

# Child Safe Standards

## CHILD SAFE POLICY



### Further Information

P +61 3 9698 8100 E [admin@vicsport.com.au](mailto:admin@vicsport.com.au) W [www.vicsport.com.au/child-safe-standards](http://www.vicsport.com.au/child-safe-standards)

*This resource is supported by the **Victorian Government** and has been developed in consultation with **Laura Johnston of People, Integrity & Culture Consulting.***



# Child Safe Standards

## CHILD SAFE POLICY – INCC Yarra Paddlers

<b>Date created:</b>	2 March 2023					
<b>Audience:</b>	Committee, Coaches & Volunteers, Parents, Club Members					
<b>Version:</b>	2023:2					
<b>Purpose of Document:</b>	The INCC Yarra Paddlers Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy outlines how INCC Yarra Paddlers prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children and is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in paddling. This policy also outlines how INCC Yarra Paddlers provides a safe and inclusive environment, and ensures that everyone involved in the club is educated and informed of their responsibilities to protect and look after children.					
<b>Actions:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All committee members are to read and understand, and to comment on areas for improvement.</li> <li>• All coaches and volunteers are to read and understand</li> <li>• The Committee to encourage parents and general members to read and ask questions</li> </ul>					
<b>Review:</b>	Annually on 30 April					
<b>INCC Yarra Paddlers Child Safety Contact:</b>	Kelly Murray					
<b>Contents:</b>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Document(s)</th> <th>Page</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Child Safe Policy</td> <td>3</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Document(s)	Page	Child Safe Policy	3	
Document(s)	Page					
Child Safe Policy	3					
<b>Other relevant resources (see Yarra Paddlers website)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Child Safe User Guide</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Summary of the Code of Conduct for dealing with Children &amp; Young People</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Child Safe Parents and Guardians Guide</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Kids Guide</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">eSafety Guide</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Guidance to deal with Child Safe Concerns</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Tips and Scripts for Complaint Management</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Form – Confidential Record of Child Safe Concern</a></li> </ul>					

*INCC Yarra Paddlers*  
**CHILD SAFE POLICY**

**1. INTRODUCTION - STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY**

- 1.1. INCC Yarra Paddlers is committed to ensuring that children and young people who participate in its activities have a safe and happy experience. INCC Yarra Paddlers supports and respects children, young people, staff, volunteers and participants.
- 1.2. The aim of INCC Yarra Paddlers' Child Safe Policy (the Policy) is to protect the safety of children in our care and prevent abuse from occurring, and in the event that allegations are raised in relation to child abuse, to ensure that the allegations are properly addressed. All complaints will be treated seriously and fully investigated and handled with maximum confidentiality and discretion.
- 1.3. Should a person wish to make any enquiries in relation to this Policy, please contact the INCC Yarra Paddlers, Child Safety Officer (see website for details).

**2. POLICY STATEMENT**

- 2.1. INCC Yarra Paddlers is committed to providing the highest level of safety for all involved with paddling. This includes protecting members' privacy, promoting positive behaviours and attitudes, protecting the health safety and wellbeing of members, particularly children and delivering activities while acting in the best interests of children in the sport.
- 2.2. Specifically, INCC Yarra Paddlers considers that the health, safety and well-being of children take priority over all other competing considerations.
- 2.3. INCC Yarra Paddlers has a zero tolerance approach to child abuse and is committed to promoting and protecting children from abuse and neglect to the greatest extent possible. All children have equal rights to protection from child abuse, regardless of their cultural background, gender, religion, disability, or sexual orientation.
- 2.4. Child protection is a shared responsibility between INCC Yarra Paddlers Committee, its coaches, parents/guardians, spectators, volunteers and members of the INCC Yarra Paddlers community. Everyone that participates in INCC Yarra Paddlers' activities is responsible for the care and protection of children, and reporting information about child abuse.
- 2.5. INCC Yarra Paddlers supports the active participation of all children. It listens to their views, respects their views, and involves them when making decisions, where appropriate, especially about matters that will directly affect them (including their safety). Some of the ways in which INCC Yarra Paddlers empowers children are:
  - 2.5.1. A Junior Paddler representative on the committee, in a non-voting position
  - 2.5.2. Junior Paddlers are actively encouraged to share their opinions during training sessions
  - 2.5.3. Junior Paddlers can send feedback via a contact form on the website
  - 2.5.4. Making them aware of their rights using child friendly documentation
  - 2.5.5. Support their participation in decisions that impact them
  - 2.5.6. Making them aware that their safety is our highest priority
  - 2.5.7. Treating them with respect
  - 2.5.8. Allowing them to express their individuality and identity

