

# **SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PEOPLE AT YSAS**



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**WE ARE COMMITTED TO PROVIDING A  
SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL YOUNG  
PEOPLE.**

## POLICY STATEMENT

YSAS is committed to providing a safe environment for all young people who come into contact with and/or access our service. YSAS recognises that all young people have the right to develop and reach their potential in environments that are caring, nurturing and safe.

YSAS considers any form of young person abuse, inclusive of emotional, physical, sexual abuse or neglect, as intolerable under any circumstances.

YSAS works with vulnerable young people whose lives are affected by serious disadvantage, which may include exploitation and abuse. As such, YSAS has a legal, ethical and mission driven responsibility to protect young people from harm and to ensure that any incidents of suspected child abuse are promptly and appropriately dealt with.

At YSAS, safeguarding young people from harm is everybody's responsibility.

## PURPOSE OF OUR POLICY

This policy outlines YSAS' approach to creating and maintaining a safe environment for young people who come into contact with and/or access our services. This policy and associated documentation, including the YSAS Code of Conduct, provide a practical guide to safeguarding young people from harm at YSAS.

## WHO DOES OUR POLICY APPLY TO?

YSAS commitment to the safety of young people policy applies to all YSAS Board Directors, Board sub-Committee members, staff, students and volunteers.

YSAS requires all organisations with which it enters service delivery partnership, including co-locating agencies, to develop and maintain their own policies and procedures that comply with relevant child safety legislation, including the Victorian Child Safe Standards.

YSAS acknowledges that it has a responsibility to ensure that young people who come into contact with its services do not harm other young people accessing YSAS programs. Young people will be informed of their rights and responsibilities regarding child safety when accessing YSAS services.

## PRINCIPLE OF OUR POLICY

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) states that children have a right to be protected from all forms of physical and mental violence, injury, neglect, maltreatment and exploitation, including sexual abuse (Article 19). The UNCRC also states the need to respect the views of the child (Article 12).

## OUR VALUES

### HONESTY

YSAS is authentic in how we relate to people within and outside of our organisation.

### EMPOWERMENT

YSAS creates a safe and positive environment for young people and staff to make valuable contributions.

### ACCOUNTABILITY

YSAS sets high standards and workers are answerable for our decisions and actions.

### RESPECT

YSAS accepts and values the diversity and rights of people, their culture and their life experience.



**HONESTY EMPOWERMENT  
ACCOUNTABILITY RESPECT**



# DEFINITIONS THAT APPLY TO OUR POLICY

## CHILD/CHILDREN

A person under the age of 18 years. Legislation aimed at protecting young people specifically relates to children under the age of 16 or 18 years, depending on the type of abuse as outlined below.

## YOUNG PEOPLE/ PERSON

YSAS considers a young person to be a person who is, or has been in contact with a YSAS program and is 25 years or younger. YSAS recognises that its clients are aged 10 – 25 years and as such the terms child and young people are used interchangeably; acknowledging the importance of safeguarding all young people who come into contact with our service and that all abuse outlined in this document is unacceptable regardless of legal age.

## STAFF

For the purposes of this policy, staff refers to all YSAS paid workers, students, and volunteers, including Board Directors and Board Sub-Committee members.

## HARM

Harm, to a child or young person, is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child or young person's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing. It is immaterial how the harm is caused. Harm can be caused by:

- physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect; or
- sexual abuse or exploitation;
- a single act, omission or circumstance; or
- a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances.

## WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE? <sup>1</sup>

Child abuse or maltreatment refers to any non-accidental behaviour by parents, caregivers, other adults (including YSAS staff) or older adolescents that is outside of the norms of conduct and entails a substantial risk of causing physical or emotional harm to a child or young person. Child abuse is commonly divided into five main subtypes:

1. Physical abuse
2. Emotional or psychological abuse
3. Neglect
4. Sexual abuse
5. Exposure to family violence

Child abuse can be multi-dimensional (i.e. physical and emotional abuse) and causes cumulative harm. Child abuse can have life-long consequences.

