



## Child Safety Policy

### Purpose

The Sydney Heritage Fleet (hereafter the SHF) strongly opposes Child Abuse and supports all possible means of Child protection. The SHF accepts that contact and working with Children is a critical responsibility and that Children have the right to be safe and protected at all times. The SHF recognises the importance of having a Child Safety Policy in being proactive in ensuring that all Children feel safe and are protected from harm while in contact with our organisation.

The SHF is committed to the objectives of its Child Safety Policy:

- making the SHF and all activities it conducts a Child safe environment which is respectful, inclusive, transparent and promotes Children's participation;
- ensuring appropriate behaviour and interactions are conducted by Staff and Volunteers while in Contact with Children;
- being proactive in the prevention of Child Abuse within our organisation and community by ensuring all involved with the SHF know that there is no tolerance for any form of Child Abuse;
- ensuring appropriate responses of the organisation to any reports of Child Abuse; and
- complying with applicable Federal and State Child protection legislation and policies.

### 1. Scope

This policy applies to all permanent, temporary and casual employees of Sydney Heritage Fleet as well as contractors and volunteers.

It applies while on SHF premises and/or vessels.

This Policy is intended to complement other relevant SHF policies and be complemented by relevant internal procedures and risk assessments.

### 2. Definitions

**Adult:** A person aged 18 years or more.

**Child:** A person under the age of 18.

**Child Abuse:** Any of the following forms of abuse committed against a Child:

- Physical Abuse;
- Sexual Abuse;
- Emotional Abuse;
- Neglect;
- Exploitation.

**Child Safety:** Any of the following:



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- Minimisation of the physical or health risks to which Children are exposed.
- Protection of Children from all forms of Child Abuse.

**Children:** more than one Child.

**Contact with Children:** Working or participating in an activity that involves Children.

**Emotional Abuse:** A consistent attack on the Child's self-esteem that affects the Child's physical, emotional, social and/or intellectual development. It can take the form of rejection, put-downs, bullying, intimidation, threats, frightening or isolating the Child.

**Exploitation:** Any of the following:

- committing an act of abuse against a Child;
- any involvement with Child pornography;
- Grooming in any form; or
- inciting any person to do any of the above.

**Grooming:** Predatory conduct by an adult to build an emotional connection and trust of a Child to prepare a Child for Sexual Abuse or Exploitation at a later time. Grooming can be conducted in person or online, for example via interaction through social media, web forums and emails.

**Neglect:** The continued failure by a parent or caregiver to provide a Child with the basic things needed for his or her proper growth and development, such as food, clothing, shelter, medical and dental care and adequate supervision.

**Non Reportable Conduct:** includes:

- conduct that is reasonable for the purposes of the discipline, management or care of Children, having regard to the age, maturity, health or other characteristics of the Children and to any relevant codes of conduct or professional standards; or
- the use of physical force that, in all the circumstances, is trivial or negligible, but only if the matter is to be investigated and the result of the investigation recorded under workplace employment procedures.

Note: Examples of conduct that constitute as Non Reportable Conduct include (without limitation) touching a Child in order to attract a child's attention, to guide a Child or to comfort a distressed Child; an educator raising his or her voice in order to attract attention or to restore order in the classroom; and conduct that is established to be accidental.

**Physical Abuse:** Non-accidental injury or pattern of injuries to a Child caused by a parent, caregiver or any other person including SHF employees or volunteers. It includes injuries which are caused by excessive discipline, severe beatings or shakings, cigarette burns, attempted strangulation and female genital mutilation. Injuries include bruising, lacerations or welts, burns, fractures or dislocation of joints. Hitting a Child around the head or neck and/or using a stick, belt or other object to discipline or punishing a Child (in a non-trivial way) is a crime.



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**Reportable Conduct:** Any sexual offence or sexual misconduct, committed against, with or in the presence of a Child (including a Child pornography offence), or any assault, ill treatment, or Neglect of a child, or any behaviour that causes psychological harm to a Child whether or not, in any case, with the consent of the Child.

**Sexual Abuse:** The use of power over a Child to involve them in sexual activity. Sexual Abuse covers a wide range of sexual activities including both contact and non-contact situations. Contact situations can involve fondling of the Child's genitals, being forced to touch somebody else's genitals, masturbation, oral sex, vaginal or anal penetration by a penis, finger or other object. Non-contact abuse can involve obscene calls or remarks made in any written form, exposure to pornography or being photographed for pornography.

**Staff/Employees:** Paid person/s employed or contracted by the organisation.

**Volunteer:** An SHF member who undertakes unpaid work within the organisation.

### 3. Risk Management

The SHF must identify any Child Safety risks in its activities and programs including:

- in recruitment and screening procedures
- in risk assessments of all activities involving persons under the age of 18; and
- in SHF consideration of partnership with another organisation.

