

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

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Acknowledgement

Juno acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land and waters upon which we work, the Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung people of the Kulin nation, and pay respect to their Elders, past and present.

We acknowledge that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have suffered immeasurable harm and ongoing trauma due to colonisation, including the forced removal of Aboriginal children from their families, country and culture. We recognise and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for their proud, strong and resilient cultures and histories from time immemorial through to the present.

Purpose

The Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy has been developed to demonstrate the strong commitment of Juno's board, staff and volunteers to ensuring child safety and wellbeing, and outlines how our organisation keeps children safe from harm and abuse.

Scope

This policy applies to all adults who access, engage with, or work for Juno. We take active steps to ensure that all adults within our organisation are made aware of their obligations in relation to our Child Safety and Wellbeing policy.

For the purpose of this policy the following definitions apply to staff and external visitors in order to identify the different expectations this policy has for all in scope:

- 'Staff' includes staff, students and volunteers.
- 'External visitors' includes Board members, consultants, contractors, partners, auditors, clients and community members attending our Juno offices.

Policy

Commitment to child safety

Juno is a Child Safe organisation. Everyone working at Juno is responsible for the care and protection of children and for reporting child abuse.

We have zero tolerance of child abuse and are committed to its prevention, increased awareness, and support for victim survivors of child abuse and neglect including victim survivors of historical abuse. Our approach to the safety and agency of children recognises that it is a community wide-responsibility and that all adults have a role to play in keeping children safe.

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We are committed to complying with all relevant child safe legislation and other laws with specific obligations around how we handle disclosures of abuse, deal with grooming behaviour, and protect children from abuse.

Juno is committed to promoting and protecting the best interests of children at all times. All children, regardless of their gender, race, religious beliefs, age, ability, sexual orientation, or family or social background, have equal rights to protection from abuse.

We are committed to:

- protecting the safety of children and eliminating risks that threaten child safety in our organisation
- actively working to listen to and empower children and recognise their agency
- promoting cultural safety of all children, including:
 - Aboriginal children,
 - children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
 - children with a disability
 - children who identify as LGBTQI+

Child safety is a shared responsibility between Juno, all employees, workers, contractors, associates, and members of the community in which we work.

Responsibility

It is the responsibility of all **those within scope** to ensure that:

- they abide by this policy
- they understand their legal, ethical and professional obligations in reference to child safe standards

It is the responsibility of all **team leaders, managers and the CEO** to ensure that:

- they provide a confidential reporting culture for suspected abuse and lead the reporting of all incidents
- staff are supported in the implementation of this policy and in the actions they must take in order to provide safe services to children
- those within scope are made aware of their obligations in relation to this policy and the child safe standards

It is the responsibility of the **CEO and Board members** to ensure:

- there are the systems and processes in place for monitoring compliance with child safe standards and relevant legislation
- Juno prioritises children’s safety and that action is taken when anyone raises concerns about children’s safety

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- they champion and model a child safe culture at Juno and encourage anyone involved in the organisation to report a child a safety concern
- they work to create a positive culture around reporting so that people feel comfortable to raise concerns

Definitions

Term	Definition
Child	A person 18 years or under
Staff	All staff, students and volunteers
External visitors	Board members, consultants, contractors, partners, auditors, clients and community members attending Juno offices
Child abuse	Child abuse is any action, or lack of action, that significantly harms the child's physical, psychological or emotional health and development
Child safety	In the context of the child safe standards, child safety means measures to protect children from abuse
Child safe organisation	In the context of the child safe standards, a child safe organisation is one that meets the child safe standards by proactively taking measures to protect children from abuse
Cultural Safety	Cultural safety is "an environment that is safe for people: where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their identity, of who they are and what they need. It is about shared respect, shared meaning, shared knowledge and experience, of learning, living and working together with dignity and truly listening." (Williams, R. 2008)
Cultural safety for Aboriginal children	For Aboriginal people cultural safety and security requires the creation of: "Environments of cultural resilience within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities...Cultural competency by those who engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities." (AHRC Social Justice Report 2011)
Cultural safety for children from diverse cultural, linguistic and faith backgrounds	Creating cultural safety for children from diverse cultural, linguistic and faith backgrounds means "an environment that is spiritually, socially and emotionally safe, as well as physically safe for children; where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their cultural or linguistic identity, of who they are and what they need.