### 1. Physical abuse:

Physical abuse occurs when a person subjects a young person to non-accidental physically aggressive acts. The abuser may inflict an injury intentionally, or inadvertently as a result of physical punishment or the aggressive treatment of a young person. Physically abusive behaviour includes (but is not limited to) shoving, hitting, slapping, shaking, throwing, punching, biting, burning and kicking. It also includes giving children or young people harmful substances such as drugs, alcohol or poison. Certain types of punishment, whilst not causing injury can also be considered physical abuse if they place a child or young person at risk of being hurt, e.g. shaking a baby.

### 2. Emotional or psychological abuse:

Emotional or psychological abuse occurs when a person subjects a child or young person to inappropriate verbal or symbolic acts and/or there is a pattern of failure over time to provide a child or young person with adequate non-physical nurture and emotional availability. Such abuse may involve repeated rejection or threats to a child or young person. Constant criticism, teasing, ignoring, threatening, isolating, yelling, scapegoating, corrupting, ridicule and rejection or continual coldness are all examples of emotional abuse. These behaviours continue to an extent that results in significant damage to the child or young person's physical, intellectual or emotional wellbeing and development.

### 3. Neglect:

Neglect is the persistent failure or deliberate denial to provide the child or young person with the conditions that are culturally accepted in a society as being essential for their physical and emotional development and wellbeing. Such neglect includes the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, adequate supervision, clean water, medical attention or supervision to the extent that the child or young person's health and development is, or is likely to be, significantly harmed. Categories of neglect include supervisory neglect whereby absence or inattention leads to physical harm or injury; physical neglect; medical neglect; abandonment or desertion; emotional neglect; and educational neglect. The issue of neglect must be considered within the context of resources reasonably available to the family.

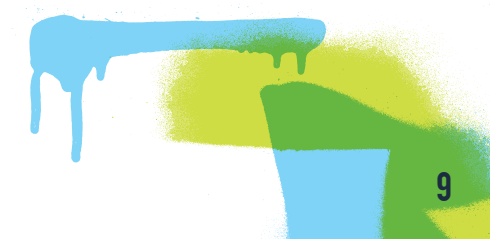
### 4. Sexual abuse:

Defining sexual abuse is complicated as it requires a sensitive understanding of a number of definitional issues specific to child sexual abuse, including relevant legislation. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines child sexual abuse as the involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, or which the child is not developmentally prepared and cannot give consent, or that violates the laws or social taboos of society.

Child sexual abuse is evidenced by sexual activity between a child and an adult or another child who by age or development is in a relationship of responsibility, trust or power, the activity being intended to gratify or satisfy the needs of the other person.

It can include making sexual comments to a child or young person; engaging children or young people to participate in sexual conversations over the internet or on social media; kissing; touching a child or young person's genitals or breasts; oral sex; or vaginal or anal penetration by a penis, finger or any other object. Exposing the child or young person to pornographic magazines, websites and videos is also sexual abuse.

However, unlike the other types of child abuse, the definition of child sexual abuse varies depending on the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator. This is explained further in appendix 1.



#### 5. Exposure to family violence:

Exposure to family violence is a specific form of emotional and psychological abuse. Exposure to family violence occurs when children or young people are present (hear or see) a parent or sibling subjected to physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological or emotional abuse, or are visually exposed to the damage caused to persons or property by a family member's violent behaviour. Family violence is defined as violence between members of a family or extended family or those fulfilling the role of family in a child or young person's life. Exposure to family violence places children and young people at increased risk of physical injury and harm and has a significant impact on their wellbeing and development.

#### Other forms of child abuse include:

- Sexual exploitation: occurs when children or young people are forced into sexual activities (refer sexual abuse definition above) that are then recorded in some way and/or used to produce pornography. Such pornography can be in the form of actual photos or videos or published on the internet. Exploitation can also involve children or young people who are forced into prostitution.