- 2.5.9. Allowing them to participate in a culturally safe way
- 2.6. INCC Yarra Paddlers is committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, and those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children living with a disability. Strategies to embed cultural safety for First Nations children include:
- 2.6.1. An acknowledgement of country at INCC Yarra Paddlers hosted events
  - 2.6.2. Consulting with families and members of the Aboriginal community to identify opportunities to promote Aboriginal culture and practices
  - 2.6.3. Provide [Providing] training for coaches and volunteers on the strengths of Aboriginal culture and its importance to the well-being and safety of Aboriginal Children.
  - 2.6.4. Seeking feedback from Aboriginal children, families and communities on their experience at INCC Yarra Paddlers, particularly around how safe they feel expressing their identity including their culture.
- 2.7. INCC Yarra Paddlers promotes fairness and consideration for all staff, volunteers and participants.
- 2.7.1 INCC Yarra Paddlers values diversity and equity for all children.  
To achieve this, we will provide training for all Committee members, Coaches, Guides and instructors and volunteers on understanding diversity and how to support inclusion and cultural safety.
- 2.7.1. We will welcome and support participation of all children, including children with disability, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who are unable to live at home, LGBTIQ children and Aboriginal children and their families
  - 2.7.2. We offer students and families through our enrolment forms the opportunity to provide information about themselves, including any specific needs to participate fully in our programs
  - 2.7.3. have zero tolerance of racism and other forms of discrimination and take action when discrimination or exclusion is identified
  - 2.7.4. deliver programming that reflects the diversity of our members, their interests and cultures
  - 2.7.5. strive to reflect the diversity of our community through representation on our Board, in our staff and on Club Committees
  - 2.7.6. have a physical and online environment that actively celebrates diversity
  - 2.7.7. commit to ensuring our facilities promote inclusion of children of all abilities.
- 2.7.2. Paddle Victoria will ensure that families and communities are informed, and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing by ensuring that:
- 2.8.1. Families participate in decisions affecting their child.
  - 2.8.2. The organisation engages and openly communicates with families and the community about its child safe approach and relevant information is accessible.
  - 2.8.3. Families and communities have a say in the development and review of the organisation's policies and practices.
  - 2.8.4. Families, carers, and the community are informed about the organisation's operations and governance.

### **3. SCOPE**

- 3.1. This Policy applies to everyone involved in or connected to paddling, including (but not limited to) participants, parents, spectators, contractors, officials, coaches, judges and staff throughout all INCC Yarra Paddlers events and activities.

3.2. This Policy will continue to apply retrospectively to a person or Member following the cessation of their association or employment with INCC Yarra Paddlers.

#### 4. RELATED DOCUMENTS & LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

4.1. This Policy must be read in conjunction with:

4.1.1. the laws of the Commonwealth and Victoria (as amended from time to time) including but not limited to:

4.1.1.1. Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)

4.1.1.2. Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Act 2015 (Vic)

4.1.1.3. Crimes Act 1958 (Vic); and

4.1.1.4. Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic)

4.1.2. INCC Yarra Paddlers policies and procedures, including but not limited to:

4.1.2.1. The INCC Yarra Paddler Privacy Policy can be accessed on the INCC Yarra Paddlers' Website: <https://www.incc.org.au/privacy-policy/>

4.1.2.2. Constitution; The INCC Yarra Paddler Constitution can be accessed on the INCC Yarra Paddlers' Website: <https://www.incc.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/INCC-Constitution-Approved-18Mar09.pdf>

4.1.2.3. Paddle Australia Codes of Behaviour NIF Child Safeguarding Policy <https://paddle.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Paddle-Aus-CHILD-SAFEGUARDING.pdf>

4.1.2.4. Paddle Australia NIF Member Protection Policy <https://paddle.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Paddle-Aus-MEMBER-PROTECTION-POLICY.pdf>

4.1.2.5. Paddle Australia NIF Complaints, Disputes and Discipline Policy <https://paddle.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Paddle-Aus-COMPLAINTS-POLICY.pdf>

4.1.2.6. Paddle Australia New PA Policies Aligning to the National Integrity Framework  
Code of Behaviour Policy  
<https://paddle.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/20220622-PA-Code-of-Behaviour-Policy-clean-to.4.pdf>

#### 5. DEFINITIONS

5.1. **Child** means a person involved in the activities of INCC Yarra Paddlers (including paddlers) and under the age of 18 years unless otherwise stated under the law applicable to the child (e.g., for the purposes of child sexual offences in Victoria, a "child" refers to a person under the age of 16 years).