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Term	Definition
Concerns and complaints	<p>A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction to Juno related to one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • our services or dealings with individuals • allegations of abuse or misconduct by a staff member, a volunteer or another individual associated with Juno • disclosures of abuse or harm made by a child or young person • the conduct of a child or young person at Juno • the inadequate handling of a prior concern • general concerns about the safety of a group of children or activity.
Safety screening	<p>Safety screening plays an important role in providing a safer service delivery for people who receive support from community services organisations. Safety screening incorporates referee checks, police record checks, identity checks, Working with Children Checks, employment history checks. It also includes disciplinary action disclosure and checks of qualifications and training.</p>
Failure to disclose	<p>Reporting child sexual abuse is a community-wide responsibility. 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 the police and DHHS Child Protection in line with Child Safety and Reporting Child Abuse Procedure</p>
Failure to protect	<p>Juno staff 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.</p>
Grooming offence	<p>The offence of grooming concerns predatory conduct undertaken to prepare a child for sexual activity at a later time. The offence applies where an adult communicates, by words or conduct, with a child under the age of 16 years or with a person who has care, supervision or authority for the child with the intention of facilitating the child's involvement in sexual conduct, either with the groomer or another adult.</p>
Physical violence	<p>Physical violence committed against, with or in the presence of a child can fall into two categories.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actual physical violence - a worker or volunteer intentionally or recklessly uses physical force against, with, or in the presence of a child without a lawful reason, which has the ability to cause injury or harm to the child. Actual physical violence can include hitting, punching, kicking, pushing or throwing something that strikes a child or another person.

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Term	Definition
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apprehended physical violence - a worker or volunteer intentionally or recklessly engages in conduct or behaviour against, with, or in the presence of a child that is capable of causing a child to think that physical force is about to be used against them or another person. This could include words, gestures or actions that cause a child to believe physical force is about to be used against them, regardless of whether or not the worker or volunteer actually intended that any physical force would be applied.
Reasonable Belief	<p>A reasonable belief is more than suspicion. There must be some objective basis for the belief. However, it is not the same as having proof and does not require certainty.</p> <p>For example, a person is likely to have a reasonable belief if they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> observed the conduct themselves heard directly from a child that the conduct occurred received information from another credible source (including another witness). <p>Heads of entity do not need to agree with or share the belief that the alleged conduct has occurred. However, they do not need to notify the Commission about the allegation if it is plainly wrong or has no basis at all in reality.</p>
Reportable Allegation	<p>A 'reportable allegation' means any information that leads a person to form a 'reasonable belief' that a person has committed reportable conduct.</p>
Reportable Conduct	<p>According to Information Sheet 2: What is reportable conduct under the Reportable Conduct Scheme? (CCYP), there are five types of 'reportable conduct' listed in the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> sexual offences (against, with or in the presence of, a child) sexual misconduct (against, with or in the presence of, a child) physical violence (against, with or in the presence of, a child) behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm significant neglect.
Serious neglect	<p>Significant neglect occurs when there is a significant, deliberate or reckless failure to meet the basic needs of a child in circumstances where the adult understood the needs of the child, or could have understood those needs if they had turned their mind to the question, and had the opportunity to meet those needs but failed to do so.</p> <p>Examples of different types of neglect could include:</p>

