

Child Safety & Client Protection

Inclusion and safety are at the heart of everything we do at **LSC&PH**. We deeply respect and support all children, staff, and volunteers. Our commitment is clear: everyone, regardless of their differences, deserves equal protection from all forms of abuse through established policies, procedures and practices that comply with the **11 Victorian Child Safe Standards**.

Child Safety Standards in Action

- ✓ Tackle all forms of racism and dismantle barriers
- ✓ Integrate child safety into leadership, operations, and culture
- ✓ Empower children and listen to their rights
- ✓ Engage communities and families in promoting child safety
- ✓ Ensure rigorous employment screening and reference checks
- ✓ Implement robust policies, procedures, and training
- ✓ Enforce Social Media Policy and monitoring
- ✓ Handle offenses and complaints seriously and promptly
- ✓ Supervise leadership with risk mitigation
- ✓ Prevent adults from being alone with a child
- ✓ Encourage reporting of unusual behavior
- ✓ Regularly review policies and procedures



Every member is a guardian of child safety through understanding various forms of abuse, adhering to the law, and upholding our Code of Conduct and child protection policies. In the event of child safety concerns, suspicions should be promptly reported to the CEO or a Board Member.

Together, we foster a vibrant, secure, and inclusive organizational culture, placing the well-being of every child as our highest priority!



Principles

1

Responsiveness

Actively listen to and address the views and safety concerns of children and clients.

2

Cultural Inclusion

Promote cultural safety and inclusion for everyone.

3

Child Safety First

Commit to being a child-safe organisation.

4

Risk Management

Identify and mitigate risks to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all.

5

Protection

Take all necessary measures to protect children and clients from abuse.

6

Transparency

Foster open and transparent communication with children and clients.

7

Privacy

Show utmost respect for the privacy of children, clients, and their families.

8

Boundaries

Maintain appropriate boundaries with children and clients at all times.



Child Safety and Client Protection Policy

Summary

Lord Somers Camp and Power House (LSC&PH) approaches Child Safety and Client Protection with the view that:

- all people are treated with fairness and dignity and
- those who are less powerful and in need of nurture and protection are cared for and provided with safety.

Therefore, all people engaged with LSC&PH have a right to feel and be safe. The welfare of everyone we engage with will always be our first priority and we have a zero-tolerance approach to abuse and harm.

We aim to create a child safe and child-friendly environment where children feel safe and have fun while enjoying LSC&PH activities, camps and programs.

LSC&PH has established policies, procedures and practices that comply with the Victorian [Child Safe Standards](#).

Any person who believes a child is in immediate risk of abuse should telephone 000.

Policy statement

LSC&PH supports and respects all children, staff and volunteers. LSC&PH is committed to the cultural safety of First Nations children, and those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children, members of the LGBTIQ+ community, clients living with a disability and vulnerable people.

All children and vulnerable people, regardless of their gender, race, religious beliefs, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, family or social background, have equal rights to protection from all forms of abuse.

Policy Scope

LSC&PH has adopted the Child Safety Standards as its benchmark of all client engagement. Therefore LSC&PH is committed to ensure to:

- a. promote the safety of children and clients alike
- b. prevent child and client abuse
- c. ensure LSC&PH has effective procedures to respond to and report allegations of child and client abuse

This Policy and the Child Safety and Client Protection Procedure apply to all LSC&PH members, volunteers, employees, and participants (LSC&PH People) in every engagement. It also applies to all contractors, stakeholders and visitors engaged with LSC&PH.

LSC&PH will implement Child Safe Standards VIC 2022, monitor the uptake of implementation and may introduce procedures, protocols and practices to ensure we are achieving, if not exceeding, compliance with the Child Safety Standards.

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Guiding Values

- **Fun** – we find fun in everything we do, and we learn through play
- **Friendship** – We promote lifelong friendships through working together and the sharing of experiences
- **Care** – We work in a voluntary capacity to care and support others without seeking recognition. We also care for ourselves
- **Acceptance** – We accept other people, their values and their differences. We offer equality of opportunity
- **Belonging** – We provide a place where everyone can belong regardless of gender identity, age, culture, sexuality or ability.

