

# MY CHILD SAFE CHILD FRIENDLY COMMITMENT



## 1. Purpose of this document

As an organisation with a mission to empower girls and young women to discover their potential as leaders of their world, Girl Guiding in Australia (GGiA) is committed to fostering a child safe and child friendly culture where children and young people are safe, respected and protected.

Girl Guiding in Australia (GGiA) has a zero-tolerance towards child abuse and neglect, racism and discrimination. It is a strategic foundation of Girl Guides Australia to be a Child Safe Child Friendly Community and the Child Safe Child Friendly (CSCF) Framework has been adopted to support this foundation. The CSCF Framework includes Policy, Procedures and Guidance Notes to support Adults in Guiding to maintain a Child Safe Child Friendly Community.

Adherence to the GGA Code of Conduct, this document and all of the policies and procedures in the CSCF Framework is **mandatory** to maintaining involvement in Girl Guiding in Australia.

GGiA is committed to compliance with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and each of the respective state and territory child safe legislation and standards.

This document provides an overview of the Commitment that must be made by all people bound by the GGA Code of Conduct to support GGiA's commitment to maintaining a Child Safe Child Friendly Community.

## 2. Who does this apply to?

All Adults in Guiding, being over the age of 18, regardless of location and role, when engaging with children and young people in any form. This includes face to face contact and using technology such as on-line formats as well as conduct outside of Girl Guide meetings and events. This policy applies in all our operational environments with strict adherence wherever children and young people are participating in our organisation's activities, programs, services and/or facilities.

This Commitment includes the boundaries and behaviours appropriate to the Girl Guide activity they are engaged with and are responsible for promoting the safety of our Youth Members and any other children involved in the activity.

### **I will:**

- Treat children, young people and families in our Guiding community with respect
- Follow the [GGA Supervision ratio policy](#) noting at least two adults should always be present
- Listen and respond to the views and concerns of children and young people
- Promote participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children and young people
- Be mindful of my tone of voice and use encouraging language
- Support young member to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights

- Never act in a way that is intended to cause pain or distress to a Youth Member
- Check in with the Youth Member if it is ok with them if you provide assistance to them
- Have minimal physical contact when involved in games or activities with Youth Members, rendering first aid, responding to an emergency situation or providing comfort in a distressing situation and seek consent whenever possible
- Apply the [GGA Supervision Ratio](#) policy and other relevant policies regarding electronic communication with Youth Members remembering that children are particularly vulnerable on digital platforms
- Report any conduct seen or heard that does not comply with Child Safe Child Friendly practice required under the GGA Child Safe Child Friendly Framework
- Call 000 if a child or young person is at immediate risk or harm.

**I will NOT:**

- Ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse or neglect (including harm or risk of harm)
- Engage in any form of physical, emotional, sexual, or verbal violence including but not limited to fighting, assault or threats of violence or bullying
- Enter an area where youth members are changing or showering, or entering tents or sleeping areas when youth members are in bed (without a valid reason, such as an emergency)
- Provide personal care such as toileting, feeding or changing clothes (unless this was part of the response to a transient health situation)
- Transport an individual Youth Member alone (unless their own child, or in an emergency)
- Communicate one-on-one with a Youth Member through personal or private contact channels, such as text messaging or via social media
- Approach a Youth Member or other child or young person attending a Guide event that is not your own with a view to physical discipline that child or young person for their behaviour
- Engage in discussions with Youth Members that are not age-appropriate
- Behave towards a Youth Member or other child or young person attending a Girl Guide event in a manner that makes them uncomfortable
- Develop special relationships with a Youth Member, including one-on-one sessions, giving unwarranted individual gifts or showing favouritism
- Distribute inappropriate materials via any channel
- Film or photograph any youth member without parental consent
- Permit or encourage the use or consumption of alcohol, smoking, vaping, or use of illicit substances by Youth Members
- Smoke, vape or be under the influence of alcohol or illicit substances while undertaking Girl Guiding duties.

### **3. Consequences of a breach of the CSCF commitment**

Breaches of this Child Safe Child Friendly Commitment will be addressed in accordance with Element 3.16 'Disciplinary Proceedings' of the CSCF Framework. The consequences of a proven breach includes loss of leadership qualifications, exclusion from Girl Guide events and loss of membership or dismissal.

### **4. Reporting Obligations**

It is the policy of GGA that if any Adult in Guiding believes, suspects, or even worries, that any child or young person has been abused or neglected, or is likely to be abused or neglected, they must follow the procedures outlined in Element 8 of the CSCF Framework. This means they MUST report their concerns as if they were a mandated reporter. Some state and territory legislation uses terminology such as harm and risk of harm from which the child should ordinarily be protected. Whatever the terminology, Girl Guides has ZERO tolerance to child abuse, neglect, harm or risk of harm (harm being non-accidental and of a type the child which the child is ordinarily protected). Child abuse and neglect should be read to include harm or risk of harm in this context.

All Adults in Guiding must make reports to the police and/or the statutory child protection agency as soon as they form a reasonable belief that a child has been abused, neglected, harmed, or is at risk of harm (harm being non-accidental and of a kind the child which the child is ordinarily protected). In most states and territories failure to make a report of this nature is a criminal offence. See Contact Details for Reporting Under CSCF.

After making a report to the police and/or the statutory child protection agency, a Girl Guide Incident Report must be completed and forwarded to the relevant State Girl Guide Organisation (SGGO) as soon as practicable. The SGGO must make a report to the police and/or statutory child protection agency if this has not already been done, or if any further child safety issues are identified.

In addition to making reports to the police and/or the statutory child protection agency many states and territories have 'Reportable Conduct Schemes' (RCS), whereby an organisation is required to report to an external oversight body an allegation that any Adult Member, Volunteer, or Employee who may have harmed a child or young person.