited to) police and/or working with children checks) of YMCA people so as they will not harm, abuse or exploit children and young people who are involved in our programs, services or facilities.
- We commit to creating an environment for children and young people to be safe and to feel safe.
- We commit to providing safe physical environments that, when possible, are designed with children, young people, their families and YMCA people.
- We commit to supporting and strengthening families by providing information and access to other relevant community services.
- We commit to regularly auditing our facilities and immediate surrounding environments to assess safety.
- We commit to monitoring our online environments to ensure their safety.
- We commit to promoting, supporting and building positive relationships between children and young people, and other users accessing our facilities.
- We commit to ensuring user groups of our facilities comply with our Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy.

## **How We Will Ensure Our Policy is Continually Improved**

- We will welcome and encourage feedback on our policies and practice, and will endeavour to ensure our complaints processes are child and young people friendly, developmentally and culturally appropriate, visible and accessible.
- We commit to responding to feedback and complaints in a timely manner.
- We commit to ensuring complaints and concerns are analysed to identify causes and systemic failures to inform continuous improvement.
- For details on making a complaint please refer to our [Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy](#) or visit our website [www.ymcabrisbane.org](http://www.ymcabrisbane.org).

## 1.4 Definitions

### (a) Definition of a Child/Young Person

The YMCA considers a child or young person to be a person under the age of eighteen (18) years of age.

### (b) Definition of Harm

Harm to a child or young person, is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child or young person's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing. It is immaterial how the harm is caused. Harm can be caused by—

- i. physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect; or
- ii. sexual abuse or exploitation.
- iii. a single act, omission or circumstance; or
- iv. a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances.

### (c) Grooming

Grooming is a term used to describe what happens when a perpetrator of abuse builds a relationship with a child or young person with a view to abusing them at some stage. There is no set pattern in relation to the grooming of children. For some perpetrators, there will be a lengthy period of time before the abuse begins. Other perpetrators may draw a child in and abuse them relatively quickly. Some abusers do not groom children but abuse them without forming a relationship at all. Grooming can take place in any setting where a relationship is formed, such as leisure, music, sports and religious activities, or in internet chatrooms, on social media or by SMS.

Grooming occurs in six stages:

1. Targeting the victim
2. Gaining the victim's trust
3. Filling a need
4. Isolating the child
5. Sexualising the relationship
6. Maintaining control

Any adult who grooms children under the age of 16 in order to facilitate the procurement of the child to engage in a sexual act, or expose, without legitimate reason, the child to any indecent matter, is committing a crime in Queensland.

### (d) Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse occurs when an adult involves a child or young person in any sexual activity. Sexual Abuse also occurs when a child or young person involves another child or young person in any sexual activity. Perpetrators of sexual abuse take advantage of their power, authority or position over the child or young person for their own benefit. It can include making sexual comments to a child or young person, engaging children or young people to participate in sexual conversations over the internet or on social media, kissing, touching a child or young person's genitals or breasts, oral sex or intercourse. Encouraging a child or young person to view pornographic magazines, websites and videos is also sexual abuse.

### (e) Physical Abuse

Physical abuse occurs when a person subjects a child or young person to non-accidental physically aggressive acts. The abuser may inflict an 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) shoving, hitting, slapping, shaking, throwing, punching, biting, burning and kicking. It also includes giving children or young people harmful substances such as drugs, alcohol or poison. Certain types of punishment, whilst not causing injury can also be considered physical abuse if they place a child or young person at risk of being hurt.

**(f) Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure or deliberate denial to provide the child or young person with the basic necessities of life. Such neglect includes the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, supervision, clean water or medical attention to the extent that the child or young person's health and development is, or is likely to be, significantly harmed.

Categories of neglect include physical neglect, medical neglect, abandonment or desertion, emotional neglect and educational neglect. The issue of neglect must be considered within the context of resources reasonably available to the family.

**(g) Psychological Abuse**

Emotional or psychological abuse occurs when a child or young person does not receive the love, affection or attention they need for healthy emotional, psychological and social development. Such abuse may involve repeated rejection or threats to a child or young person. Constant criticism, teasing, ignoring, threatening, yelling, scapegoating, ridiculing and rejecting or continual coldness are all examples of emotional abuse. These behaviours continue to an extent that results in significant damage to the child or young person's physical, intellectual or emotional wellbeing and development.

**(h) Bullying**

Bullying involves the inappropriate use of power by one or more persons over another less powerful person or group and is generally an act that is repeated over time. Bullying has been described by researchers as taking many forms which are often interrelated and include:

- i. Verbal (name calling, put downs, threats)
- ii. Physical (hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting)
- iii. Social (ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating)
- iv. Psychological (spreading rumours, stalking, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions).

**(i) Witnessing Family Violence**

Witnessing family violence is a specific form of emotional and psychological abuse. Witnessing family violence occurs when children or young people are forced to live with violence between adults in their home. It is harmful to children and young people. It can include witnessing violence or the consequences of violence. Family violence is defined as violence between members of a family or extended family or those fulfilling the role of family in a child's or young person's life. Exposure to family violence places children and young people at increased risk of physical injury and harm and has a significant impact on their wellbeing and development.

**(j) Sexual Exploitation**

Sexual exploitation occurs when children or young people are forced into sexual activities that are then recorded in some way and/or used to produce pornography. Such pornography can be in the form of actual photos or videos or published on the internet. This can occur even if images of children and/or young people were not specifically created for the purposes of pornography or gratification at the time of their production. Exploitation can also involve children or young people who are forced into prostitution.

**(k) Racial, Cultural or Religious Abuse**

Racial, cultural or religious abuse is conduct that demonstrates contempt, ridicule, hatred or negativity towards a child or young person because of their culture, race or religion.