Guiding Principles

- **Uphold** the rights of children and clients who come into contact with LSC&PH to feel heard on matters relevant to their safety.
- **Actively promote and consider** the cultural safety and inclusion of all children and clients.
- **Listen and respond** to the views and concerns of children and clients, including where it relates to concerns that they feel unsafe.
- **Abide** by the LSC&PH's commitment and obligation to be a child safe organisation.
- **Identify and mitigate** risks to the safety and wellbeing of children and clients.
- **Take** all reasonable steps to protect children and clients from abuse.
- **Work** with children and clients in an open and transparent way.
- **Respect** the privacy of children and clients and their families.
- **Always observe appropriate boundaries with children and clients.**

Policy Definitions

Abuse	<p>Abuse can consist of one or more of but is not restricted to the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Physical Abuse: any non-accidental physical injury resulting from practices such as: hitting, punching, kicking shaking, burning (irons, cigarettes), biting, pulling out hair, alcohol and/or other drug administration. b) Sexual Abuse: any assault or abuse of a sexual nature, sexual molestation, indecent exposure, sexual harassment or intimidation. c) Emotional Abuse: the chronic attitude or behaviour of one person which is directed at another person, or, the creation of an emotional environment which erodes a person's self-esteem, internal locus of control, and social confidence over time. Behaviours may include: insulting, bullying, devaluing, ignoring, rejecting, corrupting, isolating, terrorising or other extreme acts in the vulnerable person's presence.
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	<p>d) Financial Abuse may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misappropriation of money, valuables or assets. • Denial of access to personal assets. • Accessing a person’s funds electronically and/or; • Forced or unauthorised changes to legal documents <p>e) Grooming: in person or online with the intention of conditioning the person to engage in or submit to sexual activity with another person</p> <p>f) Serious Neglect: failure to provide for basic needs that jeopardizes the person’s wellbeing</p>
Child	Any person under the age of 18.
Child protection	Any responsibility, measure or activity undertaken to safeguard children from harm and act in the best interests of the child.
Child sexual assault	Any act which exposes a child to, or involves a child in, sexual processes beyond his or her understanding or contrary to accepted community standards. Sexually abusive behaviours can include the fondling of genitals; masturbation; oral sex; vaginal or anal penetration by a penis, finger or any other object; fondling of breasts; voyeurism; exhibitionism; or exposing the child to or involving the child in pornography. It includes child grooming, which refers to actions deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child to lower the child’s inhibitions in preparation for sexual activity with the child.
Client	Any registered participant who participates in a LSC&PH activity, program or event. <i>(See reference to Participant as an interchangeable term)</i>
Contractor	Any person or company which is engaged to provide services to LSC&PH.
Duty of care	<p>A common law concept that refers to the responsibility of the organisation and individual to provide an adequate level of protection against harm.</p> <p>It is the duty of LSC&PH and its individuals to protect children/clients from all reasonably foreseeable risk or real injury.</p>
Employee	Any person employed by Lord Somers Camp and Power House.
Executive Team	A leadership team for a specific LSC&PH program or activity. Specific members/ roles of an Executive Team are at the discretion of the Program or Activity Leader.