- Fetal abuse: this occurs when pregnant mothers engage in behaviours that could endanger a fetus, such as the excessive use of alcohol, prescriptive medication, or illicit drugs (including volatile substances).

- Bullying: bullying involves the inappropriate use of power by one or more persons over another less powerful person or group and is generally an act that is repeated over time. Bullying can take many forms which are often interrelated and include verbal (name calling, put downs, threats), physical (hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting), social (ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating), psychological (spreading rumours, stalking, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions).

- Grooming: grooming is a term used to describe what happens when a perpetrator of abuse builds a relationship with a child or young person with a view to abusing them at some stage. Grooming involves a perpetrator persuading a child that they have a special relationship with them and inappropriately: spending special time with a child; giving gifts to a child; showing special favours to one child but not others; allowing the child to step out of boundaries or rules; touching the child; testing and breaking professional boundaries. There is no set pattern in relation to the grooming of children. For some perpetrators, there will be a lengthy period of time before the abuse begins. Other perpetrators may draw a child in and abuse them relatively quickly. Some abusers do not groom children but abuse them without forming a relationship at all. Grooming can take place in any setting where a relationship is formed, including social media or by SMS.

- Sibling abuse

- Exposure to community violence

- Institutional abuse: for example abuse that occurs in institutions such as foster homes, voluntary organisations such as Scouts.

- State sanctioned abuse: for example female genital mutilation in parts of Africa, the Stolen Generations in Australia.

- Racial cultural religious abuse: conduct that demonstrates contempt, ridicule, hatred or negativity towards a child because of their race, culture or religion. It may be overt, such as direct racial vilification or discrimination, or covert, such as demonstrating a lack of cultural sensitivity or an absence of positive images about another culture.



## OUR COMMITMENT TO SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PEOPLE

We commit to:

- The safety and wellbeing of all young people who come into contact with and/or access any of our programs, services or facilities.
- Creating an environment for young people to be safe and to feel safe.
- Providing young people with positive and nurturing experiences.
- Listening to young people and empowering them by taking their view seriously and addressing any concerns that they raise with us.
- Taking action to ensure that children and young people are protected from exploitation, abuse or harm.
- Providing all YSAS workers with the necessary support to enable them to fulfil their roles. This will include regular and appropriate learning and development opportunities and supervision.
- Providing regular opportunities to clarify and confirm policy and procedures in relation to child and young people's protection and welfare. This will include annual training with regards to understanding the principles and intent of the Safeguarding Young People Policy.
- Listen and respond to all concerns voiced by YSAS staff in regards to keeping young people safe from harm.
- Provide opportunities for YSAS staff to receive formal debriefing and counselling arising from incidents of child or young person abuse.
- Using best practice standards in the recruitment, screening and employment of YSAS staff so as they will not harm, abuse or exploit young people who are involved in our programs, services or facilities.

**WE COMMIT TO THE SAFETY AND  
WELLBEING OF ALL YOUNG PEOPLE  
WHO COME INTO CONTACT WITH OR  
ACCESS ANY OF OUR PROGRAMS,  
SERVICES OR FACILITIES.**



## OUR EXPECTATIONS OF STAFF

It is a serious breach of this policy, and possibly the law, if a YSAS worker harms or exploits young people who come into contact with and/or access any of our services. Breaches of this policy include, but are not limited to, staff who:

- Sexually assault young people who come into contact with and/or access one of our programs.
- Physically assault young people who come into contact with and/or access one of our programs.
- Verbally abuse, denigrate or bully young people who come into contact with and/or access one of our programs.
- Sexually harass young people who come into contact with and/or access one of our programs.
- Groom young people for the purpose of sexual abuse.
- Take, reproduce and/or distribute photos of young people without consent.
- Publish any material containing images of children or young people who come into contact with and/or access one of our programs that can be used for the sexual gratification of others.