## 2. PERSONNEL ROLES AND CONDUCT

*The YMCA is committed to the safety and well-being of all children and young people accessing its programs and services. YMCA supports the rights of the child and will strive to deliver a child safe environment at all times. YMCA also supports the rights and wellbeing of our staff and volunteers and encourage their active participation in building and maintaining a safe environment for children.*

*Staff and volunteers must maintain the highest standards of professional conduct in their attitude and behaviour toward clients, colleagues and members of the community. In particular, staff recognise the power imbalance inherent in a staff/client relationship and will never act in a manner which exploits or could be seen to exploit that power imbalance.*

### 2.1 Roles and Responsibilities – Staff and Volunteers

- a. All staff/volunteers are required to understand and adhere to their responsibilities in the areas of Australian Childhood Foundation (ACF) Accreditation as outlined in the Roles and Responsibilities of Staff and Volunteers.
- b. In order to protect YMCA staff, volunteers and program participants and their families, the YMCA has developed a Safeguarding Children Code of Conduct which seeks to provide clarity to acceptable behaviour in order to minimise the risk of abuse for a child/young person. The YMCA understands the great benefit of the positive relationships that can form between YMCA staff members and volunteers with the children and young people and during the child's/young person's participation, the YMCA endeavours to make this as safe as possible for all concerned.
- c. All staff/volunteers, with direct responsibility for child care and/or other children's programs/services in the YMCA must be familiar with the Safeguarding Children Code of Conduct and follow its operational responsibilities at all times.
- d. All staff/volunteers are expected to declare that they have read and understood the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Procedures (SCPP) including the Safeguarding Children Code of Conduct.
- e. It is important that staff/volunteers have a good rapport with the children/young people so that the child or young person feels comfortable, feels as though they can trust that person and have been encouraged to communicate openly with the YMCA staff/volunteer.
- f. YMCA staff and volunteers will role model the principles of the SCPP, demonstrate appropriate behaviour and respect for children to support and encourage open communication from children regarding their wellbeing.
- g. YMCA staff and volunteers have a duty of care to ensure that all who access the Association's programs, services and facilities are provided with a safe, open and honest environment that protects children and young people and the staff and volunteers who work with them.
- h. YMCA staff and volunteers are to involve children, young people and parents/caregivers in their approaches to safeguarding children and young people by providing clear and concise information in regards to YMCA policy and procedures. Parents/caregivers, children and young people need to understand what they can do in the event of a concern, fear or threat. Communication is to be carried out in a manner sensitive to age, language, culture, religion or capability.
- i. Staff and volunteers are accountable to their supervisors and supervisors to their Managers and Managers to the CEO for ensuring the SCPP practices are effectively implemented and monitored.
- j. Staff and volunteers should use language and tone of voice in the presence of children that provides clear direction, boosts their confidence, encourages or affirms them.
- k. Language used with children should not be intended to threaten or be discriminatory, racist, sexist, derogatory, profane, sexual, belittling or negative (e.g. 'loser', 'fat').



- I. In particular, staff and volunteers are required to:
  - i. Be familiar with the contents of this SCPP and promptly seek clarification as required.
  - ii. Complete ACF training on commencement with the YMCA and annual safeguarding children update training thereafter.
  - iii. Be familiar with and adhere to the related policies, supporting documents and forms and promptly seek clarification as required. These policies, documents and forms can be found on the YMCA [Safeguarding Children Sharepoint](#) page.
  - iv. Promote the safeguarding of children and young people (child protection).
  - v. Be aware of the risk of child abuse and the indicators of child abuse and grooming.
  - vi. Understand children's rights and be clear about what is acceptable behaviour when dealing with children.
  - vii. Be aware of what to do if they suspect a breach of the Safeguarding Children Code of Conduct. Refer to items 6.8 and 2.2.1(t) (Code of Conduct), or [Whistleblower Policy](#).
  - viii. Immediately report any suspected incident of child abuse in accordance with the reporting flowchart (refer to 6.7) and otherwise respond as required and expected by this policy, state requirements and by law.
  - ix. Maintain confidentiality in investigations of suspected child abuse.
  - x. Fully cooperate with the defined relevant local/state/federal agencies in investigations of suspected child abuse.
  - xi. Adhere to prescribed minimum staff – child ratios.
  - xii. Actively involve children, young people and parents/caregivers in the ongoing development and implementation of the SCPP.
  - xiii. Report any suspicions of grooming or child abuse perpetrated by YMCA staff, volunteers, members or parents/caregivers.
  - xiv. In consultation with service staff, Group Managers will report annually to the Chief Executive Officer on the implementation, monitoring and review of this SCPP, related policies and relevant workplace and program/service practice.



## 2.2 Safeguarding Children Code of Conduct – Staff and Volunteers

### 1. Program/services staff and volunteers **MUST:**

- a) Conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the position as a positive role model to children, and as a representative of the YMCA.
- b) Within the first five (5) working days, read, understand and formally agree to abide with the YMCA policies and guidelines around the safety of children as outlined in the YMCA's SCPP, a copy of which is given to staff during their induction process.
- c) Have knowledge of, and at all times adhere to, all Law and Regulations when employed in approved or otherwise regulated Education and Care Services.
- d) Follow all workplace policies, procedures and signage in relation to the safety and protection of children and young people, including any government department's Laws and Regulations.
- e) Avoid placing themselves in potentially compromising situations with children.
- f) Ensure that, in all circumstances, government and YMCA prescribed staff/child ratios are adhered to.
- g) Ensure they are never alone with a child where they cannot be observed by at least one other YMCA staff member, volunteer or other adult.
- h) Remain alert to the risk indicators of child abuse and grooming and promptly report suspected incidents or suspicious behaviour to their Manager/Supervisor (or Child Safety Advisor) and, where required by law, to the relevant departments.
- i) Raise all concerns, issues, and problems with their supervisor as soon as possible.
- j) Respect the cultural and religious practices of families, and understand and respond to the special needs of all children and young people.
- k) As a minimum, complete annual safeguarding children refresher training provided by the YMCA.
- l) Ensure an appropriate mix of male and female staff/volunteers is achieved wherever possible when preparing rosters for children's programs.
- m) Ensure young children in YMCA programs/services are appropriately supervised in bathrooms, showers and locker rooms or be required to accompany one another in pairs at such times. All children need to be supervised and accompanied by an adult at all times while in a YMCA centre or program. Any exceptions to this are to be covered by risk assessments and work instructions.
- n) Ensure that parent/caregiver permission is obtained prior to:
  - i. any photos or videos of children being taken.
  - ii. any child being taken on a YMCA excursion or camp.
- o) Ensure that parents/caregivers are informed of travel and sleeping arrangements prior to the commencement of any excursion or camp and that a full risk assessment is completed for the excursion/camp.
- p) Ensure that sign-in and sign-out logs, showing arrival and departure times, are maintained on a daily basis and kept on file at program/service sites. Program/service staff and volunteers are required to be vigilant in witnessing the arrival and departure of individual children.
- q) Be identified by a YMCA name badge and, where practicable, a branded uniform that is familiar to the children and is the same as, or similar to, that of their co-workers.
- r) Advise their Manager or Supervisor where a friendship has developed between them and families and/or children who participate in YMCA programs prior to or during employment by the YMCA.
- s) Report to their Manager any knowledge of staff/volunteers who engage in non-YMCA activities such as baby-sitting of children who participate in YMCA programs.
- t) Report to their supervisor, any observation of inappropriate behaviour by staff/volunteers which breaches the Safeguarding Child and Young People Policy and Procedures and/or the Code of Conduct.