5.2. **Child abuse** is the mistreatment of a Child or Young Person that has harmed, is harming or is likely to Harm or endanger that Child or Young Person's physical or emotional health, development or wellbeing and the Child has not, or is not likely to be protected by the

parent(s) or guardian(s). For the avoidance of doubt, this includes but is not limited to Emotional or Psychological Abuse, Bullying, Grooming, Sexual Exploitation, Neglect and Harassment.

5.3. **Child protection** means any responsibility, measure or activity undertaken to safeguard children from Harm.

5.4. **Grooming** is a term used to describe what happens when a perpetrator of Abuse builds a relationship with a Child 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. The Child may be given special attention and what starts as an apparently normal display of affection, such as cuddling, can develop into sexual touching or masturbation and then into more serious sexual behaviour. 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, in social media or by other technological channels.

5.5. **Harm** to a person or a Child is any detrimental effect of a significant nature to the person or Child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing. It is immaterial how the harm is caused. Harm can be caused by:

- Physical, Psychological or Emotional Abuse or Neglect;
- Sexual Abuse or Exploitation;
- a single act, omission or circumstance; and
- a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances.

5.6. **Sexual offence** (in Victoria) means a criminal offence involving sexual activity or actions of indecency or any act which exposes a child under the age of 16 years to or involves a child under the age of 16 years in sexual activity or matters beyond their understanding or contrary to accepted community standards. Sexually offensive 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, and exposing the child to or involving the child in pornography. It includes grooming, which includes actions deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child under the age of 16 years (or their carer, family or supervisor) to lower their inhibitions and prepare them for engagement in a sexual offence.

5.7. **Mandatory reporter** means a person who is legally required to make a report to the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) or the Police if they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection. It includes (but is not limited to) teachers, principals, registered psychologists, nurses, doctors and midwives.

## 6. RECOGNISING AND REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

6.1. A person may, in the course of participating in the sport or other activities of INCC Yarra Paddlers or carrying out their work, form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from child abuse.

6.2. If a person is concerned about an immediate risk to a child's safety, the person must phone Victoria Police on "000" as soon as practicable.

6.3. Specific types of **Child abuse** include:

6.3.1. **Physical abuse**: occurs when a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant Harm as a result of a physical injury, such as a non-accidental physical injury.

- 6.3.2. **Sexual abuse:** occurs when a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant Harm as a result of sexual abuse, such as when a child is exploited, or used by another for their sexual gratification or sexual arousal, or for that of others.
- 6.3.3. **Emotional and psychological abuse:** occurs when a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, emotional or psychological Harm of such a kind that the child's emotional or intellectual development is or is likely to be significantly damaged; and
- 6.3.4. **Neglect:** occurs when a child's physical development or health has been or is likely to be significantly damaged. It refers to an omission, such as depriving a child of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, or medical care.

#### 6.4. Mandatory Reporters

- 6.4.1. Select classes of people in the community are required by law to report to the Child Protection Unit of the DFFH where they have formed a belief, on reasonable grounds, that a child is in need of protection because they have suffered (or are likely to suffer) significant harm due to physical or sexual abuse.
- 6.4.2. This report must be made as soon as practicable, and after each occasion where they become aware of further reasonable grounds for the belief.

#### 6.5. Reasonable grounds for belief

- 6.5.1. A reasonable belief is formed if a reasonable person believes that:
  - 6.5.1.1. the child is in need of protection;
  - 6.5.1.2. the child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm as a result of physical or sexual injury; and
  - 6.5.1.3. the child's parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child.
- 6.5.2. To form a reasonable belief, you should consider and objectively assess all the relevant facts, such as the source of the allegation and how it was communicated, the nature of and details of the allegation, and whether there are any other related matters known regarding the alleged perpetrator.
- 6.5.3. A 'reasonable belief' or a 'belief on reasonable grounds' is not the same as having proof, but is more than mere rumour or speculation.
- 6.5.4. You will have reasonable grounds to notify if:
  - 6.5.4.1. a child states that they have been physically or sexually abused;
  - 6.5.4.2. a child states that they know someone who has been physically or sexually abused (sometimes the child may be talking about themselves);
  - 6.5.4.3. someone who knows a child states that the child has been physically or sexually abused;

6.5.4.4. 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; or

6.5.4.5. signs of abuse lead to a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused.

