

Child Safe Behaviour Code of Conduct





These guidelines apply to all employees of Autism Partnership

Autism Partnership (AP) is committed to ensuring that children feel safe and are safe. That they are safeguarded from sexual, physical, emotional or psychological abuse, exposure to violence, harm and neglect. Autism Partnership encourages a culture where the prevention and reporting of abuse is supported and encouraged.

This Child Safe Behaviour Code of Conduct aims to set expectations for how adults in our organisation behave, protect children, reduce any opportunities for child abuse or harm to occur and to assist in understanding how to avoid or better manage behaviours and situations that may place staff at risk of allegations of harm.



What is expected of us

To support your journey with Autism Partnership we ask that you:

- **READ & REVIEW THIS DOCUMENT.**
Please read this booklet to familiarise yourself with its content. If there is something you are unclear about, it is important that you seek clarification from your manager
- **UNDERSTAND IT.**
It is important you understand the principles in this document, so that you can comply with the expectations on you to perform your role within AP

- **FOLLOW IT.**
It is your responsibility to always abide by the Child Safe Behaviour Code of Conduct and AP's supporting policies and procedures.

AP is a great place to work when we all understand what informs "how we do what we do," and appreciate that our individual commitment to these principles, is greatly valued.



Definitions



CHILDREN / STUDENTS

Refers to children and young people under the age of 18.

STAFF

Employees, contractors and volunteers engaged in child related work as well as business owners and managers, or anyone in a position of leadership.

CHILD ABUSE

Physical abuse: the intentional or reckless force against a child that results in harm to the child's health, development or dignity, or which has a high likelihood of resulting in such harm. It may also include the threat of abuse where the child reasonably fears it may occur.

Sexual abuse: any act which exposes a child to, or involves a child in, sexual processes beyond his/her/their understanding or contrary to accepted community standards. This can include both sexual offences (a child-related criminal offence of a sexual nature) as well as sexual misconduct (conduct with, towards or in the presence of a child that is sexual in nature but is not a sexual offence).

Emotional abuse: behaviour towards a child that is likely to damage a child's self esteem or social competence.

NEGLECT

Behaviour by a person responsible for the care of a child (such as a parent, carer or staff member if the child is in their care) that constitutes a failure to act in ways consistent with accepted community standards about what is necessary to meet the developmental needs of a child.

GROOMING BEHAVIOURS

Behaviours intended to manipulate and control a child, their family and other support networks (including organisations and the community), with the intent of gaining access to the child, and obtaining their compliance and silence in order to avoid abuse being discovered.



Responsibilities



Autism Partnership provides places of learning and care for children and young people and requires that the rights of each child and young person must always be considered first and foremost.

All adults are expected to follow the principles of:

- Safety - Comply with all Autism Partnership policies.
- Ethics - Act ethically at all times
- Support - Work in a co-operative manner.
- Communication - Use courteous and acceptable verbal and non-verbal language. Avoid the use of profane, insulting, harassing, aggressive or otherwise offensive language.
- Respect - Value diversity and refrain from all actions and behaviours that constitute harassment or discrimination.
- Confidentiality - Keep information relating to children and families confidential.

In relation to children, all adults are required to:

- Be a positive role model at all times.
- Always speak in an encouraging and positive manner.
- Listen actively to children and offer empathy, support and guidance where needed.
- Regard all children equally and with respect and dignity.
- Support children to be able to take care of their own personal needs.

In relation to others (including staff, parents and visitors), adults are required to:

- Use respectful, encouraging and accepting language.
- Respect the rights and dignity of others as individuals.
- Give encouraging and constructive feedback.
- Deal with ethical issues in ways that reflect Autism Partnership's values and standards
- Refrain from public comment regarding children and adults involved with Autism Partnership programs (past and present).
- Any issues or grievances should be directed to the Site Manager or as outlined in the [Complaints Handling Policy & Procedure](#).
- Under no circumstances should a child, parent or member of staff be approached in a confrontational manner regarding an issue or grievance.





Acceptable Behaviours

As staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the Autism Partnership community involved in child-related work individually, we are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:

- Upholding Autism Partnership's [statement of commitment to child safety](#) at all times and adhering to the Autism Partnership [Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy](#)
- Treating children and families in the Autism Partnership community with respect
- Listening and responding to the views and concerns of children
- Listen and respond if they are telling you (or indicating) that they or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child
- Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children
- Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability
- Reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the Site Manager
- Understanding and complying with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including the [Child Safeguarding Protection & Mandatory Reporting Policy](#)) as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse.
- If child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the child/children are safe and protected from harm.



