



GIRL GUIDES
A U S T R A L I A

Governance Documents

Volume 2: Policies

Child Safe Child Friendly Policy

Board approved, 29/08/2021

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1 About this Document

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Girl Guides Australia (GGA) Child Safe Child Friendly Policy is to:

- Identify to GGA and its Member State Girl Guide Organisations (SGGOs) their obligations in respect of the National Child Safe Principles; and
- Signal the ongoing commitment of Australian Guiding to a Child Safe Child Friendly community.

This document does not limit the powers or duties of GGA.

1.2 Background

As an organisation with a mission to empower girls and young women to discover their potential as leaders of their world, Girl Guiding in Australia (GGiA) is committed to fostering a child safe and child friendly culture where children and young people are safe, respected and protected.

1.3 Scope

The owner of this Policy is the Board.

This policy recognises the shared roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders of GGiA, including GGA, SGGOs, Guiding Members, Volunteers and Employees in supporting the commitment to a Child Safe Child Friendly community.

SGGOs are required to ensure that all relevant State based policies and procedures are consistent with this Policy.

1.4 Document structure

This document sets out all aspects of the Child Safe Child Friendly Policy and includes a list of relevant Commonwealth and state/territory legislation.

There are a range of accompanying procedures sitting under this policy that inform and direct Members, Volunteers, and Employees with respect to their compliance obligations. In particular:

- The Fact Sheet – introduction to Girl Guiding in Australia - a Child Safe Child Friendly Community is available and provides basic and introductory information about Girl Guiding in Australia.
- The Child Safe Child Friendly Policy identifies ten fundamental elements. Procedures and Guidance Notes are available for each of these ten elements to support Child Safe Child Friendly practice in Girl Guiding in Australia.

1.5 Approval by the Board

This document has been approved by the Board.

1.6 Review

The Board will review this document at least biennially.

1.7 Amendment

The Board may amend this document at any time.

1.8 Responsibility

Responsibilities under this policy are:

Position	Responsibility
Board	Policy owner
CEO	Executive Office oversight, policy review
Australian Guiding Committee	Policy oversight

1.9 Document Management

Approval and Change History

This table summarises the changes to and approval of this document. While the document is reviewed regularly, it is only subject to approval if changed.

Version	Author	Date	Approved By	Comments
V1.0	CC	30.11.2019	GGA Board	Initial document creation
V1.1	CC	29.08.2021		Minor amendments prior to implementation

1.10 Related Policies and Documents

This policy is designed to complement and should be read with the following:

1. GGA Strategy
2. GGA Governance Framework
3. GGA Code of Conduct
4. GGA Diversity and Inclusion Policy
5. GGA Risk Management Policy
6. GGA People and Performance Management Policy

2 Policy

2.1 Overview

Girl Guides Australia (GGA) is committed to being Australia's leading organisation for girls and young women in leadership and personal development.

GGA's mission is empowering girls and young women to discover their potential as leaders of their world. Girl Guides provides an innovative, relevant and high quality flexible, non-formal educational program for girls and young women, anchored by a shared purpose of making the world a better place. Girl Guides develops leadership skills and a sense of personal responsibility in an inclusive, supportive, safe and friendly girl-only environment.

GGA together with the State Girl Guide Organisations (SGGOs) recognise that the long-standing reputation and effectiveness of Girl Guiding in Australia (GGiA) is dependent on the behaviours and attitudes of the people who make up the Girl Guiding movement in Australia.

The Girl Guide Promise and Guide Law is fundamental to all aspects of Guiding and provides a foundation of expected behaviours.

GGA acknowledges the significant role culture plays in keeping children and young people safe. Guiding worldwide focuses on giving girls and young women a voice and an opportunity to build lifelong friendships and networks. These two core elements alone encourage those in Guiding to speak up for themselves and others, an essential part of creating a child safe culture. Girl Guides Australia has a zero tolerance of child abuse and neglect.

This policy signals the ongoing commitment of GGiA to being Child Safe Child Friendly. The foundations of the Girl Guides Australia (GGA) Child Safe Child Friendly Policy are the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations as agreed to by the Council of Australian Governments in February 2019 and the requirements of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS). Child Safe Child Friendly Community is one of the strategic foundations of GGA.

The Child Safe Child Friendly Policy identifies ten fundamental elements. Procedures and Guidance notes are available for the ten elements to support Child Safe Child Friendly practice in Girl Guiding in Australia.

2.2 Child Safe Child Friendly Elements for Girl Guiding

1. Girl-Led Guiding

GGiA is committed to being led by girls and women of all ages, with the vision of empowering all girls and young women to discover their potential as leaders of their world.

Girl-led Guiding is facilitated at the Unit level through the delivery of The Australian Guide Program (AGP).