## 2. Program/services staff and volunteers **MUST NOT:**

- a) Harm or exploit children who access YMCA programs and services.
- b) Discipline children through the use of emotional abuse, physical punishment or the withdrawal of the necessities of care (incl. food, shelter and emotional warmth), favouritism, physical abuse, verbal abuse, reference to cultural/ethnic differences, swearing.
- c) Have a child sit in their lap, cuddle, kiss, hug or touch children in an inappropriate and/or culturally insensitive manner.
- d) Make negative, violent or sexually suggestive comments to a child.
- e) Undertake a task of a personal nature that a child can do for itself, for example changing clothes, grooming, feeding and toileting.
- f) Engage in rough physical games with children.
- g) Transport an individual child or a group of children to or from YMCA programs in private vehicles without the written consent of the YMCA CEO. A risk management plan for travelling in vehicles needs to be adhered to at all times.
- h) Travel, or be accommodated, alone with a child participant before, during or after a YMCA program, excursion or camp. Where approved transport is undertaken, a minimum of two adults must be present.
- i) Take a child to their own home, or encourage meetings outside the program activity.
- j) Under any circumstances, release a child from a YMCA program or service to another parent(s), caregiver(s), relative(s) or other individual(s) without written consent from an authorised parent/guardian.
- k) Be involved in child-minding or other after hours activities unless:
  - i. The child is directly related (refer [Baby-Sitting Exemption \(Family\) form 241](#));
  - ii. The child is a participant in a different program to where the staff/volunteer is employed and they never have interaction or supervision during work hours (refer [Baby-Sitting Exemption \(Non-Family\) Form 241a](#)).

In both instances, staff/volunteers must declare their involvement with the child by completing the relevant form and obtaining parental/caregiver and CEO approval as indicated on the forms.

- l) Work for another organisation/company (second job) whilst working for the YMCA if the total hours worked per day is excessive (more than ten hours per day) and if the additional external hours will have a negative impact on YMCA duties.
- m) Wear YMCA uniforms to any external work (second job).
- n) Report to work under the influence of or in the possession of alcoholic beverages or illegal substances.
- o) Take unauthorised photos or videos of children on work or personal cameras or mobile phones/devices.
- p) Place photos of children in care on any personal social media platform, such as Facebook. Photos may only be placed on official YMCA sites once appropriate consent from the parent or guardian has been provided.
- q) Use personal social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat etc., to contact or converse with children enrolled in YMCA programs. Appropriate contact with children for the purpose of delivery of YMCA programs must be limited to official YMCA internal sites only. Any other contact should be directed to parents/caregivers only and in accordance with the YMCA's Social Media Policy.
- r) Text or email information directly to a child or young person's mobile or email address, unless for the express purpose of conducting YMCA business, counselling or training sessions. All communication made should be directed to the parents/caregivers and made only from YMCA devices.
- s) Give personal gifts to children unless under the banner of a gift from the YMCA (e.g. gifts from the YMCA service to each child at Christmas).
- t) Engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children.
- u) Engage in sexual behaviour between, with or in the presence of children or young people.

Breaches of this Policy or conduct that are considered unacceptable are subject to disciplinary procedures and possible dismissal. Refer to [Discipline and Performance Management Policy \(HRM005\)](#).

### Exceptional Circumstances

There may be exceptional situations where these guidelines do not apply, for example, in an emergency situation. However, it is crucial that, where possible, you seek management authorisation prior to taking action that contravenes these guidelines or that you advise management as soon possible after any incident in which these guidelines are breached. A [Potential Breach Register](#) is available to record such situations.

### **2.3 Reporting Breaches of the Code of Conduct**

Should a staff member/volunteer observe a breach of the code of conduct by another staff member/volunteer they should immediately notify the manager/supervisor.

Should the matter need to be immediately addressed, staff members/volunteers must address the staff member(s)/volunteer(s) involved, and intervene in the breach. The matter **must** still be raised with the manager/supervisor.

**If a staff member or volunteer does not feel comfortable reporting to their direct Supervisor or Manager about any concerns for a child in care or inappropriate behaviour towards children by another staff member or volunteer, they should report to the next level of management. Alternatively they can contact the Child Protection Advisor on 3253 1744 or 0436 676 832, or any of the Child Protection Staff at [child.protection@ymcabrisbane.org](mailto:child.protection@ymcabrisbane.org). Staff and volunteers are covered by the YMCA [Whistleblower Policy](#).**



### 3. RECRUITMENT AND SCREENING

*The YMCA is committed to recruiting and selecting directors, employees and volunteers to achieve its strategic direction and to demonstrate attributes that are consistent to YMCA values and vision. The process of recruiting and selecting directors, employees and volunteers will comply with all legal requirements and with relevant equal opportunity, affirmative action and human resource management policies as adopted by the YMCA.*

#### 3.1 Commitment to Safeguarding Children and Young People

YMCA's statement of commitment to safeguarding the children and young people in our care is supplied to all applicants at the same time as a formal employment contract is issued or directorship position is approved.

#### 3.2 Recruitment and Screening Process

Through the staff/volunteer recruitment and selection process the YMCA can put in place various steps that minimise the risk of attracting or hiring inappropriate staff/volunteers within our children/youth programs or within our association to ensure the provision of a safe environment for all. For further detail, please refer to the Human Resource Policy on [Recruitment and Screening \(HRM027\)](#). For clarification on the types of employees and the requirements for their engagement, please refer to the [Blue Card Induction Training Matrix](#).

<b>Job advertisements</b>	The YMCA will advertise internally as a minimum unless otherwise authorised by the CEO. Job ads will contain the following wording: <i>'The YMCA is committed to the safeguarding of children and young people'</i> and all applicants will be obliged to comply with all safeguarding policy and practice standards.
<b>Position Descriptions</b>	All staff will be issued position descriptions which refer to the staff member/volunteer being aware of and implementing the YMCA's SCPP. Position descriptions will also outline the need to possess a current positive notice blue card.
<b>Selection Panels</b>	Selection panels will comprise at least two people, have a gender balance where possible, declare any relationship or conflict of interest with applicants and have a chairperson. The chairperson will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Screen written applications</li> <li>• Undertake phone screening</li> <li>• Shortlist suitable applicants</li> <li>• Arrange panel interviews</li> <li>• Arrange workplace observations (where applicable)</li> <li>• Undertake reference checks.</li> </ul> All selection panel members must have met all safeguarding children standard requirements.
<b>Candidate Assessment</b>	Applicants should only be assessed on how they meet the selection criteria or job requirements. In particular, there must be no bias or discrimination on the grounds of race, age, sex, political beliefs, religious beliefs, impairment, sexual preference, marital status, pregnancy, family status, family responsibility, or trade union activity. All interviewees are to be asked whether they have been subject of an employer investigation or been charged with a criminal offence involving children, violence, drug dealing or dishonesty in line with our SCPP. Refer <a href="#">Candidate Interview Form</a> .
<b>Identity Checks</b>	Proof of identity documents that total 100 points will be obtained, copied and placed on file. Refer <a href="#">Identity Check Form No. 244</a> .
<b>Qualifications/ Registrations</b>	Original, or certified copies of qualifications or professional registrations will be sighted, copied and placed on staff files.