**Therefore, we expect all staff** to understand the meanings of abuse contained within this policy.

We expect YSAS staff to:

- Understand young people's rights.
- Be respectful of young people.
- Not contravene any policies, regulations or laws in relation to the safety and protection of young people.
- Understand and acknowledge the significance of family relationships for children and young people.
- Always follow the Code of Conduct.
- Understand and respond to the special needs of all young people.
- Show extended guardianship to all young people.
- Know and follow the law in relation to reporting child abuse.
- Co-operate with police and/or other formal investigations.
- Respect the cultural and religious practice of families who access our services.
- Be aware of our formal recruitment, screening and employment practices in relation to working or volunteering with young people.
- Protect the privacy of children, young people and families.
- Act on any concerns raised by young people or others.

(Refer to appendix 2 for full explanations of our expectations of our staff.)



**WE EXPECT YSAS STAFF NOT TO HARM  
OR EXPLOIT CHILDREN WHO COME INTO  
CONTACT WITH  
AND/OR ACCESS OUR SERVICES.**

# WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING OUR POLICY?

Safeguarding young people from harm is everybody's responsibility. However, there are specific organisational roles, responsibilities and accountabilities as outlined below.

## YSAS BOARD

Ensure appropriate policies and practices are in place to minimise the risk of child abuse and appropriately respond to suspected allegations. Understand and comply with, and promote the principles and intent of, this policy.

## YSAS EXECUTIVE

Ensure adequate resources are allocated to enable the development and effective oversight of this policy. Provide leadership on child safe at YSAS by supporting a culture of openness and accountability, understanding all relevant legislation, personal compliance, and engaging young people in development, implementation and monitoring of this policy.

## MANAGERS

Comply with all related policies and processes to safeguard young people and ensure staff understand their obligations for complying with and implementing policy at a local level. Advocate for, and promote the rights of, young people and engage young people in the support and implementation of this policy.

## STAFF

Comply with the expectations outlined in this policy, including attendance at child safety training, and ensure young people are aware of their rights and responsibilities regarding child safety. Report any concerns regarding the safety of young people to the YSAS Child Safety Officer, Manager or Director.

## CHILD SAFETY OFFICER

Act as the key contact for young people and staff on all matters regarding safeguarding young people at YSAS. Report any suspected child abuse to the relevant child protection authority and fully cooperate with authorities in their investigation, ensuring a timely response on any investigation involving a YSAS young person, employee, volunteer or involved parties. Ensure findings of child abuse complaints and/or investigations are used to continually inform the protection of young people at YSAS.

(Refer to appendix 3 for full roles and responsibilities.)



**SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PEOPLE  
FROM HARM IS EVERYONE'S  
RESPONSIBILITY.**





# ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTATION

YSAS Safeguarding Young People Policy  
Code of Conduct  
Complaints Policy  
Recruitment and Selection Policy  
Client Rights and Responsibilities  
Child Safety Notification Policy  
Risk Assessment process  
Grievance Policy  
Performance Management Guidelines

Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Act 2015

# YOUR CONTACTS

YSAS is committed to providing a safe environment for all young people. If you have any concerns regarding the safety of young people at YSAS, we ask you to speak up:

- If you're a young person you can speak to a Worker, the Program Manager or the YSAS Child Safe Officer.
- If you're a YSAS employee you can speak to your Supervisor, Program Manager, Service Director or the YSAS Child Safe Officer.
- If you are a parent, community member or service provider, please contact the Program Manager or the YSAS Child Safe Officer.

Please direct all questions and concerns to YSAS Head Office: (03) 9415 8881.

# APPENDIX

## APPENDIX 1: Continuing definitions:

Adults with no familial relationship to the child

Any sexual behaviour between a child under the age of consent (16 years) and an adult (i.e. 18 years and over) is abusive. Therefore, consensual sexual activity between a 20-year-old and a 15-year-old is considered abusive.

Family members of the child:

Any sexual behaviour between a child and an adult family member is abusive. The concepts of consent, equality and coercion are inapplicable in instances of intra-familial abuse.

