

Version Control			
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Child Safe Code of Conduct	V1	20/06/23	15/07/23



Child Safe Code of Conduct

Saltbush, Balnarring Beach (Saltbush) is a not for profit, charitable organisation that exists to enrich the lives of people experiencing hardship by providing a peaceful environment for rest, play, growth and connection.

Our vision is **restorative holidays and experiences for those who need it most.**

Saltbush acknowledges the Bunurong/Boon Wurrung people of the Kulin Nation, the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work. We acknowledge and respect their contributions, experience, and knowledge as First Nations people. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

Saltbush seeks to create welcoming space where children and young people thrive. At Saltbush, children and young people are always in the care and under the responsibility of their parent or guardian, including for all activities and school holiday programs. Saltbush provides families with a rich environment for intergenerational experiences that enhances the lives of children and young people.

Commitment to child safety

All children who come to Saltbush have a right to feel and be safe. We have a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and harm. We aim to create a child safe and child-friendly environment where children feel safe and have fun with their families and/or other significant people in their lives.

Purpose

This Child Safe Code of Conduct sets expectations for how staff, volunteers and contractors at Saltbush should behave around children.

Scope

This policy applies to staff, volunteers, contractors, and others involved in our organization and who visit Saltbush. This policy applies to all activities at Saltbush including independent stays, retreats and school holiday programs.

The Code

This Code of Conduct identifies positive child safe behaviours that we ask staff, volunteers and contractors to demonstrate. It also identifies behaviours that we consider unacceptable and not permitted at Saltbush.

Some behaviours on their own may not be a serious breach of the Code of Conduct but together may indicate a concerning pattern of behaviour that poses a risk to the safety of children.

Failure to follow standards of acceptable behaviour is a breach of this Code of Conduct and may result in disciplinary action and/or legal proceedings.

Saltbush, Balnarring Beach staff, board members, volunteers and contractors must always follow these standards of behaviour, including when at Saltbush, participating in school holiday programs, carers retreats or engaging with guests at any time:

I WILL:

- take all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- take disclosures of harm or abuse made by a child seriously and immediately report it
- raise concerns with management if risks to child safety are identified. Report and act on any concerns or observed breaches of this Child Safe Code of Conduct
- participate in all compulsory training and professional development including training on child safety and wellbeing
- treat all children and young people with respect, regardless of race, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or other opinion, nationality, cultural background, financial situation, disability or other characteristics
- consider the different needs of all children at Saltbush and support them to participate fully in programs and help them and their families feel included
- make Indigenous Australian children and families feel included and welcome at Saltbush and support children to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights
- report any instances of racism I become aware of
- help Saltbush be a place where people of all cultures feel safe and included
- listen to children and respond to them if they feel unsafe
- value children and young people's ideas and opinions
- promote friendships and encourage children and young people to support their peers
- involve children and young people in decisions about the activities they participate in at Saltbush and welcome the participation of parents and carers in these decisions
- report any conflicts of interest I have (such as an outside relationship with a child) that may affect my ability to perform my role
- respect the privacy of children and their families, including keeping all personal information confidential unless required by law to share it
- inform parents and carers if there are situations that need to be safely managed but are outside the boundaries of this Code of Conduct
- ensure breaches of this Code are reported to the CEO or Saltbush Staff immediately
- comply with all relevant Australian and Victorian legislation and our child safe policies and procedures
- uphold the rights of the child and always prioritise their needs.

I WILL NOT:

- condone or participate in illegal, unsafe, abusive or harmful behaviour towards children – this includes physical violence, sexual abuse, emotional or psychological abuse, grooming, neglect or sexual misconduct
- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse or harm
- exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues
- use hurtful or offensive behaviour or language with children
- fail to report information to police if I know a child has been abused

- touch children in a way that is unnecessary or unsuitable and falls outside what is reasonable in the context of Saltbush activities
- persistently criticise and/or denigrate a child
- deliberately prevent a child from forming friendships
- verbally assault a child or create a climate of fear
- offer children and young people alcohol, cigarettes, vapes or other drugs
- show children pornographic images
- share details of sexual experiences with a child
- use sexual language or gestures in the presence of children
- initiate unnecessary physical contact with children or do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves such as changing clothes
- develop 'special' relationships with specific children or show favouritism through the provision of gifts or unnecessary or unsuitable attention
- have unauthorised contact with children and young people online, on social media or by phone
- take photographs, screenshots or share images of children involved in activities that are not authorised by Saltbush, (Saltbush requires parents/guardians to provide permission for photos)
- be alone with a child when there is no professional reason for doing so
- engage in babysitting, mentoring and/or tutoring a child out of work hours (without managerial approval for this kind of secondary employment)
- enter changing facilities without first knocking
- enter a Saltbush house while occupied without being accompanied by a Saltbush staff member
- enter a Saltbush house while unoccupied without the permission of Saltbush staff

If I suspect that this Code of Conduct has been breached by another person in the organisation:

I WILL:

- act to prioritise the best interests of the child or children
- promptly take actions to ensure the child or children are safe
- as soon as possible report the incident or concerns using the Saltbush complaints process
- maintain the privacy of those involved, following Saltbush record keeping, privacy and information sharing guidelines.

Complaints about a breach of this Code of Conduct must be reported to our CEO, Rachel Connor or Board Chairperson, Phillip Steele.

Rachel can be contacted on 5983 1819 or via email: rachel@saltbushBB.org.au.

Phillip can be contacted on 0419 311 582 or email phillip.steele1@gmail.com.

Some breaches of this Child Safe Code of Conduct may need to be reported to the Victorian Police, or to the Commission for Children and Young People.

Staff and volunteers who breach or are suspected of breaching our Child Safe Code of Conduct may also be subject to disciplinary action. This can include internal or external investigation, increased supervision, appointment to an alternative role, suspension, or termination from the organisation. Detailed descriptions of breaches are found in our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy. This can be found by asking at the front desk.

PLEASE NOTE:

If any person in a position of authority within our organisation becomes aware of a substantial risk that a child may become the victim of a sexual offence committed by an adult associated with the organisation (for example, an employee, contractor, volunteer or guest), and they have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, then they must take all reasonable steps to do so. A person in authority who negligently fails to take appropriate action to address the risk may be charged with the criminal offence of 'failing to protect' and may face a term of imprisonment.

If an adult reasonably believes a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under the age of 16, they must report it to Victoria Police by calling 000 or going to their local police station. Failure to disclose the information may be a criminal offence.

I have read this Code of Conduct and agree to abide by its terms.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Next review date:

Responsible person: CEO, Saltbush, Balnarring Beach

To be filed under volunteer/staff/contractor compliance.