<p><b>Undertaking Reference Checks</b></p>	<p>Prior to formal offer, all appointed personnel and directors are expected to have three (3) professional referee checks completed or a mixture of two professional and one personal referee. It is ideal that at least one professional referee is from the applicant’s last place of employment/volunteering. Personal referees are not recommended. However, if there is no option but to include a personal referee, then that referee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Should not be related to the applicant.</li> <li>• Should have known the applicant for at least 12 months.</li> <li>• Must be able to vouch for the applicant’s reputation and character.</li> </ul> <p>The referee checks undertaken must involve direct contact with the referee. Written character references are not sufficient unless also followed up and verified through direct contact.</p> <p>Difficulty in contacting referees, such as those based overseas or those who have left an organisation, is not justification for accepting lower standards of scrutiny.</p> <p>YMCA maintains documentation regarding feedback from referees in relation to the suitability of an applicant to work with children. Reference check questions guide discussions with a referee. Some questions should be behavioural based questions. Listen carefully for attitude, tone and hesitancy by the referee.</p> <p>The results of these checks must be documented, diligently evaluated and placed on file prior to any offer of employment (paid or voluntary) being made.</p> <p>Where a referee may be from an overseas organisation and the cost of phoning is not possible or cost prohibitive, a reference check form can be emailed to the referee for completion and return. Refer <a href="#">Reference Check Form (280)</a>.</p>
<p><b>Blue Cards</b></p>	<p>Criminal History checks are undertaken on all paid employees engaging in regulated employment, and volunteers through the Blue Card Services as well as via the Queensland Police Service for hospitality workers. Refer to the Blue Card Services’ website: <a href="https://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au">https://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au</a></p> <p>A YMCA Manager or Supervisor of the applicant must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the new employee completes the application for positive notice blue card on day one of employment</li> <li>• Sight the applicable original identity documentation and record relevant details</li> <li>• Retain a copy of the completed application on file</li> <li>• Provide a verbal warning to the employee/volunteer before they complete/sign a blue card application form that it is an offence for a disqualified person to apply for a blue card.</li> </ul> <p>If already holding a Positive Notice Blue Card, an applicant must complete a form to link them to our organisation. <a href="#">Link an applicant/cardholder to this organisation form</a></p> <p>The Manager employing the new staff member must also validate their existing card via the online tool. <a href="https://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au/onlinevalidation/index.html">https://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au/onlinevalidation/index.html</a></p> <p>The YMCA will not employ a person who is deemed a prohibited person based on legislation in our jurisdiction. Refer to the policy on Blue Cards under <a href="#">HRM 024</a>.</p>
<p><b>National Checks</b></p>	<p>In addition to legislated screening schemes, employees may be required to undergo a National Criminal History Record Check, (also known as a ‘police check’). Where required, applicants are to complete an application form and provide consent for the check to be undertaken on behalf of the organisation. <i>Please Note: Legislation requirements in this area are continually changing and it is the YMCA’s responsibility to be fully informed in regard to these requirements and commit to changes in legislation.</i></p>

<b>International Checks</b>	The onus is on the employee or volunteer who has arrived from another country to provide an International Police Check. International Police Checks are subject to the legislation of the country where the person was a resident. The relevant overseas Police Force should be contacted to obtain a police record check, or alternatively the Australian Federal Police or Interpol.
<b>Employment of Foreign Nationals</b>	<p>Right to Work in Australia</p> <p>Whilst not directly associated with child-related employment, foreign nationals must present relevant work visas and immigration documentation to verify that they have the right to work in Australia. Completing these checks in conjunction with international criminal history checks will improve the reliability of the vetting process. The Department of Immigration conducts screening processes with overseas law enforcement agencies to ascertain if Visa candidates have relevant criminal convictions. However, YMCA management must assess each case on its merits to assess the risk of employing foreign nationals due to the difficulties associated with obtaining relevant background checks.</p>

### 3.3 Determining relevant criminal history

In accordance with the Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986, if an employee is denied employment or dismissed on the basis of a criminal record, there must be an inherent link between the criminal history and the requirements of the job.

It is at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer (or their relevant delegate), to determine whether a particular crime history is relevant to the position of employment and if the appointment or continued employment would put the YMCA at risk. This discretion must not contravene respective jurisdictional requirements. There are specific restrictions relating to the legal capacity for an organisation to make such a decision. *All Working with Children Check (WWCC) systems make a suitability assessment and issue either a positive or negative notice, and the organisation has no capacity to employ against a negative assessment, other than in NSW and SA.*

When assessing whether a particular crime history is relevant to the position of employment and if the appointment or continued employment, the following should be taken into account bound by:

- (a) There must be an inherent link between the criminal history and the requirements of the job.
- (b) The scope of the applicant's criminal history.
- (c) The nature of the offence and the relationship of the offence to the particular position/profession.
- (d) The period of time that has elapsed since the offence took place.
- (e) Whether the offence was committed as an adult or juvenile.
- (f) The type of penalty imposed by the court such as whether the court elects not to record a conviction where the person enters into and successfully completes a conditional order such as bond or probation, and whether the applicant has successfully completed the order.
- (g) The severity of any penalty imposed.
- (h) Whether the offence has been de-criminalised or removed from the statutes.

If a person is to be denied employment because of his/her criminal record, they are to be provided with an opportunity to discuss his/her criminal record and the reasons for the decision. This is imperative to allow the applicant to raise any errors or discrepancies that may have occurred.

Whenever possible, no applicant is to be offered a position until after completion of their 'National Criminal History Record' check.



## 4. PERSONNEL INDUCTION AND TRAINING

*The YMCA is committed to providing effective safeguarding children training for all new and existing directors, employees and volunteers as it strives to deliver a child safe environment at all times. The process of inducting and training directors, employees and volunteers will comply with all legal requirements and with the YMCA's own Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Procedures.*

### 4.1 On-line Training

All new staff and volunteers are to participate in a formal induction program within 7 days of their appointment. Refer to [YMCA Induction Checklist and Declarations](#).