Adults in a position of power or authority over the child (including YSAS workers):

Sexual abuse occurs when there is any sexual behaviour between a child under the age of 18 years and an adult in a position of power or authority over them. This includes YSAS workers. The age of consent laws are inapplicable in such instances due to the strong imbalance of power that exists between children and authority figures, as well as the breaching of both personal and public trust that occurs when professional boundaries are violated. The YSAS Code of Conduct explicitly prohibits sexual relationships between staff and all clients regardless of their age.

Adolescent or child perpetrators:

If the relationship between two children or young people under the legal age of consent is unequal, non-consensual or coercive, it is abusive. Elements of consent include:

- Understanding what is being proposed without confusion (not being tricked or fooled)
- Knowing the standard for the behaviour in the family, the peer group and the culture (both parties have similar knowledge)
- Having an awareness of possible consequences, such as punishment, pain, pregnancy or disease (both parties similarly aware)
- Having respect for agreement or disagreement without repercussion
- Having the competence to consent (being intellectually able and unaffected by intoxication).

**Equality** relates to the balance of power and control in the relationship. Indicators of inequality include size and weight differences and differences in intellectual development.

**Coercion** is the peer pressure put on one child by another to achieve compliance. Such pressure can be placed on a continuum. The lower end may include implied authority, manipulation, trickery or bribery. The top end of the continuum may include physical force, threats of harm and overt violence. In Victoria, it is against the law for a child to have sex with another child who is more than 2 years younger.

Therefore, sexual abuse is indicated when there is non-consensual sexual activity between children (e.g., a 14-year-old and a 13-year-old), or any sexual behaviour between a child and another child or adolescent who - due to their age or stage of development - is in a position of power, trust or responsibility over the victim. For example, any sexual activity between a 9-year-old and a 15-year-old is considered abusive as the age difference between the two children leads not only to marked developmental differences, but also disparities in their levels of power and responsibility within their relationship. Another example of abuse due to an imbalance of power is sexual activity between two 15-year-olds, where one suffers an intellectual disability that impairs their ability to understand the behaviours that they are engaging in. Normal sexual exploration between consenting adolescents at a similar developmental level and age is not considered abuse.

Adolescent or child family members:

Sexual abuse occurs when there is sexual activity between a child and an adolescent or child family member that is non-consensual or coercive, or where there is an inequality of power or development

between the two young people. Although consensual and non-coercive sexual behaviour between two developmentally similar family members is not considered child sexual abuse, it is considered incest, and is strongly proscribed both socially and legally in Australia.

## **APPENDIX 2:** Full expectations of YSAS Staff:

### **We expect ysas staff to understand young people's rights.**

An understanding of young people's rights is an important basis for all the programs and services that we offer to young people. It enables us to identify when young people's needs and entitlements are compromised and when they require support.

Therefore, we expect staff to have a working knowledge of young people's rights appropriate to their role and use it to inform decisions about how to behave and act with and on behalf of young people.

### **We expect ysas staff to be respectful of young people.**

As part of our commitment to young people, we will facilitate opportunities for young people to tell us their views and feedback about the services we provide to them. We will treat young people as individuals and respect their unique abilities and vulnerabilities.

Therefore, we expect staff to express attitudes and engage in behaviour that respect and support young people.

### **We expect that ysas staff do not contravene any policies, regulations or laws in relation to the safety and protection of young people.**

It is a serious breach of this policy if a YSAS worker contravenes any regulations or laws in relation to the safety and protection of children whether or not they are working or volunteering at the time.

### **We expect ysas staff to understand and acknowledge the significance of family relationships for children and young people.**

Families, in all their diverse forms, are the foundation of children and young people's development. Families can act as supportive resources for growth and resilience in children and young people. Family relationships can also restrain and harm children and young people's functioning. Families are the single most significant influence in shaping the way children and young people develop and perceive their sense of identity.

Therefore, we expect staff to recognise, respect and work to strengthen the capacities of parents/carers and other family members to care and protect their children.

### **We expect ysas staff to always follow the code of conduct.**

The YSAS Code of Conduct outlines expected standards of appropriate behaviour, including with and in the company of children and young people. All YSAS staff will be engaged and employed within the requirements of the Code of Conduct.

