



Child Safe Environments Policy

For sole trader business Sandy Russo Consulting

28/09/22 – Updated 10/07/23

Purpose of policy

To ensure a Child Safe Environment for all business conducted within my sole trader business Sandy Russo Consulting and it will also apply to any potential future personnel or volunteers.

I/We will:

- take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach on child wellbeing and safety issues
- value and embrace the opinions and views of children and young people
- assist children and young people to build skills that will assist them to participate in society
- are focused, and take action on, the protection of children and young people from harm.

To meet the obligations of the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2016*, I and any potential future personnel or volunteers will provide, and keep up to date, the following:

- a child safe environments policy in place
- met the South Australian working with children check obligations and
- lodge a child safe environments compliance statement with the Department of Human Services.

Commitment to the safety of children and young people

The following section of Sandy Russo Consulting's Child Safe Environments policy refers to [National Principles 1–10](#)

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I and any potential future personnel or volunteers of Sandy Russo Consulting will ensure:

- that children and young people are valued, respected and encouraged to participate and that the safety and protection of children and young people is always the first priority
- that the policy complies with the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017*, *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016* and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
- my/our commitment to diversity e.g. all children and young people are embraced regardless of their abilities, sex, gender, or social economic or cultural background and equity is upheld
- that bullying and harassment will not be tolerated
- that I/we will display information about services that can assist children and young people (such as the Kids Helpline on 1800 55 1800, Youth Helpline on 1300 13 17 19) in areas accessed by them.

Scope of policy

The following section of Sandy Russo Consulting's Child Safe Environments policy refers to [National Principles 1–10](#)

- This policy applies to me and any potential future, staff, employees, contractors, students, volunteers, children, young people and families, etc. of Sandy Russo Consulting
- Sandy Russo Consulting will require people in the organisation to agree in writing to accept and act in accordance with the policy
- Sandy Russo Consulting will require any potential outside parties such as contractors to accept and act on the policy as a condition of contracts or agreements.

Definitions

The following definitions apply to this policy:

Child or young person - persons under 18 years of age.

Complainant – person who makes a complaint.

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Harm - Section 17 of the Safety Act defines ‘harm’ to mean physical or psychological harm (whether caused by an act or omission), including harm caused by sexual, physical, mental or emotional abuse or neglect.

National Police Check - a summary of an individual’s offender history in Australia and a record of their criminal history relating to convictions, finding of guilt or pending court proceedings. They are available from South Australia Police (SAPOL) or organisations accredited by the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission.

It is an organisational decision if a National Police Certificate (NPC) is required for workers or volunteers, however the organisation can no longer use the NPC to assess if a person is suitable to work or volunteer with children in South Australia, this must be determined by a valid, not prohibited Working with Children Check.

Working with Children Check - People working or volunteering with children in South Australia must, by law, have a valid, not prohibited Working with Children Check. A Working with Children Check is an assessment of whether a person poses an unacceptable risk to children. As part of the process, the Screening Unit will look at criminal history, child protection information and other information.

Communication

The following section of **Sandy Russo Consulting’s Child Safe Environments policy** refers to [National Principles 2 and 3](#)

Chapter 8 (Section 114(5)) of the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017* requires that an organisation must, on request provide a copy of the organisation’s child safe environments policies and procedures.

Sandy Russo Consulting’s Child Safe Environments policy will:

- make its child safe policy and procedures available to any future potential employees, volunteers, families, children and young people and on request, it will be provided as part of a welcome pack or on first consult with a student and their family and on www.sandyrussoconsulting.com.au
- employees, volunteers and parents/guardians are required to sign a written statement indicating they have read and will accept and act on the policy.

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Participation of families, children and young people

The following section of Sandy Russo Consulting's Child Safe Environments policy refers to **National Principle 2**

Sandy Russo Consulting informs families, children and young people about their rights and encourages children and young people to participate and provide feedback.

The organisation has programs and resources to educate children and young people on their rights including their right to safety and right to be listened to.

We do this by:

- having and providing age-appropriate posters and information that displays information such as; how to be more child friendly and safe; being safe and respected wherever you are.
- we provide a poster with the Kids Help Line phone number to enable students a means of having access to the service.
- we listen to children and young people and encourage them to be involved through talking through these posters and provide age-appropriate feedback to questions.
- being aware of resources that help educate and develop an understanding of what matters to children and young people through publications on the Commissioner for Children and Young People (CCYP) website <https://www.cyp.com.au/resources-for-educators/>

Code of conduct

The following section of Sandy Russo Consulting's Child Safe Environments policy refers to **National Principle 4 and 6**

Caring for children and young people brings additional responsibilities for myself and any future employees and volunteers of my organisation, Sandy Russo Tutoring. I/we are responsible for promoting and protecting the safety and well-being of children and young people by providing and following a strict code of conduct that can be found on my website <https://sandyrussoconsulting.com.au/>

The code of conduct includes the following expectations of conduct:

- treating everyone (this includes staff, volunteers, students, children, young people and parents) including those of different race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity,

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sexual orientation, age, social class, physical ability or attributes and religious beliefs with respect and honesty and ensure equity is upheld.