Ideally on the first day, but mandatory during the first week of employment, all new staff will undertake:

1. On-line safeguarding children induction training with the Australian Childhood Foundation which provides a greater awareness of child safety including the risk of child abuse, indicators of child abuse, mandatory notification obligations and responsibilities. The course can be accessed at <http://www.safeguardingchildren.com.au> and a [work instruction](#) for logging onto the training and downloading certificates is included in new staff packs and is also available on the [YMCA's Safeguarding Children Sharepoint](#) page. A copy of the certificate must be placed on local staff file and a copy sent to the [Brisbane.payroll@ymcabrisbane.org](mailto:Brisbane.payroll@ymcabrisbane.org).
2. The YMCA's Safeguarding Children Policy Online Induction training, for which a certificate will be achieved.

All new staff will be emailed a link to the YMCA's Safeguarding Children Policy Online Induction training for which a certificate will be achieved.

### 4.2 Face to Face Training

There may be circumstances where undertaking on-line training is not possible, such as:

- Staff/volunteers are not sufficiently computer literate
- Staff/volunteers have language barriers
- Staff/volunteers cannot access a computer to do the on-line training
- Staff/volunteers are too young to be exposed to the information contained on-line

In these circumstances, face to face training using the ACF modules will be delivered by an appropriately qualified person. The names of those participants will be recorded on a [Staff/Volunteer Training Record](#) and an internal certificate will be generated for the attainment. All requests for such face to face training should be made to the Child Protection Advisor.

### 4.3 Update training

All existing staff and volunteers are required to undertake annual Safeguarding Children awareness update training. The method of this training may be online or face to face, and may be on a range of Safeguarding Children topics that are related to that service. Details of all training undertaken by staff/volunteers must be recorded on the staff/volunteer register.

### 4.4 Certificates of completion

Certificates will be received for all of the above types of training. Staff/volunteers should keep the original certificate and provide a copy to their Manager and HR ([brisbane.payroll@ymcabrisbane.org](mailto:brisbane.payroll@ymcabrisbane.org)) for placement on their respective personnel file.

## 5. INVOLVING CHILDREN AND PARENTS/CAREGIVERS

*The YMCA's wide range of programs and services provide a focus on prevention and early intervention. The YMCA will work with children and parents/caregivers to grow awareness of child abuse and develop strategies to reduce the likelihood of abuse occurring.*

### 5.1 Policy Versions

The YMCA's commitment to Safeguarding Children is communicated through parent/caregiver, child and young person versions of its policy. Copies of these versions of the policy can be found on the [YMCA's website](#) and YMCA [Safeguarding Children Sharepoint](#) page.

- [Policy for Children](#)
- [Policy for Parents/Caregiver](#)
- [Policy for Young Persons](#)

### 5.2 Educating Children and Parents/Caregivers

The YMCA is committed to working with parents and children to build safety awareness, to build a support network and thereby reduce the likelihood of abuse occurring. Some examples of how we work with parents and children include:

#### Parent/Caregiver

- Parent/caregiver support groups.
- Parent/caregiver attendance at incursions, excursions, seminars or other relevant activities.
- Sharing parent/caregiver experiences such as cultural awareness, job roles.
- Parent/caregiver feedback mechanisms e.g. surveys.
- Parent/caregiver communication mechanisms e.g. When parents/caregivers pick up their child, the parent/caregiver is given the opportunity to review notes on activities in which their child participated. It also provides an opportunity for the parent/caregiver to provide feedback on what is happening with the child outside of the program.
- We have parent/caregiver days to specifically involve parents/caregivers in the program.
- Parent/caregiver teacher interviews (Vocational Schools).

All YMCA programs and services will have suitable mechanisms for gaining parent/caregiver feedback on policies, procedures and planned activities related to child safety.

#### Children and young people

- Input into the daily program through child initiated ideas and suggestions.
- Weekend activity sheets that encourage all families to share the special activities they have done during the weekend.
- Young people participate in advisory committees.
- Our older gymnasts are invited to become junior/volunteer coaches.



## 6. CHILD ABUSE REPORTS AND ALLEGATIONS

*YMCA staff and volunteers working with children and young people and their families have an important role to play in protecting children who may be at risk of harm due to abuse or neglect. YMCA staff and volunteers are in daily/regular contact with children and young people and their families, so are well placed to observe when a child or young person appears to be at risk of harm.*

*The YMCA's wide range of programs and services are provided in communities where there is a focus on prevention and early intervention. It will be clear practice within the YMCA that our approach to child protection and reporting will support all children and young people in various stages of vulnerability.*

### 6.1 Duty of Care

Duty of care is the legal obligation each person has, to take reasonable care to avoid causing foreseeable harm to another person or their property. The YMCA owes a duty of care to anyone who is reasonably likely to be affected by YMCA activities. Where duty of care extends outside of the YMCA, please refer to the [Extended Duty of Care Policy](#).

### 6.2 Position on Reporting

The YMCA requires that all staff, volunteers and Directors of the Board report incidents to the relevant State/Territory Child Protection Authority/Department. This reporting requirement is applicable to staff and volunteers during the course of carrying out their professional duties if there is a belief on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is in need of protection.

This reporting obligation relates to suspected abuse occurring either in the context of the child or young person's family/home environment, in places or organisations outside of the family, or specifically in the course of their involvement in YMCA activities. This reporting is in relation to suspected abuse by a YMCA or other organisation staff member or volunteer, or through peer to peer interactions.

### 6.3 Organisational Approach to Reporting

The YMCA understands the complexity surrounding the disclosure of sensitive information and the potential impact that this may have on staff, children, young people, volunteers and families. It is for this reason that the YMCA encourages a consultative approach to reporting in accordance with state based legislation, upholding our duty of care to the child or young person and the duty of care to the original notifier.

The intent of this consultative approach will in no way delay or impede the reporting requirements. The YMCA understands the importance of having ongoing and comprehensive support and management mechanisms in place when dealing with sensitive information in regards to child protection issues. Consultation processes relevant to each State/Territory are to be followed with particular attention being given to the need for confidentiality in regards to such information. Only those managers and staff that fall within the consultative process, those providing a direct service to the individual involved in the report, State Child Protection Department staff and Police will have access to any documentation of the notification.

The YMCA will be supportive and cooperative of any State Child Protection Department, Queensland Police and other agencies as required by law. Compliance to any reasonable request will be met in a timely manner. Staff and volunteers will be resourced and supported by management.

## 6.4 Mandatory Reporting in Queensland

The Child Protection Act 1999 requires certain professionals, referred to as 'mandatory reporters', to make a report to Child Safety if they form a reasonable suspicion that a child has suffered, is suffering or is at an unacceptable risk of suffering significant harm caused by physical or sexual abuse, and may not have a parent/caregiver able and willing to protect them.

