



# CHILD SAFETY POLICY

## 1. OVERVIEW

The Embrace Collective (TEC) helps children and young people learn how to embrace their bodies through 'Embrace Kids'. Embrace Kids includes classroom programs, educator resources, community sport guides, the 'Embrace Kids' film and Activate Events. Events, programs and activities that are directed to and involve children and young people must be delivered in child safe environments.

## 2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to enable TEC to operate events, programs and activities in a child safe way in line with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, state and territory Child Safe Standards and related legislation. This policy describes how the principles are implemented and TEC's child safe practices.

## 3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all TEC directors, employees, contractors (including subcontractors), agents and volunteers who as part of their involvement may interact with children (legally defined as individuals under the age of 18). TEC prefers to refer to children between the ages of 12-18 years as "young people", so throughout this document we use "children and young people". This policy applies to all events, programs and activities that are directed to or involve children and young people. This includes, but is not limited to, events and activities organised for children and young people, youth advisory groups, on-line and in person interaction, filming, photography or content creation with children and young people.

## 4. OUR COMMITMENT TO THE SAFETY OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The Embrace Collective focuses on improving body appreciation and reducing stigma, judgement and discrimination on the basis of appearance. We seek to reduce the sociocultural risk factors for body dissatisfaction and to promote protective factors. We aim to help people of all ages learn the importance of moving, fueling, appreciating and being kind to their body. The Embrace Collective is committed to achieving our mission and engaging our audiences in environments that are child-safe

We are committed to promoting and protecting the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people who participate in events and activities through The Embrace Collective. All children and young people, regardless of their appearance, gender, race, religious beliefs, age, disability, sexual orientation, or family or social background, have the right to feel safe and be free from any harm or abuse. The Embrace Collective fosters a culturally safe environment where children and young people can feel safe, welcome and empowered.

The Embrace Collective supports the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework and implements the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

As part of The Embrace Collective's commitment to the safety of children and young people, The Embrace Collective:

- has zero tolerance for child harm and abuse in any and all forms.
- will seek to provide an environment in which all children and young people feel safe, supported and respected.
- will ensure that all children and young people feel welcome and can participate in activities and programs by recognising and taking into account their diverse needs and celebrating the uniqueness of each other and themselves.
- will seek to empower children and young people through our education programs and activities that build confidence and encourage them to create change in school, sport, peer and online settings.

- takes seriously all concerns or allegations or suspicions raised in relation to child harm/abuse or any inappropriate behaviour (as defined in the Child Safe Code of Conduct) towards a child or young person
- will ensure that any concerns or allegations are responded to by following our policies, procedures and relevant legislation, including reporting to the police all instances in which a breach of the law has or may have occurred.
- are committed to regularly training and educating all executive directors, staff, program facilitators and volunteers on their child safe responsibilities, and ensuring Child-Related Personnel are aware of and implement all of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, The Embrace Collective Risk Management strategy and relevant legislation relating to working with children checks, and the reporting of suspected child harm, abuse or neglect.

