



Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Policy

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Overview

Purpose

This policy establishes The Salvation Army (TSA) position as a child safe organisation and its commitment to ensuring the provision of a safe and inclusive environment for children and young people where they feel respected, safe, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential.

Who does this apply to?

This policy applies to:

- All personnel engaged by and with TSA, across all of its mission expressions, irrespective of whether or not they are involved in child related activities, services or ministry within Australia and internationally on behalf of TSA
 - Anyone who engages with TSA
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Effective date

21/10/2019

Definitions

Definitions are located in the [Glossary of Terms and Definitions](#) (GO_LR_GUI-03_TPMP).

Term	Definition
Child Abuse	<p>Child abuse involves the abuse of children's rights and includes all forms of violence against them.</p> <p>Unborn child abuse exists when an unborn child's continued survival is at risk or will be placed at risk once born. Factors which place an unborn child at risk include the mother being homeless, using alcohol or other drugs, living in a household where there is family violence, has significant and unmanaged mental or physical health issues or is not accessing necessary medical care to allow for safe delivery of the child.</p> <p>Physical abuse is the use of physical force, which is deliberate or reckless and is not done to prevent a greater harm to a child, which results in or is likely to result in harm to a child. Intimidation and threats of physical abuse can also be considered physical abuse and can include getting into a child/young person's personal space and shouting aggressively or throwing objects at or near a child which could frighten them.</p> <p>Sexual abuse is the exposure to or involvement of a child in any sexual activity by an adult. Sexual abuse can also include the engagement of a child in sexual activity by another child, who by the nature or their age of development has greater power. Sexual abuse includes but is not limited to: 'fondling genitals, masturbation, oral sex, vaginal or anal penetration by a penis, finger or any other object, fondling of breasts, voyeurism, exhibitionism and exposing a child to pornography or child-abuse material'.</p> <p>Exploitation refers to committing or coercing another person to commit an act of abuse against a child; having any dealings in child abuse material; committing or coercing another person to commit an act of grooming; using a child for profit, labour, sexual gratification or some other personal or financial advantage.</p> <p>Emotional/Psychological abuse is anything which undermines a child's self-esteem. It may involve forcing them to do things that are not in the child's best interests and do not meet their needs. This type of abuse may include scapegoating, belittling, withholding emotional warmth/affection unreasonably or having expectations of a child which are unreasonable for the child's stage of development.</p> <p>Neglect refers to a failure by a caregiver to provide the basic requirements for meeting the physical and other developmental needs of a child. Neglectful behaviours include a failure to provide adequate protection from serious risks, access to education, food, shelter, clothing, supervision, hygiene or medical attention.</p> <p>Danger to self or others where a child poses a serious risk to themselves or those around them and is beyond the ability of the parent/guardian to manage that risk or behaviour. Examples of this include where a child has serious mental health issues, such as being at risk of dying by suicide; is causing domestic violence; is at risk due to gang membership; frequently absconds from a safe place or is being sexually exploited by an adult or is believed to be having contact with a suspected sex offender.</p> <p>Spiritual Abuse is the denial or use of spiritual or religious beliefs and practices to control and dominate a person. Spiritual abuse can impact on someone's self-esteem and confidence, make them feel guilty, damage their spiritual experiences and isolate them.</p> <p>Carer concerns exist if a carer parent/carers is exposing a child to family violence; has alcohol and other drugs misuse issues; has serious mental health concerns which are believed to be unmanaged by professional support; relinquishes care/abandons a child; abduction/kidnapping; Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is planned to occur; planned/actual honour-killing; forced marriage/where the child is too young for the marriage to be legal.</p>

