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Revised by Sean Donovan	Approved by Fr Adrian Meaney	MSCM234 - Child Protection (ACFID B.3.4).docx

This policy meets the requirements for ACFID accreditation for section B.3.4 Child Protection

This policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of the management, employees and volunteers to child safety and establishing and maintaining child safe and child friendly environments.

Commitment to child safety

All children who come to MSC MISSION OFFICE AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED have a right to feel and be safe. MSC MISSION OFFICE AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people accessing our services and the welfare of the children in our care will always be our first priority. We aim to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe and relaxed.

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, children and individuals involved in the organisation.

Children's rights to safety and participation

MSC MISSION OFFICE AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED employees and volunteers encourage children to express their views, and make suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect children. We actively encourage all children who use our services to 'have a say' about those things that are important to them. We value diversity and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices.

We teach children about what they can do if they feel unsafe. We listen to and act on any concerns children, or their parents, raise with us.

Recruitment of employees and volunteers

MSC MISSION OFFICE AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED applies the best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of employees and volunteers. We interview and conduct referee checks on all employees and volunteers and require criminal history reports for prescribed positions as specified under the Children's Protection Act 1993.

Support for employees and volunteers

MSC MISSION OFFICE AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED seeks to attract and retain the best employees and volunteers. We provide support and supervision so people feel valued, respected and fairly treated. We have developed a code of conduct to provide guidance to our employees and volunteers, all of whom receive training on the requirements of the code.

Use of Images

The MSC Mission Office will ensure information and images of children are always managed in a respectful and appropriate manner that accurately reflect the cultural setting and situation of the child. Any images made public will never be used in a way that places a child at risk of harm, or exploitation.



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Reporting and responding to suspected abuse and neglect

We will not tolerate incidents of child abuse.

Abuse and neglect includes:

- Physical abuse - when a person purposefully injures or threatens to injure a child or young person.
- Emotional abuse - an attack on a child or young person's self-esteem e.g. through bullying, name calling, threatening, ridiculing, intimidating or isolating the child.
- Sexual abuse - any sexual act or sexual threat imposed on a child or young person.
- Neglect - where a child or young person is harmed by the failure to provide the basic physical or emotional necessities.

Employees and volunteers must notify the Child Abuse Report Line on 13 14 78 as soon as practicable if they have a reasonable suspicion that a child has been or is being abused or neglected.

We are responsible for ensuring that employees and volunteers are aware how to make appropriate reports of abuse or neglect. We will also provide opportunities for employees and volunteers to attend an information session on mandatory reporting.

A person does not necessarily exhaust his or her duty of care to a child by making a report to the Child Abuse Report Line – they may still have a role in supporting the child or young person. For example, employees and volunteers may also report any form of abuse to the Director for further support or to ensure that MSC MISSION OFFICE AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED takes all reasonable steps to keep the child and others safe.

Partner Organisation Obligations

Partners are expected to meet the requirements of the MSC MISSION OFFICE AUSTRALIA policies including this child protection policy. Project Procedures for Partners, that is provided to all prospective applicants as well as existing partners, clearly states this requirement. Project Application forms include a section where the applicant agrees to this requirement as a pre-requisite to acceptance of a project.

Education and Communication

MSC MISSION OFFICE AUSTRALIA provides access to all policies and procedures on its web site. Any changes or addition of policies, forms and procedures are notified to all existing partners when they are made. New applicants are sent details of requirements so that they are aware of the requirements before submitting their application. All staff receive a copy of any new or amended policies.



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THE CODE OF CONDUCT

The MSC MISSION OFFICE AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED endorses the following code of conduct to provide guidance to our employees and volunteers responsible for activities involving children and young people under the age of 18 years. The code serves to protect children and reduce any opportunities for abuse or harm to occur. Management, employees and volunteers all agree to abide by the code of conduct.

Management will:

- Be responsible for the overall welfare and wellbeing of employees and volunteers.
- Be accountable for managing and maintaining a duty of care towards employees and volunteers.
- Appoint an adviser to provide information and support to all employees, volunteers, children, young people and their families regarding child protection matters as required.

Employees will:

- Be responsible for the administration and programs of MSC MISSION OFFICE AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED.
- Maintain a duty of care towards others and be accountable for matters relating to the aim and purpose of MSC MISSION OFFICE AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED.
- Establish and maintain a child safe environment in the course of their work.

Employees and volunteers will:

- Be fair, considerate and honest with others.
- Treat children and young people with respect, listen to and value their ideas and opinions and protect their wellbeing.
- Operate within the rules and policies of the MSC MISSION OFFICE AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED and its activities.
- Be professional in their actions through their use of language, presentation, manner and punctuality.
- Resolve conflicts fairly and promptly and report and act on any breaches of these standards of behaviour through established procedures.
- Maintain strict impartiality.
- Comply with specific organisational guidelines on physical contact with children.
- Respect the privacy of children and their families and only disclose information to people who have a need to know.
- Maintain a child safe environment for children and young people.

We will not:

- Use prejudice, oppressive behaviour or language with children.



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- Discriminate on the basis of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability or sexuality.
- Initiate unnecessary physical contact with children or do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves.
- Develop 'special' relationships with specific children for our own needs.
- Show favouritism through the provision of gifts or inappropriate attention.
- Have contact with children outside of the organisation's programs.