## 5. DEFINITIONS

<b>Abuse/Child Abuse</b>	Abuse against a child or young person such as physical abuse, psychological abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect. Refer also to expanded definitions of abuse appended to this Policy. See Appendix A for specific definitions of the forms of abuse.
<b>Allegation</b>	When someone accuses another person of having committed abuse or harm to a child or young person.
<b>Child / children or young person / people</b>	Where this Policy speaks about child / children, this refers to anyone under the age of 18 and includes young people. The words young person or young people refer to people aged 12 years and over, but under the age of 18 years.
<b>Child-Related events, programs and activities</b>	Events, programs or activities undertaken by TEC that are directed to, involve or make contact with children or young people under the age of 18.
<b>Child-Related Personnel</b>	Child-Related Personnel means directors, employees, contractors (including subcontractors), agents and volunteers of TEC who as part of their involvement may have face to face or online interaction with children and young people.
<b>Complaint</b>	A complaint can include expressions of dissatisfaction related to TEC's services, dealings with individuals, allegations about the conduct of personnel, volunteers or other individuals engaged by TEC, another child or young person, or the handling of a prior concern.
<b>Concern</b>	When someone has a concern about the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person, or about the misconduct of another person.
<b>Cultural Safety</b>	Cultural Safety is an environment where individuals can express their identity in the form they choose without any concerns. Having a culturally safe space acknowledges differences and similarities across cultural values, spiritual connections, family networks, community dynamics and enables shared respect for all individuals.
<b>Disclosure</b>	When a person discloses abuse or harm either directly (telling someone) or indirectly (through pictures, drawings, questions).
<b>Harm</b>	Any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the person's physical, psychological, or emotional well-being.
<b>Mandatory reporting</b>	Mandatory reporting is the legal requirement for certain professional groups to report a reasonable belief of child harm or abuse or neglect to Child Protection Authorities.
<b>Misconduct</b>	Unacceptable behaviour with, towards, about or in the presence of a child or young person.
<b>The Embrace Collective/TEC</b>	The Embrace Collective (ABN 65 640 902 843).
<b>The Embrace Collective Team/TEC Team</b>	All board members, directors, staff, volunteers and contractors acting on behalf of TEC
<b>Inclusion</b>	Providing equal access and support regardless of a person's personal characteristics, gender, ability, race, sexuality, or religion.
<b>Individual Contractor</b>	Individual contractors who have direct interaction or face to face contact with children and young people (e.g. program facilitators, activity supervisors, photographer, videographer, production teams and similar roles).
<b>Risk of Significant Harm</b>	Risk that a child or young person may experience or be experiencing harm that is significant, is not minor or trivial and may reasonably be expected to produce a substantial and adverse impact on the child or young person's safety, welfare or wellbeing, or in the case of an unborn child, after the child's birth. The significance can result from a single act or omission or an accumulation of these.
<b>Third Party Organisations</b>	Corporate contractors who provide services that include face to face contact with children and young people (e.g. venues, facilitation companies, production companies and similar organisations).
<b>Other Contractors present at events</b>	Contractors who are present as part of a child - related events and will have no or only very incidental contact with children and young people (e.g. catering or service vendors)

## 6. RESPONSIBILITY

The safety and wellbeing of children and young people is the shared responsibility of everyone involved with TEC. In addition, there are specific responsibilities which apply to key organisational roles:

### Board

- Endorse policies and procedures relating to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.
- Promote TEC's commitment to the safety of children and young people as set out in this policy.
- Ensure adequate resources are allocated to allow for the effective implementation of this policy and other related policies and procedures.
- Exercise due diligence to ensure that those responsible comply with their duties or obligations under relevant legislation.
- Support review of this policy and other related policies and procedures on a regular basis.
- Assist in creating and maintaining a culture within TEC that is child safe, culturally safe and inclusive.
- Conduct themselves in line with TEC's Child Safe Code of Conduct.

### Executive Directors

- Ensure all staff, volunteers and contractors engaged by TEC understand their obligations under this Policy and other related policies and procedures.
- Oversee the implementation of this policy by all TEC staff, volunteers and contractors.
- Ensure adequate resources are allocated to allow for the effective implementation of this policy and other related policies and procedures.
- Assist in creating and maintaining a culture within TEC that is child safe, culturally safe and inclusive.
- Prioritise the safety of children and young people in strategic and operational decision making.
- Report any suspicion of, complaint, incident, abuse or misconduct, or potential breaches of this policy or TEC Child Safe Code of Conduct to the Statutory Child Protection Authority in the state you are in. After meeting your legal obligations, you are required to report to the Child Safety Officer.
- Ensure all staff, volunteers and contractors who they oversee undergo initial and ongoing training as required for their specific role and level of responsibility.
- Conduct themselves in line with TEC's Child Safe Code of Conduct.

### Child Safety Officer

- Ensure all Child-Related Personnel have been properly screened and selected using approved processes, before being permitted to work with children and young people.
- Ensure all Child-Related personnel hold a valid Working With Children Check (or Vulnerable People Check in TAS or ACT) for the state or territory where they reside, and link/register the checks to TEC through the relevant state or territory Working With Children Check body.
- Assess and action if any additional interstate Working with Children Checks are required prior to staff travel for interstate events.
- Ensure all staff have completed Child Safety training relevant to their role.
- Maintain records of Working With Children Checks, Child Safety training and signed TEC Child Safe Code of Conduct documents.
- Receive, respond to and report on any suspicion of, or complaints, incidents, abuse or misconduct, or potential breaches of this policy or TEC Child Safe Code of Conduct.
- Provide support to any person who raises a concern, complaint or makes a report in relation to the safety of a child or young person.
- Conduct themselves in line with TEC's Child Safe Code of Conduct.