Term	Definition
Child Abuse <i>(continued)</i>	<p>Image-based abuse occurs when someone creates, possesses or shares intimate imagery of a child. It amounts to a crime which must be reported because it is considered child abuse material if the image shows a child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ With their genital, anal or breast areas being focused on in the image, or which are uncovered; ▪ Doing something personal such as sexual activity, showering or using a toilet etc.; ▪ In a digitally altered/ 'deep-fake' type format which would be considered intimate. <p>Bullying occurs when people use words or actions repeatedly against an individual or a group, causing distress and risk to their wellbeing. Bullies are usually in a position of power or influence over the person they bully. They usually want to make the person feel less powerful or helpless. It can happen anywhere, including at school, at work, at home, online, or via text messaging or email.</p> <p>Grooming refers to a pattern of behaviour aimed at engaging a child as a precursor to sexual abuse. Grooming can be conducted online, in person or both by a stranger or someone known to the child.</p>
Child/Young Person	<p>Any individual under 18 years of age. The term 'children', 'child' or 'young person' is used to refer to all people who are under 18.</p>
Principles	<p>A fundamental truth or proposition that serves as the foundation for a system of belief or behaviour or for a chain of reasoning (Oxford Dictionary); a basic rule or belief about what is right and morally good, that influences the way people behave and the way people treat each other (Macmillan Dictionary).</p> <p>In this Framework, this term refers to the National Principles for Child and Youth Safe Organisations.</p>

Policy Statement

Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People

TSA is a child safe organisation and provides an environment that is safe and inclusive for children and young people*, where they feel safe, respected, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential.

TSA is committed to protecting children from all forms of abuse and harm (zero tolerance). TSA's commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children is a shared priority and responsibility of all TSA personnel.

TSA embraces the strengths and individual characteristics of children regardless of their age, ability, culture, gender and gender identity, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity.

TSA is committed to ensuring children and their families are encouraged and supported to contribute and participate in decisions that affect them and are provided with opportunities to actively participate in building an organisational culture that is safe for them. TSA recognises the diverse strengths and vulnerabilities of specific groups of children, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children who are unable to live at home and commits to working with them in a child centred way to empower them to participate more effectively in decisions that affect them.

TSA creates a culture, adopts strategies and acts to promote the safety and wellbeing of children, and commits to the continuous review and development of its policies, procedures and processes that support this culture.



* The phrase 'children and young people' hereafter referred to as 'children'.

Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Framework

TSA Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Framework (the 'Framework') defines the organisation's culture, strategies and actions that promote child safety and wellbeing.

The foundation of the Framework is a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of abuse and harm to children. The Framework supports and empowers children to contribute and actively participate in building an organisational culture that is safe for them.

The Framework is based on the fundamental principles that every child who participates in activities or is engaged in the mission of TSA has a right to be free from physical, sexual, emotional and spiritual abuse, neglect, exploitation, and bullying.

The Framework adopts the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations as its foundation:

1. Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in TSA leadership, governance and culture
 2. Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
 3. Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing
 4. Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice
 5. TSA personnel working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice
 6. Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused
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Policy Statement (Continued)

Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Framework (Continued)

7. TSA personnel are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training
8. Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed
9. Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved
10. Policies and procedures document how TSA is safe for children and young people

The Framework supports a proactive and seamless child-centred approach to continuous review and improvement of this policy, and associated processes and practices across:

- Workforce
- Systems and Processes
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Continuous Improvement
- Governance
- Mission Delivery



Refer to the [Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Framework \(GO_LR_PRO_TSWC\)](#).

Safety and wellbeing of children culture

This Policy commits all TSA personnel, irrespective of whether or not they work with children, to engage actively and take deliberate steps to protect children from all forms of abuse and harm and strive to make TSA's worship and mission activities safe and welcoming for all children and their families.

The Framework promotes and advocates the safety and wellbeing of children as the responsibility of every individual.

The Framework drives an organisational culture that supports safety and wellbeing practices across all aspects of TSA. The Framework recognises that promoting child safety and wellbeing is an ongoing process that is embedded in every aspect of TSA.

The Framework represents a whole of organisation cultural approach to the safety and wellbeing of children. The Framework places children at the centre of our thoughts, values and actions, demonstrated by:

- The genuine engagement with and valuing of children; and
- Ongoing review, analysis, critical appraisal and improvement of our child safety and wellbeing practices.

TSA leadership and all personnel champion and model child safety and wellbeing at all levels, and through all activities within TSA.

Policy Statement (Continued)

Zero tolerance

TSA adopts a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of harm and abuse to children. Under no circumstances will TSA accept any form of abuse or harm to occur between, with or in the presence of children.

