

Child Safety Policy			
Policy Area:	Operations		
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Policy Context			
Relevant service standards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Victorian Child Safe Standards 2022 • NDIS Practice Standards: Violence, Abuse, Neglect, Exploitation and Discrimination 		Legislation/other requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 • Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 • Crimes Act 1958 • United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child • Wrongs Act 1958 	

Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to describe the principles involved in maintaining child safety at Distinctive Options.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff, including the Board of Directors, Management Team, coordinators, staff, volunteers, students, contractors, and anyone working on behalf of Distinctive Options.

Policy

Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

Distinctive Options is committed to child safety. We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. The organisation is committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children. We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our robust policies and procedures. We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously. Distinctive Options is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early and removing and reducing these risks. The organisation has robust human resources and recruitment practices to reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing board members, staff, and volunteers. Distinctive Options is committed to regularly training and educating our staff on child abuse risks. We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability. We have specific policies and procedures in place that support our board members, staff, and volunteers to achieve these commitments.

Risk Management

Distinctive Options implements a risk management framework to be proactive about child safety. The organisation:

- will adhere to all principles identified in the Victorian Child Safe Standards 2022.
- will operate on the assumption that all people who interact with young children could pose some level of risk to them.
- recognises the importance of considering risks while not discouraging positive relationships between adults and children and their development.
- will ensure that identifying and reducing the risks posed to children and young people is an ongoing process.
- will strive for a culture where risk management is a daily exercise of all workers and people involved in the delivery of the organisation's services.
- understands that all children have different needs, backgrounds and identities and therefore the individual risks they face will vary.
- will endeavour to identify the individual risks posed to each individual child who comes into contact with the organisation.

These measures are detailed in the [Child Safety Procedure](#).

Relevant Documents

The following documents are related to this policy:

[Child Safety Code of Conduct](#)

[Child Safety Procedure](#)

[Child Safety Resource Easy English](#)