### Child Related Personnel managing child-related events, programs and activities

- Prioritise the safety of children and young people in strategic and operational decision making.
- Ensure staff, volunteers and contractors engaged by TEC have adequate resources and processes to eliminate or minimise risks of child abuse and harm.
- Ensure communication channels for reporting child safety and wellbeing concerns are established and remain clear.
- Ensure all staff, volunteers and contractors who they oversee undergo initial and ongoing training as required for their specific role and level of responsibility.
- Monitor all staff, volunteers and contractors who they oversee, and report to the Child Safety Officer on any suspicion of, or complaints, incidents, or potential breaches in policy.
- Identify risks associated with the protection of children and young people and implement strategies to reduce these risks.
- Report any suspicion of, complaint, incident, abuse or misconduct, or potential breaches of this policy or TEC Child Safe Code of Conduct to the Statutory Child Protection Authority in your state/territory. After you have made a mandatory report you are required to report this to the Child Safety Officer and other relevant authorities if required.
- Conduct themselves in line with TEC's Child Safe Code of Conduct.

### Program Facilitators (TEC staff only)

- Maintain a full understanding of the commitments and expectations in relation to the safety of children and young people as set out in this policy, TEC's Child Safe Code of Conduct and other related policies and procedures.
- Facilitate TEC programs in line with training, policy, procedures and TEC Child Safe Code of Conduct.
- Undertake any required induction and training relevant to the safety of children and young people.
- Seek guidance from their oversight if there is a lack of understanding in relation to the commitments and expectations as set out in this policy and other related policies and procedures.
- Take the appropriate action to protect children and young people from all forms of child abuse and all forms of inappropriate behaviour (as defined in the Child Safe Code of Conduct).
- Assist in creating and maintaining a culture within TEC that is child safe, culturally safe and inclusive.
- Report any suspicion of, complaint, incident, abuse or misconduct, or potential breaches of this policy or TEC Child Safe Code of Conduct to the Statutory Child Protection Authority in your state / territory. After you have made a mandatory report you are required to report this to the Child Safety Officer.
- Co-operate with any reasonable policy, procedure or instruction of their oversight relating to child safety.
- Conduct themselves in line with TEC's Child Safe Code of Conduct.

### All staff and volunteers

- Undertake any required induction and training relevant to the safety of children and young people.
- Prior to undertaking any child-related event, program or activity, ensure it will be operated in a child safe manner in line with this policy and TEC's Child Safe Code of Conduct.
- Seek guidance from their oversight if there is a lack of understanding in relation to the commitments and expectations as set out in this policy and other related policies and procedures.
- Take the appropriate action to protect children and young people from all forms of child abuse and all forms of inappropriate behaviour.
- Assist in creating and maintaining a culture within TEC that is child safe, culturally safe and inclusive.
- Report any suspicion of, complaint, incident, abuse or misconduct, or potential breaches of this policy or TEC Child Safe Code of Conduct to the Statutory Child Protection Authority in your state / territory. After you have made a mandatory report you are required to report this to the Child Safety Officer.
- Co-operate with any reasonable policy, procedure or instruction of their oversight relating to child safety.
- Conduct themselves in line with TEC's Child Safe Code of Conduct.

## 7. LEGAL AND REGULATORY RESPONSIBILITIES

**Duty of care:** A duty of care is a common law obligation to take reasonable steps to avoid foreseeable harm to another person or their property. In a child safety sense, TEC will take all reasonable steps to prevent harm and minimise the risk of harm to those who are part of its events, programs and activities.

**Mandatory reporting:** Mandatory reporting legislation is State and Territory based and contains a list of people whose occupational roles are mandated to report cases of suspected child harm, abuse or neglect. For each State and Territory, apart from the Northern Territory (NT), this is a list of occupations. The occupations commonly mandated to report are those who are likely to interact with children in the course of their work; for example, teachers and early childhood educators, welfare practitioners, medical practitioners, police and religious ministers. In the NT all adults, regardless of occupation, are mandated to report.

