

# SAFEGUARDING CODE OF CONDUCT

October 2018

## SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

## YMCA PEOPLE

### SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN CODE OF CONDUCT

*YMCA Brisbane is committed to the safety and well-being of all children and young people accessing its programs and services. YMCA Brisbane supports the rights of the child and will strive to deliver a child safe environment at all times. YMCA Brisbane also supports the rights and wellbeing of our YMCA People and encourages their active participation in building and maintaining a safe environment for children. YMCA People must maintain the highest standards of professional conduct in their attitude and behaviour toward clients, colleagues and members of the community. In particular, YMCA People will recognise the power imbalance inherent in a staff/child relationship and must never act in a manner which exploits or could be seen to exploit that power imbalance.*

### 1. YMCA People

### MUST

- a) Comply with the National SCYP Policy and the Child Protection Manual.
- b) Within the first five (5) working days, read, understand and formally agree to abide with the YMCA's policies and guidelines around the safety of children as outlined in the National SCYP Policy and the Child Protection Manual.
- c) As a minimum, complete annual safeguarding children refresher training provided by the YMCA Brisbane.
- d) Have knowledge of, and at all times adhere to, all Laws and Regulations when employed in Child Related programs.
- e) Follow all workplace policies, procedures and signage in relation to the safety and protection of children and young people.
- f) Use language and tone of voice in the presence of children that provides clear direction, boosts their confidence, encourages or affirms them.
- a) Ensure that, in all circumstances, government and YMCA prescribed staff/child ratios are adhered to.
- b) 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.
- c) Remain alert to the risk indicators of child abuse and grooming and promptly report concerns, issues, problems, suspected incidents and suspicious behaviour to their Manager/Supervisor (or Child Protection Advisor) and, where required by law, to the relevant departments.
- d) Respect the cultural and religious practices, individual capability and gender identity of children, young people and families, and understand and respond to any identified special needs.
- e) Ensure an appropriate mix of male and female staff/volunteers is achieved wherever possible when preparing rosters for children's programs.
- f) 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.
- g) 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.
- h) Ensure that sign-in and sign-out procedures are followed where applicable. YMCA People are required to be vigilant in witnessing the arrival and departure of all children.
- i) 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.
- j) Advise their Manager or Supervisor where a friendship has developed prior to or during employment by the YMCA, between them and families and/or children who participate in YMCA programs which could result in a breach of National SCYP Policy and or the Child Protection Manual.
- k) Report to their Manager any knowledge of YMCA People who engage in non-YMCA activities with children who participate in YMCA programs for example baby-sitting, tutoring, disability care.
- l) Report to their supervisor, any observation of inappropriate behaviour by YMCA People which breaches the National SCYP Policy and/or the Child Protection Manual.

### 2. YMCA People

### MUST NOT

- a) Harm or exploit children who access YMCA programs and services.
- b) Discriminate against anyone on the basis of gender identity, culture, race, religion or disability.
- c) Discipline children through the use of emotional abuse, physical punishment, favouritism, physical abuse, verbal abuse, reference to cultural/ethnic differences, swearing or the withdrawal of the necessities of care (incl. food, shelter and emotional warmth).
- d) Use inappropriate, discriminatory, racist, sexist, violent, profane, sexual, belittling or negative language in the presence of children (for example swearing, derogatory terms, sexual jokes or innuendos, threats, name calling).
- e) Engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children.
- f) Engage in sexual behaviour between, with or in the presence of children or young people.
- g) Have a child sit in their lap, cuddle, kiss, hug, tickle or touch children in an inappropriate and/or culturally insensitive manner.
- h) Undertake a task of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, for example changing clothes, personal grooming, feeding and toileting.
- i) Engage in rough physical games with children (for example tackling, wrestling).
- j) 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.
- k) Travel, or be accommodated, alone with a child before, during or after a YMCA program, excursion or camp. Where approved transport is undertaken, a minimum of two adults must be present.
- l) Take a child to their own home or encourage meetings outside the program activity.
- m) 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 consent from an authorised parent/guardian.
- n) 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, YMCA People must declare their involvement with the child by completing the relevant form and obtaining parental/caregiver and CEO approval as indicated on the forms.
- o) Report to work under the influence of or in the possession of alcoholic beverages or illegal substances.
- p) Take photos or videos of children on personal cameras or mobile phones/devices. All photos must be authorised and be taken on YMCA Brisbane supplied devices.
- q) Place photos of children on any personal/unofficial YMCA social media platform, such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat etc. Photos may only be placed on official YMCA sites once appropriate consent from the parent or guardian has been provided.
- r) 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 platforms only. Any other contact should be directed to parents/caregivers only and in accordance with the YMCA's Social Media Policy.
- s) 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 and from a YMCA supplied device. Where practicable all communication made should be directed to the parents/caregivers.
- t) 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).

**CONDUCT THAT IS CONSIDERED UNACCEPTABLE IS SUBJECT TO DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES AND POSSIBLE DISMISSAL**

Should any YMCA People observe a breach by another staff member/volunteer they must immediately notify the manager/supervisor. Should the matter need to be immediately addressed, the person observing the breach must address the matter and intervene. The matter **must** still be raised with the manager/supervisor.

If any YMCA People do not feel comfortable reporting to their direct Supervisor or Manager about any concerns for a child or inappropriate behaviour towards a child 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).

All YMCA People are covered by the YMCA [Whistleblower Policy](#).