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Term	Definition
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervisory neglect: This may occur when a person responsible for the care of a child is unable or unwilling to exercise adequate supervision or control of the child or young person or fails to seek or comply with appropriate medical treatment. Physical neglect: This may occur where there is the failure to meet a child's physical needs including provision of adequate and appropriate food, clothing, shelter or physical hygiene needs. Educational neglect: This may occur when there is a failure to ensure that a child's formal education needs are being met. Emotional neglect: This may occur where there is a failure to provide adequate nurturing, affection encouragement and support to a child.
Sexual misconduct (against, with or in the presence of, a child)	<p>'Sexual misconduct' captures a broader range of inappropriate behaviours of a sexual nature that are not necessarily criminal. Sexual misconduct refers to conduct that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> amounts to misconduct is of a sexual nature, and occurred against, with, or in the presence of, a child. <p>Please refer to Information Sheet 9 – Sexual misconduct for further guidance</p>
Sexual offence	<p>In Victoria, it is an offence to engage in certain sexual behaviours against, with or in front of, a child. Many of these behaviours are reportable conduct under the Reportable Conduct Scheme.</p> <p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sexual assault indecent acts possession of child abuse material 'grooming' a child in order to commit a sexual offence. <p>A full list of the relevant sexual offences is set out in clause 1 of Schedule 1 to the Sentencing Act 1991.</p> <p>A worker or volunteer does not need to be charged with, or found guilty of, a sexual offence for their behaviour to be reportable conduct.</p>
'Significant' neglect	Neglect will be significant where there has been a deliberate or reckless omission or omissions that separately or together have had, or could have, considerable force or effect on the safety or wellbeing of the child who is the

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	victim of the neglect. For detailed guidance on significant neglect together with some practical examples, please refer to Information Sheet 11 .

Implementing the Victorian Child Safe Standards

Listed below are the actions and activities Juno will undertake to ensure we are a child safe organisation.

Cultural Safety for Aboriginal Children

Standard 1: Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued

Juno is committed to creating environments where Aboriginal culture is celebrated and Aboriginal children, families and community members are welcomed and included. Strategies to embed cultural safety for Aboriginal children include:

- Acknowledgment of Country at all events and meetings
- Displaying signage acknowledging country in our offices
- Providing training for staff and volunteers on the strengths of Aboriginal culture and its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children
- Celebrating NAIDOC Week and acknowledging significant events including National Sorry Day and National Reconciliation Week

A commitment to child safety and wellbeing

Standard 2: Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture

Juno is committed to protecting the safety of children and eliminating risks that threaten child safety in our organisation, acting in children’s best interests and keeping them safe, and actively seeking to empower children.

Juno will:

- Create and maintain a child-safe and child-friendly environment and culture throughout the organisation.
- Have systems and processes in place for monitoring compliance with child safe standards and relevant legislation.
- Regularly review policies and procedures to ensure they are compliant with relevant legislative requirements

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- Ensure all staff, board members and volunteers act in accordance with our Code of Conduct
- Provide introduction to child safe standard training to all staff and volunteers

Taking child participation and empowerment seriously

Standard 3: Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously

Juno respects the rights and agency of children to participate in decision that affect them.

Juno will:

- Provide children with information about their rights in accessible formats
- Perform risk assessments with children coming into our service
- Partner with other services to promote the rights and agency of children

Involving families and communities

Standard 4: Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing

Juno is committed to promoting and protecting the best interests of children that come into contact with Juno at all times. Juno will:

- ensure service users, particularly those families with children are well informed of our commitment to Child Safety through the provision of verbal information and brochures specific to our work with children
- include the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Code of Conduct on our website
- publish the statement of commitment on our website
- ensure all staff, board members and volunteers act in accordance with our Code of Conduct
- ensure all service provision information is in written in clear easy to understand language

Respecting equity and diversity

Standard 5: Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice

As a child safe organisation, we celebrate the rich diversity of the women and non-binary people and their children we support and promote respectful environments that are free from discrimination.

We recognise that every child has unique skills, strengths, and experiences to draw on. We pay particular attention to individuals and groups of children and young people in

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our community with additional and specific needs. This includes tailoring our child safety strategies and supports to the needs of:

- Aboriginal children and young people
- children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- children and young people with disabilities
- children impacted by family violence
- children and young people who identify as LGBTIQ+

We have zero tolerance of racism and other forms of discrimination and take action when discrimination or exclusion is identified.