We have assessed that in their roles with TEC, staff and volunteers are not deemed Mandatory Reporters. They may hold other roles outside of TEC such as in healthcare, education which do deem them mandatory reporters. Whilst TEC staff and volunteers may not be required to report in some States and Territories we will always report where possible or ensure concerns are referred to relevant school contact persons where students are taking part in TEC events, programs or services.

**Failure to report:** In most States and Territories, Failure to Report legislation requires all adults to report information to police if they know, believe or reasonably ought to know that a child has been sexually abused. This means all adults have the responsibility to report sexual offences against children to police - unless they have a reasonable excuse not to, for example you fear for your safety, or the safety of another person, or you believe the information has already been reported to the police. Failing to report information to police without a reasonable excuse is an offence punishable by imprisonment. All TEC staff, volunteers and contractors need to report to police if they have seen or heard something that has led them to form a 'reasonable belief' that an adult has sexually abused a child.

**Failure to protect:** In most States and Territories Failure to Protect legislation states that it is an offence to fail to protect a child from a sexual offence in an institutional setting. This means a person who has power or responsibility to do so, must reduce or remove the risk that a child will become the victim of a sexual offence by an adult associated with an institution.

**National Principles for Child Safe Organisations:** TEC implements the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and recognises that our work spans multiple Australian states and territories where state based Child Safe Standards legislation is in place, which is aligned with the National Principles.

**Working with Children Checks:** TEC will comply with all Relevant Legislation relating to requirements for working with Children, including Working With Children Checks (WWCC). All staff and other child-related personnel including contractors, will hold a valid working with children check for the state in which they are based and TEC will conduct an assessment of specific state or territory requirements to hold WWCCs for interstate events, programs or activities.

**Child Employment Regulations** - In some States and Territories regulations apply for employing children and young people in entertainment services, acting or modelling. Regulations cover permits, work hours, rest breaks, and code of practice to ensure a safe environment. TEC will conduct an assessment prior to casting children or young people in acting, filming or photo shoots and ensure regulations are followed.

## 8. RISK MANAGEMENT

8.1 TEC seeks to deliver events, programs and activities in safe physical and online environments that minimise or eliminate the risk of harm to children and young people. TEC's Risk Management Strategy and related risk assessments will identify risks to the safety of children and young people and describe how these risks will be managed. The Risk Management strategy will be reviewed and updated annually or more often if there is a significant change in the type of events, programs or activities being undertaken, or in response to incidents.

8.2 A risk assessment should be undertaken in advance of the provision of any TEC events, activities or programs involving children or young people.

8.3 The risk assessment must identify potential risks to the safety of children and young people and the proposed control measures to be implemented to manage those risks.



8.4 Schools or community groups bringing children or young people to participate in TEC events will be responsible for all parent/guardian consent, transport and supervision. TEC is responsible for the design, location and co-ordination of the event program and content, including hosting workshops. TEC will supply schools and community partners with information about the event and program content so parents and carers can be informed and aware.

8.5 TEC team and Program Facilitators hosting workshop activities for children and young people will do so in line with this policy, TEC's Child Safe Code of Conduct and TEC's event risk assessments.

8.6 Where TEC is unable to provide appropriate supervision during workshop activities, schools or community groups bringing students will be asked to provide additional staff to supervise children during these sessions.

8.7 Children and young people participating in community events, film or product launches who attend with their parent or guardian will remain in the care of their parent or guardian for the duration of the event.

8.8 Children and young people participating in other activities such as filming, photography, content creation or youth advisory meetings will be supervised by appropriate TEC staff or contractors in line with TEC's Child Safe Code of Conduct. TEC will be responsible for obtaining parent/guardian consent, providing a safe environment for children and young people including drop off and pick up arrangements, access to bathrooms and changing areas, rest breaks and refreshments. Prior to employing children and young people in entertainment services, acting or modelling, TEC will assess the activity and ensure it complies with relevant State-based regulations.

8.9 TEC will ensure that involving children and young people in filming, photography, content creation or advisory meetings will not expose them to inappropriate content, conversations of a sexually explicit nature, or have a negative effect on their safety or wellbeing. Age-appropriate discussion in a group setting about issues of gender and body image may be general in nature.

