



Child safe statement

Our commitment to child safety

Satellite Foundation is committed to child safety with a zero tolerance for child abuse.

We want children to be safe, happy and empowered.

We are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children and young people.

We treat all child safety concerns very seriously.

We maintain robust policies and procedures, consistent with Victorian Child Safe Standards as well as our legal and moral obligations, to facilitate and promote a child safe culture.

We are committed to preventing child abuse by identifying risks early and removing or reducing these risks.

Satellite Foundation has robust recruitment practices to reduce the risk of child abuse.

We require all staff, volunteers and board members to have a national police check at on-boarding and a valid WWC check at all times.

We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, as well as children from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds. We are also committed to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

We have specific policies and procedures on child safety in place and ensure that our staff, volunteers and board members adhere to these policies to achieve these commitments.

If you believe a child is at immediate risk, phone 000.



Our commitment to diversity, inclusion and equality

At Satellite Foundation we value and support diversity, inclusion and equality. We empower children and involve them when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them. We listen to their views and respect what they have to say.

We promote diversity and acceptance at Satellite Foundation, and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome. In particular, we:

- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children;
- promote the cultural safety, participation, and empowerment of children from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds; and
- ensure that children with a disability are safe and can participate equally.

Our staff and volunteers

All of our staff and volunteers must agree to abide by our code of conduct which specifies the standards of conduct required when working with children. All staff and volunteers, as well as children and their families, are given the opportunity to contribute to the development of the code of conduct.

Training and supervision

We train our staff, volunteers and board members to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse. Staff, volunteers and board members are also encouraged to continually develop their skills to protect children from abuse and promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from linguistically or diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability.

Staff, volunteers and board members will be regularly checked to ensure they understand Satellite Foundation's commitment to child safety and that everyone has a role to play in protecting children from abuse. This will include checking that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate. Any inappropriate behaviour will be reported through appropriate channels, including the Department of Health and Human Services and Victoria Police, consistent with the severity and urgency of the matter.

Recruitment

Satellite Foundation's recruitment process has been developed to ensure that we take all reasonable steps to secure the safety and wellbeing of children under our care. Our recruitment and selection criteria filters candidates to ensure we only have those with clearly demonstrated commitment to our child safety culture and who have an awareness of our social and legal responsibilities.

Satellite Foundation understands that when recruiting staff, volunteers and board members, we have ethical as well as legislative obligations. All people who are engaged in child-related work, including volunteers, are required to hold a Working with Children Check and a national Police check and to provide evidence of these checks. If during the recruitment process a person's records indicate a criminal history, then the person will be given the opportunity to provide further information and context. For more information, please refer to the Working with Children website. (<http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/home/>).

We actively encourage applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, people from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and people with a disability.



Fair procedures for staff and volunteers

The safety and wellbeing of children is our primary concern. We are also fair and reasonable to all staff and volunteers. The decisions we make when recruiting, assessing incidents, and undertaking disciplinary action will always be thorough, transparent, and based on evidence.

We record all allegations of abuse and safety concerns using our incident reporting system. All records are securely stored. If an allegation of abuse or a safety concern is raised, we provide updates to children and families on progress and actions we as an organisation take.

Privacy

All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved, whether they be staff, volunteers, families or children, unless there is a risk to someone's safety. Everyone is entitled to know how this information is recorded, what will be done with it and who will have access to it. This is intended to protect reporters and to ensure that all members of Satellite Foundation are comfortable to disclose any allegations or concerns in relation to child safety without repercussions.

Legislative responsibilities

Satellite Foundation takes its legal responsibilities seriously, including:

- Failure to disclose: All adults in Victoria who have a reasonable belief that an adult has committed a sexual offence against a child under 16 have an obligation to report that information to Victoria Police;
- Mandatory reporting: Any board members, staff or volunteers who are mandatory reporters (doctors, nurses, midwives, teacher, principals and police officers) must comply with their duties;
- Failure to protect: People of authority in our organisation will commit an offence if they know of a substantial risk of child sexual abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so;
- Reportable conduct: The Executive Director of Satellite Foundation must be made aware of any allegations of physical and sexual abuse, sexual misconduct, significant emotional or psychological harm or significant neglect by an employee or volunteer towards a child. We are also legally required to notify the Commission for Children and Young People of the allegation;
- Duty of care: If a child is abused by an individual associated with our organisation, our organisation is presumed to have breached its duty of care unless it can prove that it took 'reasonable precautions' to prevent the abuse in question. For more information, please refer to the new organisational duty of care to prevent child abuse page (<https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/safer-communities/protecting-children-and-families/betrayal-of-trust-fact-sheet-the-new>) on the Department of Justice and Regulation's website.

Risk management

In Victoria, organisations are required to protect children when a risk is identified. In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to children.

We have risk management strategies in place to identify, assess, and take steps to minimise child abuse risks which include risks posed by physical environments as well as online environments.



Allegations, concerns and complaints

Satellite Foundation takes all allegations seriously and has practices in place to investigate thoroughly and quickly. Our board members, staff and volunteers are trained to deal with allegations appropriately.

We work to ensure all staff, volunteers and board members know what to do and who to tell if they observe abuse or are a victim, and if they notice inappropriate behaviour.

We all have a responsibility to report an allegation of abuse if we have a reasonable belief that an incident took place. If an adult has a reasonable belief that an incident has occurred, then they must report the incident to the Executive Director of Satellite Foundation. Factors contributing to reasonable belief may include:

- a child states they or someone they know has been abused (noting that sometimes the child may in fact be referring to themselves);
- behaviour consistent with that of an abuse victim is observed;
- someone else has raised a suspicion of abuse but is unwilling to report it; and
- observing suspicious behaviour.

Regular review

This policy will be reviewed every two years and following significant incidents if they occur. We will ensure that families and children have the opportunity to contribute. Where possible we will do our best to work with local Aboriginal communities, culturally and/or linguistically diverse communities and people with a disability.

Further information

Further information about the Child Safe Standards (<https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards>) can be found on the Department of Health and Human Services website. This includes additional resources that have been designed for organisations that are funded and/or regulated by the department. In particular, an overview of the Victoria Child Safe Standards (<https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/overview-victorian-child-safe-standards-word>) has information to help organisations to understand the requirements of each of the Child Safe Standards.

All organisations may also refer to the information and resources available on the Child Safety page (<https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safety/>) on the Commission for Children and Young People's website.