## **6.6. Voluntary Reporters**

6.6.1. In addition to the mandatory reporting obligations above, any person who believes on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from any form of child abuse, *may* disclose that information to the Police, DFFH or the Commission for Children & Young People (CCYP).

## **6.7. Reporting Child Sexual Abuse**

6.7.1. If a person receives information that leads them to form a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria against a child (under the age of 16 years) by another person (of or over the age of 18 years), the person has a legal obligation to disclose that information to the Police as soon as it is practicable. Individuals who fail to comply with this obligation under the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic) may be subject to a penalty of imprisonment.

## **6.8. INCC Yarra Paddlers Approach to Reports of Abuse**

6.8.1. INCC Yarra Paddlers supports and encourages a person to make a report to the Police, CCYP or DFFH if they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection, or they are concerned about the safety, health or wellbeing of a child.

6.8.2. Any person that makes a report in good faith in accordance with their reporting obligations (whether mandatory or voluntary) will be supported by INCC Yarra Paddlers, and will not be penalised by INCC Yarra Paddlers for making the report.

6.8.3. If a person is uncertain as to whether they should make a report to an external authority in relation to the safety of a child, they may speak to the INCC Yarra Paddlers President or INCC Yarra Paddlers Child Safety Officer for guidance and information. If in doubt, ask for assistance.

6.8.4. If an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, INCC Yarra Paddlers will follow the reporting procedure outlined in Paddle Victoria's Child Safe Policy and take all steps to ensure that the safety of the child and other children is paramount.

6.8.5. INCC Yarra Paddlers will investigate allegations of inappropriate conduct against a child in accordance with procedural fairness and will handle the allegations in a confidential and sensitive manner to the greatest extent possible. INCC Yarra Paddlers will seek support from Sport Integrity Australia and Paddle Vic in managing or conducting this investigation.



- 6.8.6. INCC Yarra Paddlers will cooperate with the directions of the Police, CCYP, DFFH and/or Sport Integrity Australia in relation to any investigation conducted by these authorities.
- 6.8.7. INCC Yarra Paddlers will keep a register of any allegations regarding inappropriate conduct.

## **7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PERSONNEL PROTECTING CHILDREN**

- 7.1. Personnel involved in protecting children include the committee, management, coaches and volunteers within the Organisation. Those people have responsibilities in relation to protection of children and are expected to:
  - 7.1.1. understand the rights of children, as appropriate to their role;
  - 7.1.2. respect the cultural and religious practices of families who access INCC Yarra Paddlers' services, programs or events;
  - 7.1.3. understand and appropriately respond to the needs of children with developmental delays or disabilities;
  - 7.1.4. appropriately act on any concerns raised by children;
  - 7.1.5. understand the definitions, indicators and impact of child abuse;
  - 7.1.6. at all times, know and follow regulations in relation to the care of children and follow the Paddle Victoria Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
  - 7.1.7. co-operate with police and/or other formal investigations to the best of their ability; and
  - 7.1.8. not harm or exploit children who access INCC Yarra Paddlers's services.
- 7.2. INCC Yarra Paddlers will appoint a Child Safety Officer or equivalent role that will be the primary point of contact for all concerns related to child safety.

## **8. RECRUITMENT AND SCREENING**

- 8.1. The minimum standard for background checks of employees, contractors and volunteers of INCC Yarra Paddlers and its members is the law as it applies in Victoria.
- 8.2. INCC Yarra Paddlers undertakes a comprehensive recruitment and screening process for all staff, contractors and volunteers which aims to:
  - 8.2.1. promote and protect the safety of all children who participate in the activities of INCC Yarra Paddlers;
  - 8.2.2. identify and recruit the safest and most suitable candidates who share INCC Yarra Paddlers' values and commitment to protect children; and