Therefore, we will require all staff to endorse and annually affirm their understanding of the YSAS Code of Conduct.

### **We expect ysas staff to understand and respond to the special needs of all young people.**

We acknowledge that all young people are vulnerable due to their age and associated stage of development. We also understand that we will need to be proactive in recognising the additional vulnerability to exploitation and harm that children and young people with developmental delays or disabilities experience. YSAS will provide documentation in developmentally appropriate language and translated to inform the main communities that access our services.

Therefore, we expect staff to act in ways that communicate effectively with and are supportive of children and young people.

### **We expect ysas staff to show extended guardianship to all young people.**

Experience of abuse, family violence, neglect, bullying and exploitation are significant sources of trauma for children and intensify the risk of children and young people developing a range of emotional, psychological, social and behavioural problems. The physical abuse and sexual abuse of children and young people is a crime. Interventions which identify risk factors of abuse and prevent it from happening are instrumental in supporting children and families. Extended guardianship means YSAS

staff need to understand the indicators of child abuse and exploitation. YSAS staff are to understand that perpetrators of abuse can be male or female. They can be old, young, peers, friends, Board Directors, employees, volunteers. There is no stereotypical construct of an offender of sexual abuse. Sexual abuse can occur in contexts that do not have adequate controls on behaviour, environments and relationships. Abuse can be opportunistic, premeditated, or a combination of both. Grooming behaviour can form part of the premeditation. YSAS will provide an environment that acknowledges how abuse occurs and put safeguards in place to create an environment that does not tolerate abuse risk behaviours in any way.

Therefore, notwithstanding our obligations under the law, we expect staff to ensure that appropriate action is taken to respond to concerns about the wellbeing or safety of a child or young person. This includes raising concerns about another staff member's behaviour in relationship to potential child abuse.

### **We expect ysas staff to know and follow the law in relation to reporting child abuse.**

We expect staff to know and follow relevant laws to report child abuse, family violence, neglect or exploitation.

### **We expect ysas staff to co-operate with police and/or other formal investigations.**

In every circumstance, we expect staff to co-operate to the best of their ability with any formal investigation undertaken by the police or other relevant authorised body in relation to the care and protection of children and young people.

### **We expect ysas staff to respect the cultural and religious practices of families who access our services.**

We recognise the importance of culture and religion in the lives of children and families. However, no cultural or religious belief will take precedence over the UNCRC rights of children or young people to be protected from harm.

Therefore, we expect staff to act in ways that are inclusive and respectful of the cultural and religious practices of families who access our services.

### **We expect ysas staff to be aware of our formal recruitment, screening and employment practices in relation to working or volunteering with young people.**

all staff will be informed during their recruitment that their employment will be subject to clearance of the Working with Children Check system and a National Criminal Records Check. It is a serious breach of this policy if an individual, who has convictions that would make them ineligible to be granted a Working with Children Check (or equivalent) clearance, gains employment or is allowed to volunteer with young people who access our services. It is also a serious breach of this policy, if an individual continues in their employment or volunteer role with us if they have been charged or convicted of a crime that would make them ineligible to be granted a Working with Children Check clearance. Therefore, we expect that staff understand that their continued participation in our organisation is based on the outcomes of these employment practices.

### **We expect ysas staff to protect the privacy of children, young people and families.**

the ysas privacy policy asks for consent from young people before we seek out or provide information about them to any other individuals or organisation. However, we may not ask for consent to disclose information to Police, a regulatory authority or a statutory child protection agency in the event that we have concerns about the safety and wellbeing of a specific young person. The YSAS Privacy document outlines how this works.

Therefore, we expect staff to protect the privacy of children, young people and families.

### **We expect ysas staff to act on any concerns raised by young people or others.**

We will take seriously any concerns or issues raised by young people and/or others on the young person's behalf. We will investigate all complaints or allegations made against any of our Board Directors, staff or volunteers relating to a breach of any YSAS policy or operational procedure. We will ensure that we report any abuse crimes against young people to Victoria Police or other relevant child protection authorities in accordance with the law.