8.10 Parent/Guardian consent must be obtained to take and use images or video of children and young people participating in TEC events, activities or programs.

8.11 Images and video must only be taken and used for the purpose of promotion, social media and educational purposes by TEC, related entities and program sponsors.

8.12 Photos, videos and/or captions should not include the child or young person's personal details such as full name, address, phone number, or the name of the school they attend as this may pose a risk to their safety.

8.13 TEC staff, volunteers or contractors working with children and young people as part of TEC events, activities and programs must complete relevant working with children screening and recruitment processes, orientation (which can include provision of suitable resources) and relevant training, not be alone with a child or young person, and adhere to TEC's Child Safe Code of Conduct.

## 9. PEOPLE AND CONDUCT

9.1 TEC takes all reasonable steps to ensure people working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice. Through ongoing support, education and training, staff and volunteers are equipped with knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe. The following section and supporting documents of this policy describe the standards of recruitment and screening, training and supervision and codes of conduct that will be applied for Child-Related Personnel.

### 9.2 RECRUITMENT AND SCREENING FOR CHILD-RELATED PERSONNEL (INCLUDING VOLUNTEERS)

9.2.1 TEC's recruitment and screening practices for Child-Related Personnel, prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and young people by selecting suitable and skilled people to work with children and young people.

9.2.2 Selection criteria and advertisements clearly demonstrate our commitment to the safety of children and young people and an awareness of our social and legal responsibilities.

9.2.3 Child-Related Personnel pass through recruitment and screening processes prior to commencing their engagement with the TEC. Recruitment and screening practices include:

- Clear position descriptions that state relevant child safety requirements;
- Communication of TEC's Commitment to the Safety of Children and Young People is described to potential applicants for positions;
- Holding face-to-face interviews (or via video conference platforms), which include child safety related questions;
- Undertaking two professional reference checks for all potential employees and two suitable reference checks for volunteer positions;
- Undertaking the relevant screening checks (specific to the role), which may include identity, criminal record, Working with Children Checks and qualification checks;
- As soon as reasonably practicable following engagement, a requirement to review and acknowledge an understanding of this Policy and TEC's Child Safe Code of Conduct, and participate in an induction program.
- Where a volunteer has completed equivalent child safety training with another organisation within the past two years, the volunteer may provide evidence of this to TEC in place of completing child safety training through TEC.

9.2.4 TEC requires Child-Related personnel including volunteers to successfully obtain, maintain and provide evidence for the duration of their employment or other engagement, a valid Working with Children Check for the State or Territory in which they reside. Each WWCC will be linked with TEC through the relevant state or territory working with children body.

9.2.5 TEC will assess if personnel will require any interstate WWCC when hosting an event outside of the state where they hold a valid check, based on the requirements of the state, duration of the event and frequency of visiting that location in a calendar year.

9.2.6 TEC will maintain a record of all successful applications, interviews, reference checks and verifications, and signed TEC Child Safe Code of Conduct.

### 9.3 ENGAGING CONTRACTORS IN CHILD-RELATED EVENTS, PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

9.3.1 To deliver Child-Related events, programs and activities TEC engages contractors on an individual basis or through agreements with third party organisations. TEC recognises that contractors are delivering services on their behalf and will ensure those who are working with children and young people pass through screening processes prior to commencing their engagement with TEC. Contractor engagement processes vary depending on the level of their child-related involvement and if they are engaged as an individual or as part of an agreement with a third party organisation.

9.3.2 Processes for engaging "individual contractors" who have direct face-to-face contact or interaction with children and young people (e.g. program facilitators, activity supervisors, photographer, videographer, production team, and similar roles) include:

- Clear guidelines that state relevant child safety requirements;
- Communication of TEC's Commitment to the Safety of Children and Young People;
- Holding face-to-face interviews (or via video conference or telephonic platforms), which include child safety related questions;
- Provide a copy of their up-to-date CV or details of previous experience in working with children.
- Undertaking the relevant screening checks (specific to the role), which may include identity, criminal record, Working with Children Checks and qualification checks;
- Prior to engagement, a requirement to review and commit to TEC's Child Safe Code of Conduct and be informed of and acknowledge the child safety responsibilities and requirements relating to their role;
- Where a contractor has completed equivalent child safety training with another organisation within the past two years, the contractor may provide evidence of this to TEC in place of completing relevant child safety training through TEC.