TSA does not tolerate or condone abuse of any kind:

- Within any of its worship, mission and enterprise expressions, environments and activities; or
- By any person working for or with TSA; or
- By any person within the community.

TSA personnel must respond immediately to any complaints or allegations of abuse, misconduct or breach of TSA's [Code of Conduct Policy](#) (GO_LR_POL_TCOC) and [Code of Conduct Standard](#) (GO_LR_PRO_TCOC) and will undertake appropriate management of any issues to remove and/or reduce the risk of harm to children.

TSA personnel will report concerns, disclosures and allegations of child abuse and harm internally as per TSA [Feedback and Complaints Policy](#) (GO_QA_POL_TFBK) and [Incident Management Policy](#) (GO_QA_POL_TCIM) and will report to relevant external authorities as required under legislative and/or contractual obligations.

Reporting obligations

TSA will be proactive in preventing abuse and harm to children by removing and/or reducing risks as they are identified and/or reported.

All TSA personnel must ensure the safety of all individuals by taking immediate and appropriate action to remove and/or reduce the risk to a child, including the immediate notification of harm or abuse to a Senior TSA representative.

All TSA personnel are expected to report to a Senior TSA Representative any concern or incident of abuse or harm in accordance with the [Incident Management Policy](#) (GO_QA_POL_TCIM) if:

- They become aware of any alleged or actual incident of child abuse or harm, including reports of historical abuse and harm, within TSA or within the community
- They have a concern for the safety of a child in our services or in the community
- They notice any member of TSA personnel whose practice or behaviour is contrary to the expectations of TSA or in violation of legislative or regulatory guidelines

Quality and continuous improvement

TSA Professional Standards and Quality (PSQ) Department supports the development and implementation of child safe and wellbeing practices and reports directly to the Assistant Chief Secretary.

PSQ undertakes regular review of child safety practices, incidents, complaints and compliance with policies and processes to support continuous improvements and ensure remedial action plans are implemented in response to any review outcomes.

PSQ monitors and reports on TSA child safety and wellbeing performance to the Assistant Chief Secretary and Committees of the Board including:

1. Quality and Safety Committee, and
2. Professional Standards Committee.

Relevant findings from internal reviews and systemic audits of child safety practices and processes will be reported to TSA personnel and made publicly available.

Policy Statement (Continued)

Legislative frameworks

TSA takes its legal and moral responsibilities seriously, and this includes its:

- Responsibility to Protect
- Responsibility to Disclose
- Responsibility to Report

TSA is subject to mandatory legislative and regulatory reporting requirements in relation to the protection of children from abuse and neglect.

Nothing in this Framework will remove or diminish any individual and/or organisational responsibilities as stipulated in state, territory and/or federal legislation. TSA complies with state, territory and/or federal funding body reporting requirements.

Nothing in the Framework will remove or diminish any individual and/or organisational responsibilities of TSA personnel travelling overseas on mission-based activities and projects to adhere to the local regulations and legislation of the country in which they are based.

TSA adheres to privacy legislation and national privacy principles and information sharing legislation.

Roles and Responsibilities

Professional Standards and Quality Department (PSQ)

The Professional Standards and Quality Department:

- Monitors compliance with [Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Policy](#) (GO_LR_POL_TSWC) and processes, and reports to the Professional Standards Committee of TSA Board
- Monitors compliance with all state/territory and federal legislative child safe requirements

Professional Standards Committee

The Professional Standards Committee:

- Defines and promotes TSA as a safe and child friendly organisation with a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and harm; and
- Defines and promotes an evidence-based best-practice response to the disclosure and management of allegations of abuse and harm to children; and
- Ensures TSA is actively enhancing child safety within the Australian community.

Quality and Safety Committee

The Quality and Safety Committee's role is to define and promote a culture of continuous quality improvement and consumer safety that aligns with TSA values and meets legislative and regulatory obligations.

The Committee will review reports and make recommendations to the Board about culture, resourcing and performance of TSA quality and consumer safety systems against agreed standards/indicators.