Therefore, we expect staff to follow our complaints procedure without hesitation in response to concerns raised by young people and/or others on behalf of a young person.



### APPENDIX 3: Who is responsible for implementing our policy?

Safeguarding young people from harm is everybody's responsibility. However there are specific organisational roles, responsibilities and accountabilities as outlined below.

#### YSAS Board:

Ensure appropriate policies and practices are in place to minimise the risk of child abuse and appropriately respond to suspected allegations.

Promote the principles and intent of this policy.

Understand and comply with this policy, including ensuring any suspected child abuse is reported to the YSAS Child Safety Officers and Victoria Police.

#### YSAS Executive:

- Ensure adequate resources are allocated to enable the development and effective oversight of the YSAS Safeguarding Young People Policy, including but not limited to the appointment of a Child Safety Officer, and requisite staff training and supervision.
- Facilitate a review of the YSAS Safeguarding Young People Policy every three years as a minimum or at a time determined or promoted by changes to legislation, regulations or organisational review.
- Provide leadership on child safety at YSAS by supporting a culture of openness, continued improvement and accountability to protecting young people.
- Develop, monitor and annually review consortia / partner arrangements to ensure that they are continuously improved to support the protection of children and young people.
- Develop and promote opportunities for YSAS to enhance a culture of transparency, accountability and continuous improvement in relation to the YSAS Safeguarding Young People Policy.
- Understand all relevant legislation related to child safety and comply with this policy, including ensuring any suspected child abuse is reported to the YSAS Child Safety Officer and Victoria Police.
- Ensure all allegations of child abuse are investigated fully, with findings used to continually inform the protection of young people at YSAS.
- Ensure compliance with all related policies and processes to safeguard young people, including the recruitment and selection of staff.
- Empower and engage young people in the development, implementation and monitoring of this policy.
- Support managers to implement the policy to ensure organisational compliance.
- Advocate for, and promote the rights of, young people at local, State and Federal levels.

#### Managers:

- Ensure staff understand their obligations in accordance with the intent and principles of YSAS Safeguarding Young People Policy and its implementation at a local level.
- Advocate for and promote the rights of young people at a local level.
- Empower and engage young people in the support and implementation of this policy.
- Understand and comply with this policy, including ensuring any suspected child abuse is reported to the YSAS Child Safety Officer, relevant Director and Victoria Police or other statutory authority.
- Comply with all related policies and processes to safeguard young people, including the recruitment and selection of staff.
- Develop opportunities for regular discussion to support a culture of continuous improvement and accountability for the protection of young people, including the facilitation of an annual program/site risk assessment.

#### Staff:

- Comply with the expectations as outlined in this policy, including attendance at child safety training.
- Ensure young people are aware of their rights and responsibilities regarding child safety, including not harming other young people, when accessing YSAS programs.
- Empower and engage young people to report any concerns
- Report any concerns regarding the safety of young people to the YSAS Child Safety Officer, Manager or Director.

#### Child safety officer:

- Understand and comply with the intent and principles of YSAS Safeguarding Young People Policy, including reporting any suspected child abuse to the relevant child protection authority and Victoria Police.
- Fully cooperate with relevant child protection authorities and/or Victoria Police in their investigations of suspected child abuse.
- Directly liaise with child protection authorities and/or Victoria Police in their investigations of suspected child abuse.
- Ensure that appropriate policies and practices are reviewed regularly and access to appropriate training and development is provided to all involved parties.
- Promptly respond to any changes to legislation or advice received from child protection authorities and ensure that changes are brought to the attention of all management levels, including the YSAS Board.
- Be the key contact for young people and staff on any safeguarding young people matter.
- Ensure a timely response to the investigation of suspected child abuse that involves a YSAS young person, employee, volunteer or involved parties.
- Ensure findings of child abuse complaints / investigations are used to continually inform the protection of young people at YSAS.

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