9.3.3 Processes for engaging "third party organisations" to provide services that include face-to-face contact or interaction with children and young people (e.g. venues, facilitation companies, production companies and similar organisations) include:

- A signed agreement by the third party organisation declaring that:
  - the organisation will comply with all legislative requirements relating to the protection of children and young people from harm, abuse and neglect;
  - all workers engaged in child-related work hold a valid and current WWCC and that

- checks are verified/linked to the organisation;
- the organisation will immediately notify TEC if they receive advice that there is a change in the status of a worker's WWCC;
- workers have received training in child safety principles including reporting of harm, abuse or neglect;
- TEC's Child Safe Code of Conduct will be provided to all staff scheduled to work on the TEC event prior to commencement of the event.
- Provision of the third party organisation's Child Safety Policy demonstrating compliance with National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (and/or relevant state based Child Safe Standards);
- Communication of TEC's Commitment to the Safety of Children and Young People; Communication of TEC's Child Safe Code of Conduct.

9.3.4 "Other Contractors" who are present as part of Child-Related Events and will have no or only very incidental contact with children and young people (e.g. catering or service vendors) will be required to follow the guidelines set out in the relevant TEC Child Safety Checklist.

#### 9.4 POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

9.4.1 All staff, volunteers and contractors will be given clear position descriptions that clearly outline their role and child safety responsibilities.

9.4.2 Staff, volunteers and contractors should not act outside their role as outlined in their position description..

9.4.3 Interactions between TEC personnel and children or young people should be limited to interactions directly associated with TEC events, programs and activities, and TEC personnel should not act outside the confines of their duties (as specified in their position description or the activity description).

#### 9.5 TRAINING AND SUPERVISION

9.5.1 Training and education are important to ensure that everyone at TEC understands that child safety is everyone's responsibility.

9.5.2 Child-Related personnel will be trained and educated on child safe practices, minimising risks of child harm/abuse, how to recognise potential signs of child harm/abuse and how to follow reporting procedures.

9.5.3 TEC's organisational culture aims for all TEC team, children and young people to feel confident and empowered to discuss and report allegations of child harm/abuse or child safety concerns.

#### 9.6 TEC CHILD SAFE CODE OF CONDUCT

9.6.1 All board, staff, volunteers and contractors must agree to abide by TEC's Child Safe Code of Conduct which specifies the standards of conduct required when working with children and young people.

9.6.2 TEC personnel are encouraged to report breaches to the code of conduct to the Child Safety Officer.

9.6.3 Significant and/or repeated breaches of this policy or TEC's Child Safe Code of Conduct will lead to disciplinary action. Disciplinary action may include a caution, further training, performance monitoring, a restriction or change in duties or dismissal. Any criminal behaviour will be reported to police or other statutory authorities as required by law.

### 10. RESPONDING TO CONCERNS

10.1 TEC takes seriously all concerns or allegations raised in relation to child harm/abuse or any other inappropriate behaviour towards a child or young person. TEC will respond to child safety concerns following our policies, procedures and relevant legislation including reporting to the police all instances in which a breach of the law has or may have occurred.

**10.2 If a child or young person is at imminent risk of harm or in immediate danger, all TEC staff, volunteers and contractors are required to report directly to the Police - CALL '000' (within Australia).**



10.3 A Child Safety Concern may arise from:

- A disclosure of harm that has occurred (recently or historically),
- An observation of indicators of harm,
- Observation or allegation of concerning behaviour,
- A breach of TEC's Child Safe Code of Conduct or
- An incident that has taken place as part of or relating to a TEC event, activity or program.

10.4 Complaints may also be raised that can include expressions of dissatisfaction about TEC related to:

- dealings with individuals
- allegations about the conduct of board members, staff, volunteers, contractors or other individuals engaged by TEC, or
- the handling of a prior concern.

10.5 Anyone may raise a Child Safety Concern or Complaint - Board members, staff, volunteers, contractors, parents, guardians, a child or young person, or a member of the community.

10.6 Children and young people are informed of their rights to be safe and respected and are encouraged to speak up to give feedback or make a complaint.

