

CODE OF CONDUCT – CHILD SAFETY

All staff, volunteers and board members of EDVOS are required to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children, as noted below.

All staff (inclusive of volunteers and contractors) of EDVOS are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children by:

- Adhering to EDVOS Child Safety Procedures (and all related Policies, Procedures and Legislation) / upholding EDVOS statement of commitment to child safety at all times
- Taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse and harm
- Treating everyone with respect
- Listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused and/or are worried about their safety or the safety of another child
- Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal child’s self-identification)
- Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance of discrimination)
- Promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability (for example, during personal care activities)
- Promoting safety for children who identify as belonging to, or identifying with, LGBTI community
- Ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not left alone with a child without consent of the parent/caregiver
- Reporting any allegations of child abuse to the EDVOS Child Safety Officers (ie. Executive Director or General Manager Services / Team Leader – Practice Development) , and ensure any allegations or concerns are immediately reported to the child protection and Victoria Police (as appropriate)
- Reporting any child safety concerns to the EDVOS Child Safety Officers (ie. Executive Director or General Manager Services or Team Leader – Practice Development) as soon as possible
- If an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe by taking all appropriate measures
- Encouraging children to ‘have a say’ and participate in all relevant organisational activities where possible, especially on issues that are important to them.

Staff and volunteers must not:

- Develop any ‘special’ relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children)
- Exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (for example inappropriate sitting on laps. Sitting on laps could be appropriate sometimes, for example while reading a storybook to a small child in an open plan area)
- Put children at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors or allowing them to be alone with an adult other than a parent or caregiver)
- Do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
- Engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children (for example, personal social activities)

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- Use inappropriate language in the presence of children (this includes swearing, but also includes any language which could be seen as discriminatory, judgemental or potentially harmful to a child)
- Express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
- Discriminate against any child, for any reason; including, but not limited to, culture, race, ethnicity, gender or LGBTI identity or ability
- Have contact with a child or their family outside of our organisation without the express knowledge of EDVOS Child Safety Officer’s knowledge and/or consent (for example, “babysitting”). Accidental contact, such as seeing people in the street, is unavoidable
- Have any online contact with a child or their family (unless necessary, for example providing families with e-newsletters, information/resources etc.) or in the course of usual EDVOS business
- Ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse.

By observing these standards you acknowledge your responsibility to immediately report any breach of this code to the EDVOS Child Safety Officer (Executive Director or General Manager Services) / leadership.

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

Report necessary disclosures to Child protection

East Division Intake

1300 360 391

(8.45am - 5.00pm Monday - Friday)

After hours Child Protection Emergency Service

13 12 78

(5.00pm - 9.00am Monday - Friday, 24 hours on weekends and public holidays)

**it may not be necessary to report all disclosures however they should still be reported to relevant people in EDVOS. For example a disclosure about an incident that Child Protection is already aware of but you would still report this to the SFVA/Leadership.

I agree to adhere to this Code of Conduct – Child Safety

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

State of Victoria, Department of Health and Human Services (2015) Child Safe Standards toolkit: resource 3, Code of conduct. Retrieved from <http://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/resources-child-safe-standards>

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