GGiA will routinely and regularly seek the views of Youth Members about issues of interest and relevance to them, including, in particular,

- (i) their safety and wellbeing;
- (ii) the policy and practice of GGiA; and
- (iii) issues relevant to being a girl or young woman, and a Youth Member.

The views of all Youth Members will be sought in a respectful and effective manner and will be given serious consideration by GGiA.

2. Becoming a Girl Guide

GGiA welcomes girls and women as members to Guiding in accordance with the GGA Diversity and Inclusion Policy, the GGA Child Safe Child Friendly Policy and any other relevant policy.

Fundamental to being a member is acceptance of the Girl Guide Promise and the Guide Law. All Youth Members and Adult Members will make their Promise in a way that is comfortable for them, and will be supported by GGiA to ensure that their day to day behaviour as a Girl Guide is reflective of this intention and purpose.

All Adult Members are required to commit to acting in accordance with the GGA Code of Conduct and renew this commitment annually. The Code of Conduct requires adherence to Girl Guide policies and procedures. Youth Members are required to comply with Girl Guide policies and procedures as far as it is appropriate for their age and developmental stage.

All Adult Members must satisfy the requirements of Element 3 - **Recruitment and Screening of Volunteers**.

3. Recruitment and Screening of Volunteers

GGiA relies on the significant contribution made by Volunteers and is committed to recruiting in accordance with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

The recruitment of all Volunteers will be conducted in an accountable and transparent manner outlined in the *Procedures and Guidance Notes for the Child Safe Child Friendly Policy*.

GGiA has a uniform approach to the screening of all Adult Members, Volunteers and Employees across Australia which complies with the relevant legislation. This is a deliberate policy to promote a uniform approach across Girl Guiding in Australia.

All Adult Members* and Ongoing Volunteers will undergo a Working with Children Check (WWCC), a National Police Check, and two Referee Checks. The WWCC must be without restriction or condition and be current. All checks and clearances are required to be updated in accordance with the applicable state or territory requirements for where the volunteer lives and volunteers.

All Volunteers are required to act in accordance with the GGA Code of Conduct; and Girl Guide policies and procedures at all times.

All Volunteers will engage in an induction process tailored to their role and responsibilities, as soon as practicable after commencing their role.

GGiA will respond promptly to all concerns regarding potential or actual breaches of the GGA Code of Conduct; or Girl Guide policies and procedures by any Volunteer.

* Note - in some states and territories a WWCC is required for anyone 14 years or over who volunteers.

4. Supervision and Training of Volunteers

GGiA is committed to providing all Volunteers with role appropriate supervision and training. GGiA acknowledges the important role that skilled, confident volunteers play in safeguarding children.

All Volunteers that are not members will be supervised by an Adult Member. All Volunteers will be supported and monitored by their supervisor as appropriate to their role.

Adult Members and ongoing Volunteers will be provided with opportunities for further development primarily through the Australian Leadership and Qualification Program (ALQP) or other relevant training programs.

All Volunteers will receive information with respect to expectations and obligations outlined in the GGA Code of Conduct; and Girl Guide policies and procedures.

All Adult Members will undertake specific Child Safe Child Friendly training appropriate to their role.

5. Recruitment and Screening of Employees

The recruitment of all Employees of GGA and SGGOs will be conducted in an accountable and transparent manner, using nationally consistent procedures and include the Child Safe Child Friendly Policy and relevant Girl Guide policies and procedures.

All Employees will undergo a Working with Children Check (WWCC); two Referee Checks; a National Police Check; and are required to act in accordance with the GGA Code of Conduct.

All Employees are required to commit to acting in accordance with the GGA Code of Conduct. There will be an induction process for all Employees tailored to their role and responsibilities, as soon as practicable after commencing their role.

GGiA will respond promptly to all concerns regarding potential or actual breaches of the GGA Code of Conduct; or Girl Guide policies and procedures by any Employee.

6. Supervision and Training of Employees

GGiA is committed to providing all Employees with role appropriate supervision and training. GGiA acknowledges the importance of providing an environment where employees have the skills, knowledge and confidence to safeguard children.

All Employees will be actively supported and monitored by their supervisor; receive training opportunities appropriate to their roles.

All Employees will receive specific training with respect to expectations and obligations as outlined in the GGA Code of Conduct; and Girl Guide policies and procedures as applicable to their roles.

7. Health and Safety

GGiA is committed to promoting and providing a healthy lifestyle and environment for all Members, Volunteers, and Employees.

Adult Members, Volunteers, and Employees will follow all required procedures to minimise health risks to Youth Members.

GGiA will respond promptly to all health and safety concerns affecting any Youth Member.

8. Responding to Abuse and Neglect

Promoting and protecting the emotional, physical, and sexual safety and general wellbeing of all Girl Guides is central to all aspects of the culture and operation of GGiA. Any reference to abuse and neglect includes harm and risk of harm of any kind.