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Leader	<p>Any person (paid or unpaid) over the age of 18 who is responsible for the control and safety of members/volunteers placed in their care whilst holding a formal position in Lord Somers Camp and Power House. A Leader could include but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camp Leaders • Deputy Camp Leaders • Executive Officers • Programs Leader • Slushie King and Slushee Queen • Heads of Departments
Member	<p>Any person who has a current membership subscription to LSC&PH, including various life memberships, term membership or honorary life membership.</p>
Neglect	<p>Failure to provide for basic needs. Any serious omission or commission which jeopardises or impairs a person’s health or development</p>
Online Grooming	<p>The act of sending an electronic message with indecent content to a recipient whom the sender believes to be less than 16 years of age, with the intention of procuring the recipient to engage in or submit to sexual activity with another person, including but not necessarily the sender.</p>
Participant	<p>Any person who attends an LSC&PH program as a participant or a grouper.</p>
Reasonable grounds for belief	<p>A belief based on reasonable grounds that child abuse has occurred when all known considerations or facts relevant to the formation of a belief are taken into account and these are objectively assessed. Circumstances or considerations may include the source of the allegation and how it was communicated, the nature and details of the allegation, and whether there are any other related matters known regarding the alleged perpetrator.</p> <p>A reasonable belief is formed if a reasonable person believes that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) the child is in need of protection: b) the child has suffered or is likely to suffer “significant harm as a result of physical injury” and/or c) the parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child.

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	<p>A reasonable belief is formed if a reasonable person in the same position would have formed the belief on the same grounds. For example, a reasonable belief might be formed if:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) a child states that they have been physically or sexually abused b) a child states that they know someone who has been physically or sexually abused (sometimes the child may be talking about themselves) c) someone who knows a child states that the child has been physically or sexually abused d) Professional observations of the child’s behaviour or development leads a professional to form a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused or is likely to be abused, and/or e) Signs of abuse lead to a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused.
Types of Reportable Conduct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual offence committed against a child • Sexual offence committed with a child • Sexual offence committed in the presence of a child • Sexual misconduct committed against a child • Sexual misconduct committed with a child • Sexual misconduct committed in the presence of a child • Physical violence committed against a child • Physical violence committed with a child • Physical violence committed in the presence of a child • Behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child • Significant neglect of a child
Visitor	<p>Any person attending an LSC&PH program or activity who is not an employee, volunteer, member or participant of that activity. Can be differentiated as</p> <p>Invited visitor: Any person invited to visit an LSC&PH program or activity.</p> <p>Uninvited visitor: An intruder or someone who attends an LSC&PH program or activity without being invited to do so.</p>
Volunteer	<p>Any Non-Member who attends LSC&PH activities as a member of the camp's staff under direction of a Camp Leader.</p>

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Vulnerable Person	Any person who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of intellectual or other disability, age, social circumstance, or illness.
Wellbeing / Safety Officer	A designated role within each LSC&PH program or activity that includes the role of a Child Safety Officer.
WWCC/ Working with Children Check	<p>A screening process for assessing or re-assessing people who work with or care for children in Victoria.</p> <p>It includes a detailed look at the criminal history and relevant professional conduct findings of applicants.</p>

Policy Responsibilities

Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ultimately responsible for detecting and preventing child / client abuse and for ensuring that appropriate and effective internal control systems are in place. • Ensure that appropriate policies and procedures and a Code of Conduct are in place. • Appoint an 'alternative head of organisation' in the event that the CEO is suspected of harming or abusing a client.
Camp Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camp Leaders/Program Leaders are responsible for the Child Safety portfolio during LSC&PH activities. • Ensure appropriate Child Safe briefings have occurred prior to camp/activities. • Ensure Child Safety Standards are upheld during LSC&PH activities with the assistance of the Child Safety Officer and the leadership team. • Facilitate the reporting of any inappropriate behaviour or suspected abusive activities to the CEO.
CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act as LSC&PH's 'head of the organisation' under the Reportable Conduct Scheme, unless they are involved in an allegation of reportable conduct. • Respond to and investigate reports of child / client abuse • Review allegations made against an LSC&PH employee, member or volunteer • Report the results of the review to the President and Camp Chief of the Board.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all employees, members, volunteers and contractors are aware of relevant laws, organisational policies and procedures • Ensure that all adults within the LSC&PH community are aware of their obligation to report suspected sexual abuse of a child in accordance with these policies and procedures • Ensure that all employees, members, volunteers, visitors and contractors are aware of their obligation to observe the Code of Conduct (particularly as it related to child safety) • Provide support for employees, members, volunteers, visitors and contractors (if applicable) in undertaking their child protection responsibilities. <p>NOTE: If the CEO is suspected of perpetrating harm or abuse, the Board will appoint someone to undertake their responsibilities under this Policy.</p>
<p>Child Safety Officer (CSO)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be the nominated Child Safety Officer for a Program/Activity involving participants under the age of 18 years old. • The Child Safety Officer is part of the Executive Team at Camp. • The CSO reports directly to the Camp Leader on Child Safety concerns. • Gather information and assess the situation. • If, based on the available information, the CSO reasonably believe that a child / young person needs protection because they have suffered or are likely to suffer from physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or neglect, notify Leadership and report to Child Protection or police in accordance with ethical and professional obligations. • Inform the young person of what action is to be taken as long as this will not jeopardise the safety of the child, young person or staff member(s). • Where a third party was the source of information co-ordinate to support that member that the information was disclosed to. • Where the child/young person continues their participation at LSC&PH activities, closely monitor their behaviour, and liaise with the child protection service to ensure that any additional support required is being provided. • Make appropriate use of the Child Safe Report via LSC&PH online incident reporting portal. • The CSO is part of the Leadership team for a Program/Activity and involved in the planning and preparation as well as delivery of that activity. They do not hold a dual role such as Mental Health First Aid.