- being a positive role model to children and young people in all conduct with them.
- setting clear boundaries about appropriate behaviour between myself and the children and young people in Sandy Russo Tutoring sessions – boundaries help everyone to understand their roles.
- listening and responding appropriately to the views and concerns of children and young people.
- being alert to bullying behaviours and responding promptly and appropriately.
- ensuring another adult is always present or in sight when conducting one-to-one coaching, instruction or other activity.
- being alert to children and young people who are, or may be at risk of harm, and reporting this quickly to the Child Abuse Report Line (13 14 78).
- responding quickly, fairly and transparently to any serious complaints made by a child, young person or their parent/guardian.
- encouraging children and young people to 'have a say' on issues that are important to them.

Recruitment

The following section of **Sandy Russo Consulting's Child Safe Environments policy** refers to **National Principle 5**

Sandy Russo Consulting is a sole trader and is not planning on employing or engaging volunteers that will work with children. If, in the future we do we will only engage the most suitable people to work or volunteer with children and young people, for example:

- position descriptions will include a need for a commitment to child safety and wellbeing.
- I will hold face-to-face interviews that include behavioural questions in relation to child safeguarding.
- I will require at least two referee checks
- Sandy Russo consulting meets the requirements of the *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016* which requires that staff and volunteers have a current, 'not prohibited' Working with Children Check issued by the DHS Screening Unit
- Sandy Russo Consulting will verify the accuracy of the Working with Children Check before employing them to work with children and young people, and for existing employees, you will verify they renew their Working with Children Check every 5 years and the status remains as not prohibited. Verification will be done online through the Organisation Portal via the DHS Screening Unit

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- Sandy Russo Consulting will advise the Screening Unit when the organisation becomes aware of certain information regarding any person involved with the organisation, including any serious criminal offence, child protection information, or disciplinary or misconduct information.
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Supervision, training and support for employees, volunteers

The following section of Sandy Russo Consulting's Child Safe Environments policy refers to [National Principles 5 and 7](#)

Sandy Russo Consulting will ensure that I as the sole provider of services to students will stay informed and be trained in Mandatory Notification RAN every 3 years. I will also ensure that any potential future employees and volunteers that work will students will also need to complete and read the following:

- I will have on file the [Mandatory Notification Information Booklet \(see: https://dhs.sa.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/103179/CSE-Mandatory-notification-information-booklet.PDF\)](https://dhs.sa.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/103179/CSE-Mandatory-notification-information-booklet.PDF)
- I will attend a 'Safe Environments: Through Their Eyes' training course every 3 years or Responding to Risk of Harm – Education and Care (RRHAN-EC) training every 3 years
- I will view the resources Keeping our kids safe at developed by SNAICC at <https://www.snaicc.org.au/policy-and-research/child-safety-and-wellbeing/keeping-our-kids-safe/>
- I will also be involved and attend professional development opportunities to build knowledge and skills regarding the wellbeing and development of children and young people.

Reporting and responding to harm or risk of harm

The following section of Sandy Russo Consulting's Child Safe Environments policy refers to [National Principles 6](#)

Sandy Russo Consulting will ensure, that I, as the sole provider of services to students will, as my legal obligation will carry out the following points:

- report a reasonable belief that a child or young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

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- encourage non-mandated notifiers are encouraged to make voluntary reports about harm or risk of harm to a child or young person.
- any reports regarding the reasonable belief that a child or young person is, or may be, at risk of harm are to be made to the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) on 13 14 78 or if at immediate risk, report to South Australia Police (SAPOL) on 000. In cases involving Aboriginal children and young people, support is provided by Yaitya Tiramangkotti - an Aboriginal team, via the CARL number.
- I will ensure the individual who identifies the harm or risk of harm is the person who makes the report to CARL/SAPOL.
- I will be guided by the relevant authority (CARL/SAPOL) about whether an internal investigation is appropriate.
- Information about all complaints and concerns, including breaches of relevant policies or the Code of Conduct, is recorded and analysed, including in relation to processes, timeframes and record keeping practices. Systemic issues are identified and mitigated through this process.
- I will support children, young people and their families after a report to CARL/SAPOL has been made by ensuring that children and young people know who to talk to if they are feeling unsafe and know what will happen.
- All future adult employees, volunteers etc will have a legal obligation to:
 - report child sexual abuse to the police and
 - to protect a child from sexual abuse
 - failure to meet these obligations may be considered a criminal offence (Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935 (s.64A & s.65))

Reporting and responding to general complaints or feedback

The following section of **Sandy Russo Consulting's Child Safe Environments policy** refers to [National Principles 6](#)

Sandy Russo Consulting will communicate with young children, families and schools through the following methods: face-to-face, on the phone and through emails.