10.7 All concerns and complaints will be taken seriously and responded to promptly and with consistency and fairness.

10.8 If TEC staff, volunteers or contractors have concerns that a child or young person is at risk of harm, abuse or neglect they should report where possible to the relevant State or Territory Child Protection service. Noting that in the NT reporting is a legal requirement by all adults to report. Then notify TEC's Child Safety Officer.

10.9 Whilst TEC staff and volunteers may not be required or mandated to report in some states and territories (except the NT where all adults must report), we will always report where possible or ensure concerns are referred to relevant school contact persons where students are taking part in TEC events, programs or services.

10.10 Reasonable grounds to report/notify suspected harm or risk of harm may include:

- when your own observations of a particular child or young person's behaviour and/or injuries lead you to suspect a child or young person is, or may be, at risk of harm
- when a child or young person tells you they are at risk or have been harmed
- a child or young person telling you that they know of someone who has been harmed (they may possibly be referring to themselves)
- when your own observations about the behaviour of the child or young person, or their parent/guardian/ caregiver, gives you cause to suspect that a child or young person is being, or is at risk of being harmed
- when you hear that a child or young person is, or may be at risk of harm from someone who is in a position to provide reliable information (perhaps a relative or friend, neighbour or sibling of a child or young person who is at risk).

10.11 Where a school or community group are providing supervision for children and young people taking part in TEC events, programs or services, TEC Program Facilitators will ensure concerns are referred to the relevant school contact person.

10.12 Concerns relating to a TEC team member or alleged breach of TEC's Child Safe Code of Conduct or policies, should be reported to the Child Safety Officer.

10.13 Breaches of this policy or TEC's Child Safe Code of Conduct should be reported to the Child Safety Officer and relevant authorities, as required, and will be appropriately investigated in accordance with Responding to Child Safety Concerns or Complaints Procedure and responded to.

10.14 Significant and/or repeated breaches of this policy or TEC's Child Safe Code of Conduct will lead to disciplinary action. Disciplinary action may include a caution, further training, performance monitoring, a restriction or change in duties or dismissal. Any criminal behaviour will be reported to police.

## 10.15 RESPONDING TO A DISCLOSURE

10.15.1 A disclosure is a process by which a child or young person conveys or attempts to convey that they are being or have been harmed, abused or neglected. Disclosure may also involve an adult conveying or attempting to convey that they were harmed or abused as a child. A disclosure might be verbal or non-verbal. Non-verbal disclosures may involve painting or drawing, gesticulating, or observable behavioural changes. Disclosures may be direct (about the person who is making the disclosure) or indirect (about the harm or abuse of another child or young person who is not the one making the disclosure).

10.15.2 When a person makes a disclosure it is important that the person receiving the disclosure follows these steps:

### Listen

- Remain as calm as possible, listen to the person and pay attention to what they are saying.
  - Show you are listening with your body language and by avoiding distractions.
  - Let the person tell you in their own words.
  - Gather enough information/details by asking open ended questions. Think about what, who, when, and where. For example, 'what happened', 'who was it', 'when did it happen', and 'where did it happen'?
  - Ensure you don't ask leading questions. A leading question implies or contains its own answer. Leading questions can lead a disclosure off track, prompting the person to answer in the way they think you want to hear or are comfortable with rather than what they want to share.
  - Reassure the person of your support.
  - Provide reassuring responses, such as, "it's good that you told me about this", "it's not your fault", "I believe you", or "I am going to help you".
  - Inform the person that they can come back and tell you more if they would like to, as long as you are able to listen further and provide this support.
  - Explain that you will "need to tell adults that have special training that can help you".
  - **Assess Safety**
  - Check the current safety of the person. Are they safe to go home? Is urgent medical attention required? When will the child next see the alleged perpetrator?
  - Assess if the person is in immediate risk of serious harm, if so call 000.
- **Record Information.**
    - Record key information by writing down as best you can:
      - what the person has said in their own words.
      - a description of any physical injuries (size, colour, location on body) you may have observed or been shown
      - Any other indicators of harm you may have observed or circumstances you're aware of.
- **Report**
    - If TEC staff, volunteers or contractors have concerns that a child or young person is at risk of harm, abuse or neglect they should report to the relevant State or Territory Child Protection service. Noting that in the NT reporting is a legal requirement by all adults to report. Then notify TEC's Child Safety Officer.
    - Report any concerns about the conduct of staff, volunteers or contractors, or potential breaches of this policy or TEC Child Safe Code of Conduct to the TEC's Child Safety Officer.
    - Email the Child Safety Officer with the information you have recorded.
    - If a disclosure is made by a child or young person taking part in a TEC event, where supervision is provided by the school or community group, you should report the disclosure or suspected harm or incident to the appropriate contact person as well as the TEC Child Safety Officer.
    - If a report to State or Territory child protection services, or to the police, is required you will be assisted to make this report as it is best that the person with the most knowledge of the situation makes the report.