Juno works to ensure that culturally and/or linguistically diverse children and their families receive information in a culturally sensitive, relevant and accessible manner, including in relevant community languages.

- Providing access to translated information.
- Displaying child friendly information in our offices
- Providing an information pack regarding our services to clients and their children on intake with relevant, accessible language

Ensuring staff are suitable and supported

Standard 6: People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice

We require staff to have appropriate qualifications for their roles and check to make sure these qualifications are valid. Members of the Board must hold a valid Working with Children Check and a national Police Check is required.

Juno undertakes a comprehensive recruitment and screening process for all workers (employees and contractors), Board members and volunteers which aims to:

- Promote and protect the safety of all children under the care of the organisation
- Identify the safest and most suitable people who share Juno's values and commitment to protect children, and
- Prevent a person from working at Juno if they pose a risk to children.
- Juno requires all workers/volunteers to pass through the organisation's recruitment and screening processes prior to commencing their engagement with Juno.

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- Juno requires applicants to provide a national police check in accordance with the law and as appropriate before they commence working at Juno and during their time with Juno at regular intervals.
- Juno requires applicants to provide a current Working with Children Check prior to commencement of work
- Juno will undertake thorough reference checks as per the approved internal procedure.
- Once engaged, workers/volunteers must review and acknowledge their understanding of this Policy and the Child Safety, Reporting Child Abuse Procedure and Code of Conduct
- Introduction to child safe standard training is mandatory for all staff and volunteers

Complaints and reporting

Standard 7: Process for complaints and concerns are child focused

All reports of child abuse and child safety concerns will be treated seriously, whether they are made by an adult or a child and whether they are about the conduct of an adult or a child. All complaints and child safety concerns will be responded to promptly and thoroughly.

Juno will:

- Ensure all **staff**:
 - receive training relevant to their role to enable them to identify, assess and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse
 - are aware of their responsibilities to report allegations of abuse where they have reasonable belief that an incident has taken place
 - are encouraged to build their skills and practices to increase their confidence in discussing allegations of child abuse or raising child safety concerns
 - where relevant, receive supervision that attends to and reflects on their role in protecting children from abuse
 - are aware of and check that their own behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate, and
 - deal appropriately with all allegations.

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- Ensure all **external visitors**, where relevant, are made aware of their responsibilities regarding this policy and their responsibility to report allegations of abuse where they have a reasonable belief that an incident has taken place.
- Report in a thorough and timely way all allegations of abuse and safety concerns using formats and templates as required by the Department of Health and Human Services and conduct relevant and timely investigations. Ensure all alleged criminal acts that occur during service delivery e.g. client work, project work, community development activities are reported to the police as soon as practicable. Provide updates to children and families on the progress of investigations and actions taken as a result of allegations of abuse or safety concerns raised. Store securely all records of reported incidents related to child safety.

If there is concern for the immediate safety of a child, immediately call 000.

Staff knowledge, skills and awareness

Standard 8: Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training

Juno is committed to ensuring that all board, staff and volunteers receive training to ensure they understand their responsibilities in relation to child safety and to support their engagement with children. Juno assists its board, staff and volunteers to incorporate child safety considerations into decisions and to promote a safe environment where children are empowered to speak up about issues that affect them.

Juno achieves this by ensuring

- This policy and the Child Safety, Reporting Child Abuse Procedure is available to all staff on our Resources and included in the induction process
- Staff/volunteers must review and acknowledge their understanding of this Policy and the Child Safety, Reporting Child Abuse Procedure and Code of Conduct
- Introduction to child safe standards training is mandatory for all staff and volunteers and training is recorded in the Staff Development Plan & Training Records
- Staff Development Plan & Training Records are audited quarterly to ensure all staff have completed mandatory training in the timeframe required
- Staff and volunteers will receive supervision to support their engagement with children and for compliance with our Code of Conduct and Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

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- Issues or concerns about behaviour with children will be raised immediately and addressed in line with our Code of Conduct, complaint handling policy and Performance Management and Discipline Policy

Safe physical and online environments

Standard 9: Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed

Juno will ensure that child safety is a part of its overall risk management approach. The Juno Board of management has a risk and compliance sub-committee committed to identifying and managing risks at Juno.