- 8.2.3. prevent a person from working at INCC Yarra Paddlers if they pose an unacceptable risk to children.
- 8.3. INCC Yarra Paddlers requires coaches, contractors and volunteers to pass the recruitment and screening process prior to commencing their engagement with INCC Yarra Paddlers.
- 8.4. As part of the screening and recruitment process, an applicant must provide appropriate evidence (e.g., WWCC and Police check) to show that they are suitable to work with children and young people in a recreational setting. INCC Yarra Paddlers requires that:
  - 8.4.1. all INCC Yarra Paddlers coaches, volunteers and Committee members require a WWCC; and
  - 8.4.2. the following key event personnel must have a valid WWCC:
    - 8.4.2.1. those paid by INCC Yarra Paddlers or PaddleVic for their services
    - 8.4.2.2. volunteers with regular roles in INCC Yarra Paddlers;
    - 8.4.2.3. relevant contractors who may have unsupervised access to children; and
    - 8.4.2.4. anyone else who INCC Yarra Paddlers Committee feel requires a WWCC due to the nature of the work that they are undertaking for INCC Yarra Paddlers.
- 8.5. The type of evidence that an applicant is required to provide to INCC Yarra Paddlers will vary depending on the type of position that they are applying for. However, an applicant will not be offered a position until they provide the required evidence to INCC Yarra Paddlers.
- 8.6. INCC Yarra Paddlers will exercise discretion and may require applicants to provide a Police check in accordance with the law and as appropriate before they commence their engagement and during their time with INCC Yarra Paddlers in regular intervals.
- 8.7. INCC Yarra Paddlers will undertake at least two thorough reference checks prior to engaging any personnel.
- 8.8. Once engaged, INCC Yarra Paddlers will provide coaches and volunteers with access to this policy and staff and volunteers must review and acknowledge their understanding of this policy.
- 8.9. INCC Yarra Paddlers requires that affiliated clubs ensure all staff and volunteers (including coaches and any officials) likely to have contact with athletes (and other children) have a current WWCC, which needs to be signed off annually as part of the affiliation process. Clubs which do not comply with their legal obligations will be found to have not complied with the INCC Yarra Paddlers affiliation requirements and will be disaffiliated.
- 8.10. INCC Yarra Paddlers requires all affiliated club personnel including Committee Members, Volunteers, Coaches and Judges and anyone else

who has contact with children to possess a valid working with children check. Any costs associated with gaining a valid WWCC will be dealt with in a manner determined by INCC Yarra Paddlers.

## **9. SUPPORTING PERSONNEL**

9.1. INCC Yarra Paddlers is committed to ensuring that all staff, Committee members, volunteers and contractors receive training to ensure that they understand their responsibilities in relation to child safety. Mandatory training at INCC Yarra Paddlers includes:

9.1.1. Child Safety Induction, Play by the Rules Online Child Protection Training and Play by the Rules Online Harassment and Discrimination Training. Cultural Awareness training to be included for all staff going forward.

9.2. INCC Yarra Paddlers assists its Committee members, coaches, and volunteers to incorporate child safety considerations into decision-making and to promote a culturally safe environment where children are supported to speak up about issues that affect them.

## **10. RISK MANAGEMENT APPROACH**

10.1. Child safety is a part of INCC Yarra Paddlers' overall risk management approach.

10.2. See [CCYP Guide for Creating a Child Safe Organisation](https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/being-a-child-safe-organisation/).  
<https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/being-a-child-safe-organisation/>

## **11. POLICY BREACHES**

11.1. It is a breach of this policy for any person or organisation to which this policy applies, to have been found to have done anything contrary to this policy. Any person who may breach this policy is subject to Paddle Australia Complaints, Dispute and Disciplinary Policy and Member Protection Policy. These can be accessed via the Paddle Australia Website: <https://paddle.org.au/sport-integrity/>

## **12. POLICY PROMOTION**

12.1. This policy will be made available to all members via email, and is available on the website.

12.2. This policy will be communicated to all Committee, Coaches, and Volunteer members via email.

12.3. References to this policy will be included in documentation provided to all team officials that represent INCC Yarra Paddlers.

## **13. RECORD KEEPING**

13.1. INCC Yarra Paddlers will retain records of reports of child abuse and complaints about child safety.

13.2. In maintaining records of reports about child safety, INCC Yarra Paddlers will maintain confidentiality and privacy for children and families in accordance with legislation.

- 13.3. INCC Yarra Paddlers will appropriately note identified risks to child safety through the record keeping process and will incorporate those into its risk management plan.

#### **14. REVIEW PROCESS**

- 14.1. This policy will be reviewed by the INCC Yarra Paddlers Committee on an annual basis.
  - 14.2. If you would like to provide INCC Yarra Paddlers with any feedback or suggestions to improve this policy, please contact the Child Safety Officer via the Committee ([secretary@incc.org.au](mailto:secretary@incc.org.au)) or the contact form on the Child Safety page of the INCC Yarra Paddlers website.
  - 14.3. In addition to the regular review of this policy, recommendations for changes to the policy may be submitted to the Committee for consideration at any time. In the event that changes are accepted, the policy will be updated, and circulated to all stakeholders via the webpage, newsletter and other appropriate communication channels.
-