AP is dedicated to doing what is best for children and young people. We are committed to providing our children and young people with a safe environment where their rights, needs and interests are met. We work to create a culture, adopt strategies and take action to promote child wellbeing and prevent harm to children and young people.



As a team, we have a responsibility to understand the important and specific role we play, individually and collectively, to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children is at the forefront of every decision that we make.

Unacceptable Behaviours

As staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the Autism Partnership community involved in child-related work:

- Do not ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse
- Do not develop a relationship with any child that could be seen as favouritism or amount to 'grooming' behaviour (for example, offering gifts)
- Do not exhibit behaviours or engage in activities with children which may be interpreted as abusive.
- Do not ignore behaviours by other adults towards children when they appear to be overly familiar or inappropriate
- Do not discuss content of an intimate nature or use sexual innuendo with children, except where it occurs relevantly in the context of parental guidance, delivering the education curriculum or the therapeutic setting
- Do not be alone with a child when there is no professional reason for doing so
- Do not treat a child unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity
- Do not communicate directly with a child or family through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, email, instant messaging, texting, etc.) except where that communication is reasonable in all the circumstances where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter
- Do not babysit, mentor and/or tutor a child out of work hours (without Autism Partnership Director approval for this kind of secondary employment)
- Do not photograph or video a child in any Autism Partnership environment except in accordance with Autism Partnership policy or where required for duty of care purposes
- In the Autism Partnership environment where children are present, do not consume alcohol contrary to Autism Partnership policy or take illicit drugs under any circumstances.



Procedures

Autism Partnership employees will promote the health and well-being of all children and will strive to:

- Create and maintain safe and healthy environments for children.
- Foster all facets of children's development in the context of the child, their family and their community.
- Enhance each child's feelings of competence, independence and self esteem.
- Act as an advocate on behalf of all children for policies, programmes and services that impact on their health and well-being.
- Act promptly in situations where the wellbeing of the child is compromised.
- Enable children to participate to their full potential in environments that are carefully planned to serve individual needs and to facilitate the child's progress in the social, emotional, physical and cognitive areas of development.
- Consider the children's cultural and social environments when planning.
- Apply the knowledge of stages of physical, social, emotional, moral and cognitive development of each child.

We will demonstrate our care for all children in all aspects of our practice by:

- Responding appropriately to each child's expression of wants and needs.
 - Providing children with experiences that build trust.
 - Expressing warmth, appropriate affection, consideration and acceptance for children both verbally and non-verbally.
 - Communicating to children a genuine interest in their activities, ideas, opinions and concerns.
 - Supporting children as they experience different emotions
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We will work in partnership with parents; recognise that parents have primary responsibility for the care of their children, value their commitment to their children and support them in their parenting. We will do this by:

- Promoting considerate relationships with parents.
- Respecting the rights of parents to transmit their values, beliefs and cultural traditions to their children.
- Supporting parents with knowledge, skills and resources that will enhance their ability to care for their children.
- Supporting families in obtaining support from other agencies / professionals.
- Providing programmes and environments that meet both child and family needs.

We will work in ways that enhance human dignity in trusting, caring and cooperative relationships:

- Communicate respect by practising and promoting anti-biased interactions.
- Plan inclusive programmes that communicate respect for diversity regarding ability, culture, gender, socio-economic status, sexual orientation and family composition.

We will comply with the policy for dealing with a breach in the code of conduct:

- An alleged breach of the code of conduct will be reported to the Site Manager
- The Site Manager and Human Resources Manager will recommend a course of action that may include immediate dismissal



Reporting Obligations



All staff, volunteers, families and community members are encouraged to speak up if they have any concerns about the safety of children. Complaints about a breach of Autism Partnership's Child Safe Behaviour Standards and Code of Conduct must be reported.

→ [Complaints Handling Policy & Procedure](#)

→ [Child Safeguarding, Protection & Mandatory Reporting Policy](#)

→ [Child Safety Reporting Process - Flowchart](#)

Staff and volunteers who breach our Child Safe Behaviour Code of Conduct may also be subject to disciplinary action, This can include increased supervision, suspension or termination from the organisation.



An adult in child-related work in an organisation will commit an offence if they know another adult there poses a serious risk of abusing a child (under 18 years), and they have the power to reduce or remove the risk, and they negligently fail to do so.

All adults are required to report information to police if they know, believe or reasonably ought to know that a child (under 18 years) has been abused.