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<p>The Program/Activity Leadership Teams</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote safety at all times • Assess the risk of child abuse within their area of control and eradicate / minimise any risk to the extent possible • Educate members, volunteers and visitors about the prevention and detection of child abuse and reporting requirements. • Facilitate the reporting of any inappropriate behaviour or suspected abusive activities.
<p>Leadership Teams</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be familiar with the types of abuse that might occur within their area of responsibility for the prevention and detection of child abuse • Familiarise themselves with the relevant laws, the Code of Conduct, and LSC&PH's policy and procedures in relation to child protection, and comply with all requirements • Ensure that there is a member of the Leadership team that is allocated with the responsibility of the role of CSO (this cannot be delegated outside of the leadership team) • Report any suspicion that a child's safety may be at risk to the CEO (or, if the CEO is involved in the suspicion, to a Board Member of LSC&PH) for escalation procedures • If they have mandatory reporting obligations (<i>refer to Appendix 1</i>), report any reasonable belief that a child's safety is at risk to the relevant authorities (such as the police and/or the state-based child protection services) • In the case of child sexual abuse, all adults in Victoria and not just professionals who work with children, who hold a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed, are required to report this to the police and should also complete an incident report and submit this to the organization either via LSC&PH Incident Report Portal or to the Child Safe Officer who will submit an incident report. • Provide an environment that is supportive of all children's emotional and physical safety.
<p>All Staff (Employees and Volunteers)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be familiar with the types of abuse that might occur within their area of responsibility for the prevention and detection of child abuse

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- Familiarise themselves with the relevant laws, the Code of Conduct, and LSC&PH's policy and procedures in relation to child protection, participate in child safe training and comply with all requirements
- Report any suspicion that a child's safety may be at risk to the CEO (or, if the CEO is involved in the suspicion, to a Board Member of LSC&PH) for escalation procedures
- If they have mandatory reporting obligations (*refer to **Appendix 1***), report any reasonable belief that a child's safety is at risk to the relevant authorities (such as the police and/or the state-based child protection services)
- In the case of child sexual abuse, all adults in Victoria and not just professionals who work with children, who hold a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed, are required to report this to the police and should also seek assistance from Leadership or CSO to complete an incident report and submit it via LSC&PH Incident Report Portal.
- Provide an environment that is supportive of all children's emotional and physical safety.
- Contribute towards a positive, safe, and inclusive organisational culture

Child Safety Standards

Current legislation stipulates organizations must meet the Child Safety Standards if it does any of the following:

- provide any services specifically for children, or
- provide any facilities specifically for use by children who are under the organisation's supervision, or
- engage (whether paid or unpaid) a child as a contractor, employee or volunteer to assist the organisation in providing services or facilities or in producing or providing goods.

