

Child Safety Policy

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Responsible Officer:	Chief Executive Officer	Current Version:	23/08/2021
Authorised Officer:	GOTAFE Board	Due for review	Annual 22/08/2022

Purpose

The purpose of this Child Safety Policy (the Policy) is to define GOTAFE’s position on child safety, including providing a child safe environment for all our children and young people. A ‘child or young person’ is considered to be any person aged 17 years or under that is enrolled, visiting or participating in GOTAFE activities.

This Policy supports GOTAFE to comply with their child safe obligations, and to provide clear guidelines for all employees, students, contractors and visitors.

The Policy supports the behaviours provided in the GOTAFE Employee Code of Conduct and GOTAFE Student Code of Conduct.

The Policy’s supporting Child Safe Reporting Procedure outlines the obligations of employees to ensure children and young people at GOTAFE are safe and feel safe.

Policy Statement

GOTAFE is committed to ensuring that all employees, students, contractors, visitors, children, young people and their families are aware of GOTAFE’s commitment to child safety, including having access to child safety materials and avenues for providing feedback and complaints.

GOTAFE has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of child abuse and neglect and we recognise that all children and young people have a right to be kept safe from harm.

GOTAFE is committed to, and will uphold the following principles in applying this Policy:

- **Preventing child abuse:** identifying child abuse risks early and removing and reducing these risks.
- **Zero-tolerance of child abuse:** all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously, in a consistent manner and expeditiously addressed.
- **Reporting suspected child abuse:** complying with our legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child’s or young person’s safety.
- **Protecting equity and diversity:** children and young people feel safe and are listened to and respected regardless of their abilities, sex, gender, sexual orientation religion, cultural or economic background.
- **Safety, participation and empowerment:** employees and students, including children and young people, are aware of child safety practices and have access to raise concerns about abuse or misconduct. Students are supported to raise concerns through GOTAFE’s student support services, and all staff receive relevant training and support to enable them to do so.

- **Training and educating:** our employees receive training and support, proportionate to their role, to ensure they are equipped with the skills and knowledge to provide children and young people with safe learning environments; understand the responsibilities and boundaries of their roles; and respond to any child safety concerns.
- **Continuous improvement:** regularly reviewing and removing any systemic issues which may be contributing to, or hindering, GOTAFE from being safe, or providing a safe environment.

GOTAFE is committed to fostering a culture where all employees, students, contractors, visitors, children, young people and their families feel able to raise child safe-guarding concerns.

Roles and Responsibilities

This Policy applies to all GOTAFE employees, students, contractors and visitors who each have an obligation to comply with their child safe obligations to provide a safe environment for children and young people.

Any person engaged in child related work at GOTAFE is required to have a valid Working with Children Check in compliance with current legislation.

GOTAFE employees are also required to attend mandatory annual Child Safe training to ensure all children and young people are kept safe.

GOTAFE's Child Safe Officers have a specific obligation to champion child safe practices across GOTAFE and to embed these practices.

Documentation and regulation

Other material related to the Child Safety function at GOTAFE include, but are not limited to:

- Victorian Child Safe Standards (VCSS);
- *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*;
- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*;
- *Working with Children Check (WWCC) Act 2005*;
- *Crimes Amendment (Grooming) Act 2014*;
- *Crimes Amendment (Protection of Children) Act 2014*;
- *Children Legislation Amendment (Reportable Conduct) Act 2017*;
- *The Wrong's Amendment (Organisational Child Abuse) Act 2017*;
- GOTAFE Employee Code of Conduct;
- GOTAFE Student Code of Conduct;
- Working with Children Check and National Police Check Policy;
- Duty of Care Policy;
- Child Safe Reporting Procedure; and
- Issue Resolution and Investigation Procedure.