- Follow up support or counselling services will be offered to personnel who received a disclosure, or make a report relating to child safety.
- Respect the privacy of the person who disclosed harm, abuse or neglect to you and don't share the information with others who are not involved in the reporting process, including other team members.
- Don't attempt to contact the alleged perpetrator or attempt to investigate the matter yourself.
- Follow any instructions given by authorities, State or Territory Child Protection, or the TEC child safety officer .

## 11. COMPLIANCE

### 11.1. Compliance Measurement

Compliance with this policy will be verified by authorised parties through any methods deemed appropriate by TEC, including but not limited to: business tool reports, security reviews / audits and feedback to the policy owner.

### 11.2. Exceptions

Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by an Executive Board member in advance and have a written record.

### 11.3. Non-Compliance

Any employee found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment and referral to authorities where laws may have been broken.

## 12. OTHER POLICIES

Employees are encouraged to read this policy in conjunction with other relevant Company policies. The list of relevant policies includes the following: Code of Conduct, TEC Child Safe Code of Conduct, TEC Responding to Child Safety Concerns or Complaints Procedure, Privacy Policy and Social Media Policy.

## 13. ENDORSEMENT AND APPROVAL

Unless otherwise noted, this policy is effective from the date of approval.

This policy has been approved and endorsed by:

Name of document	Child Safety Policy
Version	1.1
Author	Child Safe Australia / Nikki Campbell
Reviewed By	Zali Yager
Approved By	TEC Board
Date of Approval	17 May 2024
Date of Effect	17 May 2024
Assigned Review Period	36 months (or more frequently, if required, to ensure standards remain up-to-date and continue to meet the requirements of The Embrace Collective)
Date of Next Review	17 May 2027

**NOTE:** Any changes to the policy must be lodged with the South Australian Department of Human Services as a new CSE compliance statement.

## Appendix A

### Forms of Abuse - Definitions

#### Neglect

- When a child or young person's basic needs for growth and development are not met. This may include failure by parent or caregiver to provide adequate food, water, clothing, housing, healthcare, personal hygiene or supervision.

#### Sexual Abuse

- When a child or young person is involved in sexual activity, whether that be by a person using their power over them or taking advantage of their trust, or sexual activity perpetrated by another child or young person. Sexual abuse is a crime and can involve a wide range of sexual activity, including physical, verbal or emotional. For example, encouraging a child or young person to do, watch, or hear something sexually explicit, sexual intercourse, inappropriate touching, exposure to pornographic material, involvement in the production of child abuse materials, conversations of a sexual nature.

#### Physical Harm/Abuse

- When a child or young person is subject to or is at risk of ill-treatment, non-accidental injury or physical trauma. This may include excessive discipline, hitting, beating, shaking, burns, bites or inappropriate administration of alcohol and drugs. Physical abuse does not always leave visible marks or injuries, it is the act itself that causes injury or trauma to the child.

#### Emotional or Psychological Harm/Abuse

- When a child or young person experiences emotional disturbance or psychological harm resulting in impaired social, emotional, cognitive or intellectual development due to the behaviour or attitude of a parent or caregiver. Emotional or psychological abuse damages a child or young person's confidence and self-esteem and may include a range of behaviours such as excessive criticism, bullying, withholding affection, exposure to domestic family violence, intimidation or threatening behaviour.

#### Other Concerns

- Other concerns may cause harm or put a child at risk of harm, such as the mental health of parents or carers, a concern for the welfare of an unborn child, or a child or young person who is a danger to themselves or others.