Mandatory reporters should also report to the Department of Child Safety, a reasonable suspicion that a child is in need of protection caused by any other form of abuse or neglect.

Under the Child Protection Act 1999, mandatory reporters are:

- Teachers under the Education (*General Provisions*) Act 2006 and the Education (*Accreditation of Non-state Schools*) Regulation 2017
- Doctors
- Registered nurses
- Police officers with child protection responsibilities
- A person performing a child advocate function under the Public Guardian Act 2014
- Early Childhood Education and Care Professionals (from 1 July 2017)

## 6.5 Disclosures

In the event a child or young person reports or discloses an incident of 'harm' or suspected harm to themselves or to another person, the person receiving the concern/allegation should listen attentively and calmly and record the actual words if possible. Do not use leading questions. Put your own feelings aside.

- **Listen** to the child/young person.
- **Reassure** the child/young person that they have done nothing wrong by talking to you.
- **Promise to help, but DO NOT promise to keep the information a secret and DO NOT promise to stop the abuse from occurring.**
- **Explain that you need to speak to someone else in order to get advice that can help them.**
- **Never ask leading questions – e.g. 'who did that?'; 'did \_\_\_ do that?'. Try open ended questions like: 'could you tell me more about that?'; 'what happened then?'; don't pressure them to respond.**
- **Let them tell you in their own words. Don't correct their words.**
- **Document the conversation objectively – e.g. just write what was said, not your opinions, and report to your supervisor.**

Questions that are leading or unnecessary can distress the child/young person and could compromise any investigation.

### IMPORTANT NOTE: Observations and Suspicion

- All concerns should be acted upon immediately. It is not up to the YMCA to decide whether abuse has taken place or not. Organisations must notify authorities when there are reasonable grounds for suspecting/reporting abuse.
- The law protects a person who raises legitimate concerns through appropriate procedures under the banner of "qualified privilege".
- **Confidentiality is of the utmost importance** and crucial to a fair and effective reporting process. At no time should the suspected abuse or suspicions be discussed in general discussion with other staff, other parents/caregivers, customers, members or the general community.

## 6.6 Reporting Processes

Staff in regular contact with children and their families are well placed to observe when children appear to be at risk of harm, and can play an important role in protecting the safety and wellbeing of those children.

YMCA staff and volunteers will be required to work with their direct supervisor/manager during the consultation process to determine that all necessary information has been collated in order to form a belief on reasonable grounds to make a formal report on the allegation of abuse.

YMCA staff and volunteers will be given time to make the report to the relevant State Child Protection Authority/Department. All documentation used during this reporting process will be filed and stored in a confidential manner. This documentation is not to be given to any other party unless clearly falling under relevant state legislation. The reporting process for YMCA of Brisbane and Y-Care operations are outlined as follows:

**\*Please Note: This reporting process does not apply to vocational schools and related entities, please refer to the [‘Student Protection Policy’](#) which incorporates, [‘Reporting by Legislation’](#), [‘Principal Head of Campus Decision Tree’](#), [‘Teaching Staff Decision Tree’](#) and [‘Non-teaching Staff Decision Tree’](#) and references to all relevant legislation.**

### Reporting Steps

#### STEP 1

- Observation, suspicion or disclosure of abuse occurs and is reported by the original notifier.
- In consultation with the Group Manager, the Manager/Supervisor or appointed person is to immediately assess the report and gather written, signed and dated statements from staff (where appropriate).
- If a staff member feels uncomfortable to raise suspicions of abuse with their immediate supervisor, they should contact another Manager within the YMCA, The Child Protection Advisor or the CEO.
- Obtain written details of all people involved, including any witnesses and meet with the person who has made the allegation to clarify the details. Use the [Significant Incident Form \(243\)](#) to guide you.
- In the absence of the Group Manager, work directly with the Child Protection Advisor or the CEO. All information being emailed should be copied to the Group Manager and Child Protection Advisor to allow the matter to be actioned in the absence of any one person.

**If you believe a child is in immediate danger or is in a life-threatening situation, contact the Queensland Police Service immediately by dialling 000.**

#### STEP 2

- The Group Manager and Child Protection Advisor make a decision to report and advise the CEO of such intention. The CEO or his/her delegated authority will advise the President of the Board of all critical incidents and, dependent upon the circumstances, the Australian Childhood Foundation (ACF) and YMCA Australia will also be notified of the action taken.
- The CEO or his/her delegated authority will provide the report to the appropriate authority.
- Once the report is made to the relevant authority, the matter is handled by that authority and all information requested by them is to be provided by the CEO or his/her delegated authority.
- The relevant authority will determine how best to respond to the situation.
- If not already involved in the reporting process, the actions taken will be reported back to the original notifier.

### STEP 3

- Staff will be supported through the reporting process and professional counselling and debriefing arranged if required. One-on-one or group counselling will be arranged.
- In the event that allegations are made against a YMCA staff member or volunteer, the CEO is required to immediately suspend that person (on full pay if employed staff) or remove from activities involving the direct supervision of, and/or direct contact with, children.
- Reinstatement of a staff person or volunteer may only occur after any and all allegations against that person have been dismissed or cleared to the satisfaction of the Board of the YMCA and any authorised consultants involved in investigations.
- Fair process will be followed for the staff member or volunteer who has had the allegation made against them.
- An impartial person will be appointed to liaise with / support the person subject to allegations of improper conduct.

YMCA staff are encouraged to contact their supervisor and talk through any concerns held about a child in care. File notes should be kept on any concerns and these made known to the supervisor. Staff should not feel the decision to escalate or report their concerns is theirs alone. There is great benefit in talking it through with their Supervisor/Manager/Group Manager or Child Protection Advisor. Managers may also seek advice from the online [Child Protection Guide](#) or Family and Child Connect, which provides an additional pathway (other than Child Safety) for referring concerns about children and their families. [www.familychildconnect.org.au](http://www.familychildconnect.org.au)

If you suspect a child is experiencing harm or is at risk of experiencing harm and does not have a parent willing and able to protect them, contact the Child Safety Services Enquiries Unit, Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, on **1800 811 810** or visit their website <http://www.communities.qld.gov.au/childsafety/protecting-children/reporting-child-abuse>. Child safety service centres have professionally trained child protection staff who are skilled in dealing with information about harm or risk of harm to children. When you make a report to Child Safety Services or the Queensland Police Service, they are required to keep your identity strictly protected.