A family or school will have the right to address me about any feedback, concerns or a considered breach of conduct. I will first work towards solving the complaint myself, by negotiating with the family, and/or the school as to when and how the code was breached, and an appropriate way of resolving the issue.

If I cannot successfully resolve a complaint myself, I will seek Mediation to settle the dispute through the Australian Mediation Association Register (AMR) <https://ama.asn.au/find-a-mediator/>

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Risk management

The following section of Sandy Russo Consulting’s Child Safe Environments policy refers to [National Principles 8](#)

The following risk management guide for Sandy Russo Consulting has been developed after reviewing the [risk management guide](#).

Identified risk	Actions to minimise risk
<p>Culture of organisation is not child-safe focussed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • child focused Code of Conduct is in place that sets the behavioural standards expected including what happens when a breach occurs • culture of management reflects our strong commitment to the safety of children and young people • the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations are embedded in policies and procedures • we meet the requirements of the <i>Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017</i> (which mandates child safe environments) and the <i>Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016</i> (which mandates Working with Children Checks)
<p>Organisational staff (including employees, volunteers, students, contractors etc) harm children/young people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recruitment processes including undertaking referee checks to ensure the suitability of persons before they are employed/volunteer with our organisation • interview questions (no prior preparation) should gauge an applicant’s understanding of child safe principles and actions that would be taken to prevent harm to children and young people • all organisational staff have WWCC with ‘not prohibited’ result prior to working with children and young people • WWCCs updated every 5 years and status remains as not prohibited • children and young people and their families are given a copy of our Child Safe Environments policy and complaints and feedback process as part of a welcome/induction pack



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<p>Organisational staff (including employees, volunteers, students, contractors etc) do not understand their obligations to report harm and risk of harm to the Child Abuse Report Line (or SA Police if child/young person is at immediate risk)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all organisational staff trained in Safe Environments – Through their Eyes on commencement and refresher training every 3 years after • all organisational staff trained in Responding to Risk of Harm and Neglect – Education and Care on commencement and refresher training every 3 years after • all organisational staff must abide by the child safe environments policy and Code of Conduct (latter is signed on commencement with organisation)
<p>Physical contact</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • any physical contact must be appropriate to the delivery of services being provided • where physical contact is required, this is undertaken in a safe way by explaining why contact is required and what will happen, and asking the child/young person for their permission (or their family if this is more appropriate) before proceeding • unnecessary physical contact is not allowed
<p>Online communications</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cyber safety and social media guidelines are in place and provided to all organisational staff • appropriate supervision is provided for all online activities • organisational staff must not communicate with children or young people via social media
<p>Supervision</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • children and young people are to be supervised by parents/guardians at all times • when providing one to one consultation with a child or young person, it will be in line of sight of a parent, caregiver, or another adult
<p>Taking images of children and young people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consent of child young person and their parent/guardian required • disclosure will be made as to how the image is to be used and consent must be provided by the child, young person and parent/guardian • images must be presented in a way that de-identifies the child or young person
<p>Physical environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintain a risk register that is reviewed annually to ensure effectiveness • conduct risk assessments for all activities



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure all equipment is in good working order
Privacy and confidentiality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> all documents containing confidential information will be stored privately in a locked filing cabinet (or similar place with restricted access) digital files containing confidential information shall be protected electronically by restricting the access to only those requiring it to perform their duties organisational staff must not disclose information regarding any child or young person without written consent of the child, young person and their parent/guardian
Off-site activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> consent of parent or guardian must be given consent of school setting must be given working within line of sight of a staff member of the school setting is required children and young people have the right to contact their parents, or teacher, if they feel unsafe, uncomfortable, or distressed during the tutoring session
Toileting requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> supervision will be provided by the young person's parent, ensuring the child or young person's right to privacy. phones, cameras and recording devices must not be used in toileting room

Related policies and procedures

The following section of **Sandy Russo Consulting's Child Safe Environments policy** refers to **National Principles 9**

Sandy Russo consulting also has a Code of Conduct Policy and a Privacy Policy available through the website <https://sandyrussoconsulting.com.au>

Policies are reviewed:

- as new or added risks are identified for children or young people, which may require a change in the policy or procedures.
- a critical incident where a child or young person has experienced harm through involvement in the organisation.

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- when concerns are raised by anyone involved in your organisation about child safety or welfare in the organisation.
- if it becomes evident that awareness or compliance to the child safe policy and/or procedures is low
- legislative changes/requirements.
- Sandy Russo Consulting will lodge a new child safe environments compliance statement with Department of Human Services each time a review is held, and policies updated.
- Sandy Russo Consulting will at a minimum, review the policies and procedures once every 5 years as required by the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017*

