

SOVEREIGN**HILL**MUSEUMS
ASSOCIATION

CHILD SAFE POLICY

	People & Performance				
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1	Tracey Lewis-Jones	Head of OHS	Updated with changes in Child Safe Guidelines & Child Wellbeing Regulations 2017	SHMA Executive Team	31/01/2017
2	Tracey Lewis-Jones	Head of OHS	Minor grammar & spelling edits	SHMA Executive Team	28/11/2017
3	Sofia Fiusco	Head of Learning	Updated to include requirements of the Victorian Child Safe Guidelines		23/08/2021
4	Tracey Lewis-Jones	Head of OHS	Separated policy & procedure & edits		03/09/2021
5	Kez Tacar	Chief People Officer	Major changes to content of policy		14/09/2021
6	Katrina Nitschke	Chief Museum Officer	Minor updates	SHMA Executive Team	9/11/2022

Child Safe Policy

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1. Scope

All Victorian organisations that provide services or facilities to children are required by law to comply with the Child Safe Standards and Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005.

The purpose of the Child Safe Policy is to ensure that all employees, consultants, contractors or volunteers (workers) engaged by SHMA are aware of our commitment and obligation to creating a child safe organisation.

This policy applies to the following people:

- all workers engaged by SHMA
- organisations and entities which SHMA contracts and provides services across SHMA operations

It applies to a broad range of situations where interaction with children and young people may occur. For example, the Child Safe Policy will apply when staff come into contact with children and young people:

- as part of our Education offering to schools
- in the day to day visitor interactions across the museum

It is important that all staff are aware of their obligations under the **Mandatory Reportable Conduct Process**, whereby allegations of workers misconduct involving children and young people can be made against a staff member even if the conduct occurred outside of their work.

2. Statement of Commitment

SHMA is committed to being a child safe organisation where children feel safe, respected, valued and protected from harm.

Statement of commitment to Child Safety:

- SHMA has zero tolerance of child abuse and all forms of harm to children.

SHMA's goal is to:

- provide all children with a positive and enjoyable experience
- enable access to a wide range of interesting and challenging activities, within a safe, inclusive and supportive environment
- empower children to be creative through practical, hands-on experiences and education programs that encourage their independence and decision making.

Our commitment is grounded by the following principles:

- Safety of all children
- Promoting the cultural safety of Aboriginal children
- Promoting the cultural safety of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Promoting the safety of children with a disability
- Promoting the safety of children of all gender and sexual identity.

Online questions from students for example via the Sovereign Hill Education Blog will be responded to via the generic Sovereign Hill Museum Education email by the Head of Learning or the Learning Program Leader.

Children will be adequately supervised at all times when volunteering at Sovereign Hill. Adequate supervision refers to constant, active and diligent supervision where the responsible adult is in a position to observe each child in their care, respond to their individual needs, and immediately intervene if necessary.

Existing workers will be briefed on this Policy and management will ensure ongoing compliance.

New workers will have this Policy included in their induction packs and training. This policy, supersedes any exiting OHS policy or procedure referencing / relating to child protection or safety.

3. Recruitment

The recruitment and selection of workers aims to support SHMA's commitment to promoting an organisational culture of child safety. SHMA carries out reference checks and police record checks to ensure that the right people are recruited.

For positions that involve contact with children and young people, recruitment should be based on selection criteria which clearly demonstrate commitment to child safety to assist in ensuring that the most appropriate workers are employed. Selection policies and guidelines, including pre-screening activities, are to reflect an understanding of, and commitment to, a child safe environment. Workers can hold a valid/current Victorian Institute of Teaching Registration (VIT) and/or WWCC and undertake a pre-employment National Criminal Check.

Pre-employment National Criminal History Record Checks and Working with Children (WWC) Check are required for all workers.

Workers are required to report all instances of child abuse and suspected child abuse in accordance with their Mandatory Reportable Conduct Process Training.

Mandatory Reportable Conduct Training: <https://elearn.childlink.com.au/login/index.php>

4. Reporting a Child Safety Concern or Complaint

SHMA works to ensure all children and young people, families, workers understand their obligations and know who to tell if they observe abuse, are a victim, or if they notice inappropriate behaviour. SHMA takes all allegations of child abuse and reportable conduct seriously. It is committed to ensuring that such allegations are addressed in accordance with SHMA processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse.

Child safe issues should be reported to the appropriate manager and to the Head of OHS. If a worker member has a reasonable belief that reportable conduct may have occurred, then they must report the incident to the Head of OHS, who will then inform the Chief People Officer. If the incident is a criminal offence, the incident must also be reported to the police on 000.

The following conduct must be reported:

Reportable conduct includes:

- (a) a sexual offence committed against, with or in the presence of, a child, whether or not a criminal proceeding in relation to the offence has been commenced or concluded, or
- (b) sexual misconduct, committed against, with or in the presence of, a child, or
- (c) physical violence committed against, with or in the presence of, a child, or
- (d) any behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child, or
- (e) neglect of a child.

The Head of OHS can be contacted by email at safety@sovereignhillcom.au or by phone on 0448627083.

Please refer to the Mandatory Reportable Conduct Process (Appendix 2 Child Safe Guidelines) on the process for reporting and responding to allegations of reportable conduct.

In order for SHMA to perform its functions under the Child Safe Standards, it may be required to collect personal information about workers and disclose that information to a third party.

Personal information which is collected and/or disclosed about an individual will be managed in accordance with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*.

5. Definitions

Child means a child or young person under the age of 18 years.

Child abuse means a sexual offence committed against, with or in the presence of, a child, whether or not a criminal proceeding in relation to the offence has been commenced or concluded, sexual misconduct, committed against, with or in the presence of, a child, physical violence committed against, with or in the presence of, a child, any behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child or significant neglect of a child.

Child Safe Standards as made under section 17(1) of the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*.

6. More information

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the **Child Safe Guidelines** and the **Volunteer Policy**.

If you have a query about this policy or need more information please contact the Head of OHS.