

SCYP: Parents/Caregivers Information

Our Commitment

At Aquatic Achievers we consider the health, safety and wellbeing of all children and young people to be our highest priority. We strive to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people through our Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy / Commitment Statement.

Our Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy / Commitment Statement has been adopted approved and endorsed by Aquatic Achievers Board. It underpins a set of policies and procedures in relation to the protection of children and young people which guide:

- the screening and recruitment of our team members
- the behaviour of our team member towards children and young people
- the induction and training of our team member about safeguarding children and young people
- our open and effective communication with children and young people and their parents
- our responses to the abuse and neglect of children if it occurs and
- our maintenance of a safeguarding culture in the organisation.

All team members must ensure that their approach and interactions with children and young people are sensitive, respectful, and inclusive of all backgrounds and abilities. We promote equity and respect diversity by:

- actively anticipating children's diverse circumstances and responding effectively to those with additional vulnerabilities
- by giving all children access to information, support, and complaints processes, and
- paying particular attention to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with a disability and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Our team members are required to:

- undergo an extensive screening process including a Working with Children Check or the equivalent and/or a National Criminal Records Check
- behave professionally and with care towards children and young people including not acting outside the boundaries of their duties or using their position with the organisation to solicit work with or initiate contact with children and young people who are clients/members of our organisation
- understand the important responsibility they have to protect children and young people from all forms of abuse, bullying and exploitation either by our team members or that occurs outside the scope of our operations and services; and
- create and maintain a child safe culture.



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We expect all within our organisation, regardless of their role or level of responsibility, to act to safeguard children from such harm by:

- adopting the practices and behaviour we have set as our standard when carrying out their roles, and
- reporting any abuse or neglect of which they become aware to our management and/or to external authorities responsible for child protection or to police, regardless of whether that abuse is being perpetrated by team members within our organisation, or by those outside our organisation including those from the child's family, extended family, their family's extended network or strangers.

We are dedicated to protecting the children and young people in our community and have successfully achieved Accreditation with the Australian Childhood Foundation's Safeguarding Children Program.

Responding to Child Abuse Reports and Allegations

We consider any form of child abuse including emotional, physical, and sexual abuse, family violence, grooming or neglect as intolerable under any circumstances.

We have a legal, moral and mission driven responsibility to protect children and young people from harm and to ensure that any incident of suspected child abuse is promptly and appropriately dealt with. Our team members are required to report suspected child abuse to their direct supervisor/manager and the child protection authorities or the police. Aquatic Achievers will co-operate with the child protection authorities and police and other agencies as required by law.

Practice & Behaviour Guidelines (Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct)

Aquatic Achievers and team members are required to maintain the highest standards of professional conduct towards children and young people. We have developed the Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct to identify and prevent behaviour that may be harmful to the children and young people in our care. The following is a summary to those Guidelines.

Supervision

Our team members are required to avoid one-to-one unsupervised situations with children and young people to whom we provide services, and (where possible) to conduct all activities and/or discussions with service recipients in view of other team members.



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Transport

Only children and young people who are employees of Aquatic Achievers to be transported by another team member and only in circumstances that are directly related to the delivery of our activities, programs, and services. For example, when an Aquatic Achievers' team member, who is a young person, requires another team member to transport them to an activity, program, or service such as our Gold 1km event being held at another facility. In this circumstance prior authorisation from our Centre Manager and the child/young person's parent/care giver is required.

If the child and young person is not an employee of Aquatic Achievers, we prohibit our team members from providing transportation to children and young people as part of the service we provide.

Overnight Stays

We prohibit overnight stays as part of the service we provide to children and young people.

Positive Guidance

We aim to make children and young people aware of the acceptable limits of their behaviour. Children are encouraged to feel safe and be safe. There are times when our team members may be required to use appropriate behaviour management strategies to ensure an effective and positive environment and the safety and/or wellbeing of children, young people or team members participating on our programs and services.

Any behaviour management strategy used must be fair, respectful, and appropriate to the developmental stage of the children or young people involved.

The child or young person is to be provided with clear directions and given an opportunity to redirect their misbehaviour in a positive way. Under no circumstances are our team members to take disciplinary action involving physical punishment or any form of treatment that could reasonably be considered as degrading, cruel, frightening or humiliating.

Use of language and tone of voice

Language and tone of voice used in the presence of children and young people should not be harmful to children and should provide clear direction, boost their confidence, encourage, or affirm them.

Professional role boundaries

Our team members are not to act outside the confines of their duties, as specified in their position description, when helping to deliver our programs and services. Aquatic Achievers actively discourages our team members to engage with children who participate in Aquatic Achievers programs, in activities such as baby-sitting and weekend trips. Such activities may only occur with prior written approval of the Centre Manager.



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Uniform

Our team members are to wear their Aquatic Achievers uniforms only while involved in delivering service, representing Aquatic Achievers at events, or when travelling to and from work.

Photographs of children and young people

Children and young people are to be photographed by our team members while involved in our programs and services only if:

- The context is directly related to participation in our programs and services
- The child is appropriately dressed and posed
- Prior written parental/guardian authorisation is obtained where the child or young person is identifiable
- The content is captured using a secured Aquatic Achievers device

The following Aquatic Achievers policies and supporting documents must be considered in relation photography:

- Privacy & Media Policy
- Electronic Communication Policy

Use, possession or supply of alcohol or drugs

While on duty, team members must not:

- be under the influence of alcohol and /or an illegal drug
- be incapacitated by any other legal drug such as prescription or over-the-counter drugs
- supply alcohol or drugs (including tobacco) to children and young people participating in our programs

Giving Gifts

Giving of gifts by our service delivery team members to children and young people to whom we provide service is subject to obtaining prior authorisation from the Centre Manager and the parents.

Promoting equity and diversity

All team members must ensure that their approach and interactions with children and young people are sensitive, respectful, and inclusive of all backgrounds and abilities. Where our organisation is involved with children who are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds or who have a disability, our team members will promote their safety (including cultural safety), participation and empowerment.

Further Information

For any concerns or further information, please contact your Centre Leaders or visit the Aquatic Achievers website.