Accountability

Obligation

All personnel under the terms of their service, employment, engagement or contract must comply with all TSA policies, procedures and supporting documents. In addition to the above, Officers must comply with the relevant TSA Orders and Regulations.

Consequences of non-compliance

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action and, in serious cases, termination of employment or engagement with TSA.

Location

Repository

[Territorial Policy Application](#)

Feedback

Feedback is encouraged

Feedback is used to improve and enhance the impact of this policy and will be considered when reviewing and updating the document.

TSA commits to seeking feedback from children, families, the community, TSA personnel and key stakeholders in consultation and review processes to support the continuous review of policy, procedures and practices that keep children safe.

Who is feedback provided to?

All feedback is to be forwarded to the Manager Safeguarding Policy via email to professionalstandards@salvationarmy.org.au.

Related Documents and References

Policy Documents	<hr/> Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Policy (GO_LR_POL_TSWC) Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People Framework (GO_LR_PRO_TSWC) Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People - Procedure Link Document (TSWC) COVID-19 Interim Guidelines for Working with Children/Vulnerable Persons Checks (GO_LR_GUI-01_TSWC) <hr/>
Related Policy Documents	Approved Authorities Policy (GO_LR_POL_TAAP) Code of Conduct Policy (GO_LR_POL_TCOC) Code of Conduct Standard (GO_LR_PRO_TCOC) Compliance Policy (GO_LR_POL_TCOM) Digital Communications and Social Media Policy (GO_PR_POL_TDIG) Diversity and Inclusion Policy (GO_LR_POL_TDAI) Enterprise Risk Management Policy (GO_LR_POL_TERM) Feedback and Complaints Policy (GO_QA_POL_TFBK) Incident Management Policy (GO_QA_POL_TCIM) Recruitment and Onboarding Policy (BS_HR_POL_TROB) Whistleblower Protections Policy (GO_LR_POL_TWBP) Work Health and Safety Policy (GO_WH_POL_TWHS) IHQ Orders & Regulations - applying to officers, soldiers, local officers and Corps Council <hr/>
Related Legislation	<i>Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016</i> (SA) <i>Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Regulations 2016</i> (SA) <i>Children's Protection Law Reform (Transitional Arrangement and Related Amendments) Act 2017</i> (SA) <i>Children's Protection Act 1993</i> (SA) <i>Spent Convictions Act 2009</i> (SA) <i>Care and Protection of Children Act 2007</i> (NT) <i>Domestic and Family Violence Act 2007</i> (NT) <i>Working with Children Clearance Notices (Ochre Card) Policy</i> <i>Child Protection Act 1999</i> (Qld) <i>Criminal Law (Rehabilitation of Offenders) Act 1986</i> (QLD) <i>Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000</i> (QLD) <i>Children and Young People Act 2008</i> (ACT) <i>Working With Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011</i> (ACT) <i>Reportable Conduct and Information Sharing Legislation Amendment Act 2016</i> <i>Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998</i> (NSW) <i>Criminal Records Act 1991</i> (NSW) <i>Child Protection (Working With Children) Amendment (Statutory Review) Act 2018</i> (NSW) <i>Ombudsman Act 1974 Part 3A</i> (NSW) <i>Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997</i> (Tas) <i>Registration to Work With Vulnerable People Act 2013</i> (Tas) <i>Children, Youth and Families Act 2005</i> (Vic) <i>Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Act</i> (Vic) 2015 <i>Victorian Crimes Act 1958</i> (Vic) (Section 49B, 49C, 327) <i>Working With Children Act 2005</i> (Vic) <i>Children Legislation Amendment (Reportable Conduct) Act 2017</i> <i>Children and Community Services Act 2004</i> (WA) <i>Commissioner for Children and Young People Act 2006</i> <hr/>

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Related Legislation (Continued)	<i>Working With Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004 (WA)</i> <i>Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)</i> <i>Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000 (Cth) (Privacy Act)</i> <i>Crimes Act 1914 (Cth)</i>
Funding Agreement Requirements	N/A
Governance/ Accreditation/ Certification Standards	N/A
Audit Report Findings	N/A
Other Relevant Documents /Resources	N/A

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