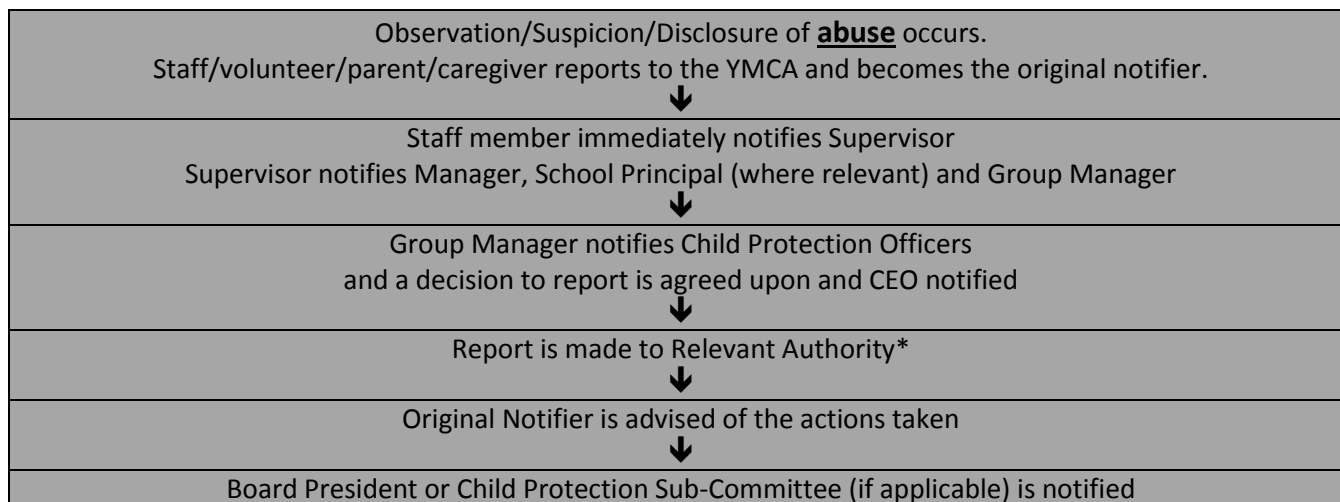


## 6.7 Reporting Flowchart

At all times during the investigation of any allegation of child abuse, confidentiality is paramount.

Staff/Volunteers must not discuss the matter with anyone except their Supervisor/Manager/Group Manager, Child Protection Advisor, the CEO and/or relevant authorities.

**\*Please Note: This reporting flow chart does not apply to vocational schools and related entities, please refer to the [‘Student Protection Policy’](#) which incorporates, [‘Reporting by Legislation’](#), [‘Principal Head of Campus Decision Tree’](#), [‘Teaching Staff Decision Tree’](#) and [‘Non-teaching Staff Decision Tree’](#) and references to all relevant legislation.**



If an allegation is made against a <b>STAFF MEMBER</b>	If an allegation is made against a <b>PARENT/CAREGIVER</b>	If an allegation is made against an <b>EXTERNAL PERSON</b>
↓	↓	↓
School Principal to be notified where the matter relates to Breakfast Programs or OSHC Schools		
Staff member stood down immediately (on full pay if employed staff) or removed from activities that involve contact/supervision of children	Relevant authority is notified	Relevant Authority to be notified
↓	↓	↓
Investigation of allegation occurs by CEO or his delegate or by Relevant Authority*	In respect to contacting parents, follow the lead of the Relevant Authority	Relevant Authority will notify parents/caregivers of the child
↓	↓	↓
Reinstatement only occurs after all allegations have been dismissed or cleared to the satisfaction of the Board or any authorised interveners	Investigation of allegation occurs by Relevant Authority	Relevant Authority conducts investigation of allegation
Professional Counselling through the YMCA Employee Assistance Program to be offered to all staff involved		

\* Relevant Authority:

- Queensland Police - Emergency number – **000**; Non-emergency number - **131 444**
- Department of Child Safety **1800 811 810** or after hours **1800 177 135**
- The Australian Childhood Foundation **1800 176 453** or **03 9874 3922**
- [Office of Early Childhood Education and Care](#) if the incident is identified in an Approved Service.
- [Family and Child Connect](#) services for advice and direction

**If you believe a child is in immediate danger or is in a life-threatening situation, contact the Queensland Police Service immediately by dialling 000.**



## 7. SUPPORTING A CHILD-SAFE CULTURE

*The YMCA will show its commitment to safeguarding children and young people by requiring its members, facility users and participants to act in the best interests of the children and young people that enter a YMCA facility.*

### 7.1 Child Protection Staff

The YMCA has appointed child protection staff including a Child Protection Advisor to support staff in the implementation of its policies and procedures, and to provide advice and support in the event of an incident or allegation.

**Child Protection Advisor** - Courtney Rohan

Ph. 3253 1744

M. 0436 676 832

E. [child.protection@ymcabrisbane.org](mailto:child.protection@ymcabrisbane.org)

#### Alternate Contacts

Meg Woolf

M. 0439 724 171

Michele Meredith

M. 0418 879 632

Will Sambrook

M. 0408 743 193

### 7.2 Risk Management Plan

The YMCA's Safeguarding Children and Young People program is underpinned by an organisation wide risk management plan. The plan focuses on preventing, identifying and mitigating all risks to individuals and the organisation, and outlines control measures that must be implemented by all programs and services.

To ensure compliance with the Risk Management Plan, each YMCA program or service will be subject to random audits by child protection staff.

High risk activities including (but not limited to) overnight stays, excursions, travel and accommodation, are subject to the development of a detailed risk management strategy.

[Child Protection Risk Management Plan](#)

### 7.3 Family Relationships

All staff and volunteers are expected to understand and acknowledge the significance of family relationships for children and young people. Families, in all their diverse forms, are the foundation of children and young people's development [**Article 18 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child**]. Families can act as supportive resources for growth and resilience in children and young people. Family relationships can also restrain and harm children and young people's functioning. Families are the single most significant influence in shaping the way children and young people develop and perceive their sense of identity.

The YMCA will provide documentation in developmentally appropriate language and in translation to accommodate the main communities that access our services. Therefore, we expect YMCA People to recognise, respect and work to strengthen the capacities of parents/caregivers and other family members to care and protect their children. Staff will also refer families who require support to Family and Child Connect or other support agencies.

## 7.4 Conditions of Entry

Conditions of entry/participation include a clear and transparent statement outlining the YMCA's commitment to safeguarding children and young people.

***The YMCA wants everyone to enjoy their involvement at the YMCA. However, individuals may be excluded from participation in programs and services or removed from the premises if they are adversely affected by alcohol, drugs and other behaviour altering substances or if they demonstrate inappropriate and unacceptable standards of behaviour as deemed by YMCA Management staff. Behaviour that places children or other patrons at risk will not be tolerated.***

***YMCA Management have the right to exclude any persons that breach this condition of entry.***

## 7.5 Signage and Posters

All centres are expected to utilise safeguarding signage, posters and resources within their programs to further promote a child safety culture. Each YMCA site will display signage which includes our right to exclude participants or members of the public whose conduct risks the safety of children and young people.