As such LSC&PH will implement the 11 Child Safety Standards as stipulated:

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.
2. Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.

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

In addition, LSC&PH will promote the Rights of Children in accordance with meeting the aims of the Child Safety Standards:

- Be treated fairly no matter what
- Have a say about decisions affecting you
- Live and grow up healthy
- Have people do what is best for you
- Know who you are and where you come from
- Believe what you want
- Right to privacy
- Find out information and express yourself
- Be safe no matter where you are
- Be cared for and have a home
- Have access to education, play and cultural activities
- Have help and protection if you need it

(Adapted from the Convention on the Rights of the Child by the Australian Human Rights Commission)

Child Safety Duty of Care

The reasonable precautions duty of care requires all organisations that exercise care, supervision or authority over children in Victoria, to take reasonable precautions to prevent the abuse of a child

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(sexual, emotional or physical abuse) by an individual associated with the organisation while the child is under their supervision or authority. This duty of care ensures that LSC&PH has a well-defined and clear legal duty to prevent child abuse.

How LSC&PH can utilize the Child Safe Standards to assist in taking reasonable precautions:

- Address all forms of racism and consider attitudes and practices that are a barrier to providing a culturally safe environment and addressing all forms of racism (Child Safe Standard 1)
- Embed child safety and wellbeing in leadership, operations, governance and culture (Child Safe Standard 2)
- Ensure children and young people are empowered about their rights and listened to (Child Safe Standard 3)
- Inform and involve communities and families in promoting child safety (Child Safe Standard 4)
- Employment screening and reference checking (Child Safe Standard 6)
- Child Safety and Client Protection, Diversity and Inclusion, Anti-Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment, Code of Conduct Policies and procedures, supervision, camp briefings and training (Child Safe Standard 3, 4, 5, 8 and 11)
- Social Media Policy and monitoring (Child Safe Standard 9)
- Implementing systems where potential offences and complaints are taken seriously and responded to promptly and thoroughly investigated (Child Safe Standard 2 and 7)
- Leadership supervisory requirements/risk mitigation (Child Safe Standard 2 and 6)
- Prohibiting adults from being alone with a child (Child Safe Standard 6 and 9)
- Encouraging children and adults to notify authorities or parents about any signs of unusual or aberrant behaviour (Child Safe Standard 3 and 7)
- Policy and procedure review (Child Safe Standard 10 and 11)

Child Safety requires an organisational duty of care which relates to conduct by an individual, such as a leader or volunteer, associated with the organisation while the child is under the care, supervision or authority of the organisation. This can include, but is not limited to, employees, members, volunteers, contractors, office holders, and foster or kinship carers.

Organisations cannot avoid their duty by delegating their care, supervision or authority of children to LSC&PH. For example, if a school sends students to a privately run camp and a member of the camp's staff abuses a student, the school is required to prove that it took reasonable precautions to prevent that abuse.

Other relevant policies and procedures

There are a number of LSC&PH policies which support or relate to the Child Safety & Client Protection Policy including, but not limited to:

- Code of Conduct
- Social Media Policy
- Privacy Policy

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- Breaching the Code of Conduct Management Procedure
- Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Anti – Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Child Safety and Client Protection Procedure
- Misconduct Procedure

Associated documents

Child Safety and Client Protection Procedure documents:

- Mandatory and Voluntary Reporting Requirements in Victoria – Appendix 1
- Guidance on responding to abuse and suspected/alleged abuse – Appendix 2
- Working with Children: Application process for members and volunteers – Appendix 3
- Warning Notice – Appendix 4
- Reportable Conduct Scheme – Appendix 5
- Incident Impact Rating and Incident Priority Reporting Rating – Appendix 6

Policy review

This Policy will be reviewed every two years by the Child Safety Committee, or sooner if warranted by internal or external events or changes.

Changes to the Policy will be recommended by the Child Safety Committee to the LSC&PH Board.