All Adult Members, Volunteers and Employees, regardless of whether they are mandated by their state or territory legislation, will report any concerns regarding the abuse or neglect of a child or young person as if they were a mandated reporter. This means it is reported to the police and/or relevant statutory child protection agency. Support is provided for the making of a report in the Procedures and Guidance Notes for this Policy. The State Commissioner and/or CEO of the relevant SGGO must be informed of any report made to the police and/or relevant statutory child protection agency.

GGiA will provide all Adult Members and Volunteers with an ongoing role, and Employees with role appropriate supervision, training, and development to enable them to appropriately recognise and respond to:

- (i) disclosures
- (ii) allegations
- (iii) observations, and
- (iv) suspicions of the abuse or neglect of any child or young person.

9. Responding to Feedback, Concerns and Complaints

GGiA welcomes all feedback. This includes positive feedback, concerns or complaints about any action, or lack of action, by any Member, Volunteer, or Employee or any other aspect of Girl Guiding.

GGiA will provide and promote feedback mechanisms to Members; parents, guardians and carers of Youth Members; Volunteers; Employees; and members of the broader community.

All Members, Volunteers, and Employees will respond to feedback, concerns and complaints in a transparent, timely, and child-focused manner, regardless of who is pursuing the matter or what the complaint is about.

10. Girl Guiding in Practise

GGiA is committed to providing safe activities and environments for all Guides, Volunteers, and Employees and has policies and procedures for specific aspects. These include supervision ratios, risk management, outdoor activities, adventure-based activities, overnight stays, interstate events, international events and travel, social media and internet, and engagement and activities with other organisations. These policies and procedures support Youth Members to engage in Girl Guiding safely.

Adult Members, Volunteers and Employees must be familiar with the Girl Guide policies and procedures relevant to their role. All GGiA Members, Volunteers, and Employees will adopt a culture of adherence to the policies and procedures of GGA and the relevant SGGO according to their role in Guiding.

3 Legislation and Standards**

GGA and SGGOs will comply with relevant Commonwealth, state and territory legislation and standards. Additionally, the Girl Guides Australia Child Safe Child Friendly Policy is informed by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the following legislation and standards:

3.1 Commonwealth legislation

- Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cwlth)
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cwlth)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cwlth)
- Family Law Act 1975 (Cwlth)
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cwlth)
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cwlth)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cwlth)

3.2 State and Territory Legislation

Child Protection:

- Children and Young People Act 2008 (ACT)
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)
- Care and Protection of Children Act 2007 (NT)
- Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld)
- Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017 (SA)
- Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997 (Tas)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act (Vic)
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)
- Children and Community Services Act 2004 (WA)

Reportable Conduct:

- Ombudsman Act 1989 (ACT)
- Children's Guardian Act 2019 (NSW)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
- There is currently no legislative reportable conduct scheme in the Northern Territory, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, or Western Australia.

Working with Children Checks:

- Working With Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011 (ACT)
- Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 (NSW)
- Care and Protection of Children Act 2007 (NT)
- Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld)
- Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016 (SA)
- Registration to Work With Vulnerable People Act 2013 (Tas)
- Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic)
- Working With Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004 (WA)

Discrimination:

- Discrimination Act 1991 (ACT)
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1996 (NT)
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)
- Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (SA)
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1998 (Tas)
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (WA)

Privacy:

- Information Privacy Act 2014 (ACT)
- Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW)
- Information Act 2003 (NT)
- Information Privacy Act 2009 (QLD)
- There is currently no legislative privacy scheme in South Australia, however, South Australian government agencies are required to comply with Information Privacy Principles in the PC012 Information Privacy Principles (IPPS) Instruction.
- Personal Information Protection Act 2004 (Tas)
- Privacy Data and Protection Act 2014 (Vic)
- There is currently no legislative privacy scheme in Western Australia, however some privacy principles (dealing with access to information and correction of information) are provided for in the Freedom of Information Act 2001 (WA)

Health Privacy:

- Health Records (Privacy and Access) Act 1997 (ACT)
- Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW)
- Health Records Act 2001 (Vic)
- Information Act 2003 (NT)
- Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld)
- There is currently no legislative health privacy scheme in South Australia, however, South Australian government agencies are required to comply with Information Privacy Principles in the PC012 Information Privacy Principles (IPPS) Instruction.
- Personal Information and Protection Act 2004 (Tas)
- There is currently no legislative health privacy scheme in Western Australia.

Other:

- Human Rights Act 2004 (ACT)
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)

3.3 Commonwealth Standards

- Australian Privacy Principles
- National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
- National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020

3.4 State and Territory Standards

- Victorian Child Safe Standards

** All legislation and standards listed above are current as at August 2021.

Appendix

CSCF Framework - Definitions and Abbreviations Please refer to [Guide Lines for Girl Guides and Girl Guide Volunteers](#)