Juno will:

- Ensure Risk and compliance sub-committee members receive training in relation to child safety.
- Apply risk management strategies to identify, assess and minimise child abuse risks, including risks posed by the physical and online environments.
- The Juno Risk Register is regularly reviewed by the Board of Management
- A risk assessment and management plan for the physical environment for the Juno office has been undertaken and will be reviewed annually (*source ccyp.vic.gov.au/resources*)
- A risk assessment and management plan will be undertaken prior to Juno events where children and young people will be in attendance
- Ensure all children, clients and staff know what to do and who to tell if they observe abuse, are a victim of abuse and/or notice inappropriate behaviour.
- Implement best practice safety screening in all recruitment and selection processes to ensure that Board members staff and volunteers recruited have the appropriate registrations including national police and Working With Children checks.

Review child safe policies and practices

Standard 10: Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved

All reports of child abuse and child safety concerns will be treated seriously, whether they are made by an adult or a child and whether they are about the conduct of an adult or a child. All complaints and child safety concerns will be responded to promptly and thoroughly.

Juno will:

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- Follow the Child safety and reporting child abuse procedure that includes information for staff and volunteers about how a complaint of child safety concern will be responded to
- Ensure all policies regularly reviewed and updated in accordance with the policy and procedure review cycle. Policy reviews are undertaken by the Board of Management in consultation with Juno CEO.
- All procedures are reviewed in line with the policy and procedure review cycle by the Juno Leadership team or if there is a change to relevant legislation or regulations prior to the review date.
- Implementation of the child safe standards will be monitored as part of Juno’s overall Quality and Compliance Framework

Documenting policies and procedures

Standard 11 Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people

Juno has comprehensive policies and procedures in place demonstrating our commitment to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children we come into contact with as part of our work including

- Child Safety and Reporting Child abuse procedure
- Code of Conduct
- Complaints, Compliments and Feedback policy
- Complaints and Feedback procedure
- Risk assessment and management plans
- Recruitment and Orientation policy
- Record Management Policy
- Incident Reporting Policy
- Incident reporting and investigation procedure
- DFFH Critical Incident Management System (CIMS) frameworks.

Related Documents

- Code of Conduct
- Child Safety and Reporting Child abuse procedure
- Performance Management and Staff Discipline Policy

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- Risk Management Policy and Framework
- Governance Framework Policy
- Recruitment & Orientation Policy
- Professional Excellence Policy
- Complaints, Compliments & Feedback Policy
- Complaints and Feedback Procedure
- Performance Management and Discipline Policy
- Incident reporting and investigation procedure
- Privacy & Confidentiality Agreement
- Protecting your right to privacy and confidentiality brochure

Legislative Context

- Child Wellbeing and Safety (Child Safe Standards Compliance and Enforcement) Amendment Act 2021
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safety Standards) Act 2015
- Crimes Act 1958
- [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.](#)
- [Reportable Conduct Scheme](#)

Privacy and Information Sharing

Juno collects and securely stores personal information about our clients and supporters for the purposes of conducting usual activities and operations. Information about how Juno collects and stores personal information can be obtained in the Protecting your right to Privacy and Confidentiality brochure and the Juno Privacy Policy

Records Management

All records are stored securely and kept in accordance with the Retention and disposal Authorities (RDAs) for funded organisations.

Policy Review and Authorisation

This policy will be reviewed every two years, following significant incidents if they occur, or as required from time to time. The CEO is responsible for reviewing the policy and the Board are responsible for authorising this policy.

The Juno Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy is available at juno.org.au

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