



# Safeguarding Children in RDA

## Child Safe Statement

### Our Commitment

RDA Australia is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people who are involved in our organisation, as well as vulnerable adults. Our policies and procedures seek to address risks to child safety and to establish child safe culture and practices. Across Australia we deliver an active recreation program involving children and young people between the ages of 3 and 18 years in our horse related programs as well as volunteering opportunities for young people from the age of 12 years. We take seriously our responsibility to deliver a recreational environment that is caring, nurturing and safe.

It is the responsibility of everyone at RDA Australia from executive staff to volunteers to:

- Protect children and young people from all forms of abuse, bullying and exploitation by our people;
- be alert to incidents of child abuse and neglect occurring outside of our sport that may have an impact on the children and young people; and
- create and maintain a child safe culture that is understood, endorsed and put into action by all the individuals who work for, volunteer or access our programs and services.

### We are committed to keeping children and young people safe

Our policies communicate our commitment to keeping children, young people and the vulnerable adults that participate in RDA activities safe from abuse and neglect. Copies of these policies are available through the RDA website [www.rda.org.au](http://www.rda.org.au) and regularly communicated to members.

### Our staff and volunteers know the behaviour we expect

We ensure that each person involved in our delivery of services to children, young people and vulnerable adults understands their role and the behaviour we expect in relation to keeping children and young people safe from abuse and neglect through application of the Code of Behaviour. We utilise clear position descriptions which clearly state relevant child safe requirements. We have a Code of Behaviour, which is approved and endorsed from the highest levels of our organisation that outlines our expectations for behaviour towards children and young people. Our staff and volunteers are given a copy of and have access to the Code of Behaviour. Our staff and volunteers indicate, in writing, that they have read and are committed to the Code of Behaviour.

### We minimise the likelihood of recruiting a person who is unsuitable

We have appropriate measures in place to minimise the likelihood that we will recruit staff or volunteer who are unsuitable to work/volunteer with children, young people or people with disabilities. We have recruitment procedures that ensure:

- our child safe commitment is communicated to potential applicants for positions
- face to face interviews are held including experience and working with children and people with disabilities
- two professional references are requested (this means not an immediate family member)
- screening checks are undertaken, including identity, criminal record, working with children or equivalent checks.



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## Induction and training is part of our commitment

We provide all new staff and volunteers with information during their induction about our commitment to keep children safe including our policy, Code of Behaviour and child abuse reporting policy. We have a process for ensuring all staff and volunteers complete child safe training. We support ongoing education and training for our staff and volunteers to ensure child safe information is provided in an ongoing way.

## We encourage the involvement of children, young people and their parents

We involve and communicate with children and young people, and their families in developing a safe, inclusive and supportive environment. We provide information to children and their carers (such as brochures, posters, handbooks, guidelines) about:

- our commitment to keeping children safe and communicating their rights
- the behaviour we expect of our staff and volunteers and of themselves
- our policy about responding to child abuse

We have processes for encouraging two-way communication with children and families. We seek their feedback and have a process for responding. We respect diversity and seek to facilitate effective communication and involvement.

## Our staff and volunteers understand their responsibility for reporting child abuse

Our policy for responding to child abuse is approved and endorsed from the highest levels of our organisation, and applies to all our staff and volunteers. The policy states that:

- staff and volunteers must immediately report abuse or neglect and any concerns with policies, practices or the behaviour of staff and volunteers.
- staff and volunteers must meet any legislated mandatory or other jurisdictional reporting requirements
- staff and volunteers must follow a specified process when reporting abuse or neglect including who will receive reports
- failure to report is serious misconduct

Our staff and volunteers are given a copy of and have access to the policy and understand the implications of the policy for their role. We document any allegation, disclosure or concern regarding child abuse and monitor responses to all allegations, disclosures or concerns.

## We will maintain and review our policies and practices

We are committed to maintaining and reviewing our policies and practices to keep children, young people and vulnerable adults safe from abuse and neglect. We will develop and implement a risk management strategy, including a review of our existing child protection practices, to determine how child-safe our organisation is. Our suite of child safe policies will be: accessible in forms that are easy to understand; have been informed by stakeholder consultation; and are communicated to children, young people and their families, our staff and volunteers and the general public. We regularly review our policies, gain endorsement of changes and advise our staff and volunteers of changes.

	Policy adopted – 26 February 2020
	<i>Reference RDA National Member Protection Policy 1 Jan 2019</i>