Such signage and resources are available on the YMCA's [Safeguarding Children Sharepoint](#) page.

## 7.6 Memberships, enrolment and facility hire

### Facility Hire

- (a) When choosing to hire a YMCA venue/property/asset, lessees or hirers agree to maintain our Safeguarding Children Code of Conduct in regards to safeguarding children and young people.
- (b) The lessee or hirer is to have a child protection policy in place that meets the YMCA's SCPP standards or will accept responsibility to act in accordance with the YMCA's Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Procedures.
- (c) Staff/volunteers of the lessee/hirer are required to hold current working with children clearances applicable to each state/territory. These staff will also be required to supervise and guide children and young people in line with YMCA SCPP and procedures.

### Membership and Enrolment Forms

- (a) Membership and enrolment forms include a clear and transparent statement outlining the YMCA's commitment to safeguarding children and young people.
- (b) Membership and enrolment forms inform parents/caregivers of the YMCA's need to report any disclosures or causes for concerns about the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person and directs them to the website to review the policy for further information.
- (c) Membership and enrolment forms inform parents/caregivers of their option to report any concerns relating to the safety or wellbeing of their child (ren) or young person in a YMCA facility or program and directs them to the website to review the policy for further information.

## 8. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Term	Meaning
ACF	Australian Childhood Foundation
Association	The YMCA of Brisbane and Y-Care (South East Queensland) Inc.
Board Director	An elected member of the Board of Directors of the YMCA of Brisbane or an elected member of the Management Committee of Y-Care (South East Queensland) Inc., all of whom are volunteers
Blue Card	Criminal history screening to determine suitability to work with children and obtained through Blue Card Services
Child and/or Young Person	A Child or Young Person means every human being below the age of eighteen (18) years
FDC and IHC	Family Day Care and In Home Care
Qualified Privilege	Privilege that protects its holder only if it is exercised properly and in the performance of a justifiable act or failure to act
SC	Safeguarding Children
SCPP	Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Procedures
Staff YMCA People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> All full time, part time or casual staff who are paid employees of the YMCA of Brisbane or Y-Care (South East Queensland) Inc.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> All Educators working for YMCA Family Day Care or YMCA In Home Care, even though they are self-employed contractors</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> People who are contracted to provide services to the YMCA (e.g. Personal Trainers, Group Fitness Instructors)</li> </ul>
Volunteer	All people who provide services for either YMCA of Brisbane or Y-Care (South East Queensland) Inc. in an unpaid capacity
Children with a disability or special need	A disability can be any physical, sensory, neurological disability, acquired brain injury or intellectual disability or developmental delay that affects a child's ability to undertake everyday activities. A disability can occur at any time in life. Children can be born with a disability or acquire a disability suddenly through an injury or illness.
Aboriginal Child	A person under the age of 18 who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> is of Aboriginal descent</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> identifies as Aboriginal and</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> is accepted as Aboriginal by an Aboriginal community</li> </ul>
Torres Strait Islander Child	A person under the age of 18 who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> is of Torres Strait Islander descent</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> identifies as Torres Strait Islander, and</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> is accepted as Torres Strait Islander by a Torres Strait Islander community</li> </ul>
Children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds	A child or young person who identifies as having particular cultural or linguistic affiliations by virtue of their place of birth, ancestry or ethnic origin, religion, preferred language or language spoken at home or because of their parents' identification on a similar basis.
Children from diverse backgrounds	This includes children from different cultural backgrounds as well as children who identify as LGBTIQA (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, queer and asexual) or who have parents who are LGBTIQA. Equity is to be promoted and diversity respected.
Sexual Behaviour	<p><u>Contact Behaviour</u> Sexual intercourse, kissing, fondling, sexual penetration or exploiting a child through prostitution</p> <p><u>Non-Contact Behaviour</u> Flirting, sexual innuendo, inappropriate text messaging, inappropriate photography or exposure to pornography or nudity</p>
YMCA	The reference to YMCA through this document shall mean the YMCA of Brisbane and Y-Care (South East Queensland) Inc.

## 9. EXCEPTIONS TO THE OPERATING PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

Policy Area	Exceptional Circumstances
Being alone with a child	YMCA Family Day Care and YMCA In Home Care Educators provide care for children in either their own homes or the homes of the child. As such, the policy areas indicated do not apply. These circumstances are governed by Family Day Care Policies.
Transporting children	
Sharing accommodation with a child	
Toileting children	
Giving gifts to children	
Releasing children to parents who are intoxicated	In situations which put staff and/or other children in danger by not releasing the child to the parent/caregiver, a risk management strategy for emergency situations will be developed and staff will be trained accordingly to manage, record, advise or otherwise notify the Police.
Providing professional referees	Volunteers who have not have been in the workforce for many years. Volunteers who have not entered the workforce. Candidates who have just completed school or who have not been previously employed. Junior staff members who have not been previously employed.
Toileting children	Toileting of special needs children and children requiring emergency toileting (refer to <a href="#">Toileting Children Policy</a> ).
Being alone with a child	Circumstances where this is not possible can be found on the <a href="#">Child Protection Risk Management Plan</a> .
Texting children	In training/counselling delivery where this is the accepted form of communication to students but texts will always be professional, course related and made only from YMCA devices.

### **LEGISLATIVE OBLIGATIONS AND REFERENCES**

YMCA is committed to complying with obligations imposed on YMCA under all legislation relevant to maintaining and protecting individuals including but not limited to the:

- [Child Protection Act 1999 \(Qld\)](#)
- [United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child 1990](#)
- [Working with Children \(Risk Management and Screening\) Act 2000](#)
- [Working with Children \(Risk Management and Screening\) Regulation 2011](#)
- [Privacy Act 1988](#)

### **DOCUMENTATION - Supporting Policies/Forms**

**The Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures are also supported by numerous industry sector policies. All forms and documents relating to safeguarding children can be found on [Safeguarding Children Sharepoint](#) page.**

## 10. DOCUMENT REVISIONS

The Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures will be reviewed annually as a minimum.

February 2007	August 2010	March 2012	June 2016
July 2007	November 2010	October 2013	October 2016
January 2009	January 2011	February 2014	July 2017
June 2009	February 2011	October 2015	March 2018

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE  
SAFE AND HAPPY  
AT THE YMCA

**IF YOU SEE SOMETHING – SAY SOMETHING**