Risk assessments should

- identify risks;
- classify any high risk positions, individuals and activities; and
- document steps to be taken to reduce or remove risks.

### 4. Working with Children Checks

All Staff and Volunteers who have Contact with Children who are not in the care of their parent or legal guardian must undergo a Working with Children Check undertaken through the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian. Prior to the commencement of their duties, all SHF Staff and Volunteers whose duties involve Contact with Children will have their Working with Children Check numbers verified and recorded.

Responsibility for ensuring such checks are undertaken and verified rests with the Child Safety Officer.

Procedures relating to Working with Children Checks can be found in section 5 of the SHF Child Safety Procedures document.



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### **5. Code of Conduct**

As a part of the SHF's commitment to being a Child Safe organisation all Staff and Volunteers shall sign the Child Safety Code of Conduct (Appendix 1).

For those working in activities that involve direct Contact with Children, the Code of Conduct must be signed prior to the commencement of their duties.

The purposes of the Code of Conduct include:

- to clarify what is acceptable behaviour and enhance the safety and wellbeing of the Children; and
- to protect Staff, Volunteers and the organisation.

### **6. Child Safety Officer**

The SHF Board will appoint a Child Safety Officer to act as their delegate on all matters pertaining to Child Safety and protection, including meeting any obligations under the applicable Acts. As of 27.02.19 the current appointed Child Safety Officer is Briana McDonald.

The roles and responsibilities of the Child Safety Officer can be found in section 6 of the SHF Child Safety Procedures document.

### **7. Responsibilities of SHF, Staff and Volunteers**

The SHF recognises that any allegation of abuse involves:

- the right of the Child to be listened to, protected and supported;
- the right of the Child and their families to have their concerns acted on;
- the right of the alleged perpetrator to a fair process;
- everyone's right to privacy; and
- SHF's legal obligations in relation to mandatory reporting.

#### **Responsible Persons**

All SHF Staff and Volunteers are responsible for reporting allegations or suspected incidents of Child Abuse or breach of the Child Safety Code of Conduct.

All allegations of Child Abuse must be reported in writing to the Child Safety Officer.

As a mandatory reporter, all alleged or suspected incidents of Child Abuse brought to the Youth Program Supervisor's attention must be assessed using the Mandatory Reporter's Guide and reported to the Child Protection Helpline and the Department of Family and Community Services by the Youth Program Supervisor.



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In the case of suspected Child Abuse or Neglect, the concern should be reported to the Child Protection Helpline on 132 111. The online Mandatory Reporter Guide provides guidance to anyone who is unsure whether the concern reaches the threshold for reporting to the Helpline. The Mandatory Reporter Guide is at

<https://reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/s/mrg>

### Types of Allegations

All SHF Staff and Volunteers have a responsibility to report:

- suspicion of Child Abuse
- disclosure of Child Abuse
- breach or suspected breach of the Child Safety Code of Conduct

### Making an Allegation

A Child, parent, accompanying adult or any Staff or Volunteer of the SHF can make an allegation or raise a concern by:

- a face to face meeting with the CSO
- a phone call to the Child Safety Officer contact number
- an email to the Child Safety Officer email address: [youthprograms@shf.org.au](mailto:youthprograms@shf.org.au)
- a letter to the SHF's address: Wharf 7, 58 Pirrama Rd, Pyrmont 2009

### Immediate Response to an allegation:

If an SHF Staff member or Volunteer becomes aware of an incident of

- Child Abuse or what might reasonably be suspected to be Child Abuse; and/or
- A breach or suspected breach of the Child Safety Code of Conduct;

they must immediately complete an incident report and report the allegation to the Child Safety Officer via a face to face meeting, phone call or email.

The person making or receiving the initial allegation **must not:**

- attempt to investigate the allegation;
- inform the person against whom the allegation is made; or
- discuss the matter unless it is part of the official investigation process.

If the child is in immediate danger call 000.

Procedures relating to responding to allegations and investigation process can be found in section 7 of the SHF Child Safety Procedures document.

## 8. Drugs and Alcohol



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The SHF recognises that the use of alcohol or illegal drugs by Staff and Volunteers can affect the safety and well-being of the Children accessing SHF activities, the integrity and professionalism of the SHF, and the degree to which Staff and Volunteers behave as appropriate role models.

Staff and Volunteers:

- may not attend any Child orientated activity if affected by alcohol or illegal drugs;
- may not possess, supply or use alcohol or illegal drugs during the running of any activity involving Children.

### 9. Social Media

The SHF recognises that social media can pose a threat to the safety and wellbeing of Children.

Staff and Volunteers:

- must not seek to establish social contact with Children participating in SHF activities outside of their SHF duties, including on social media.
- must not publish photographs of Children participating in SHF activities on their personal accounts must not photograph or publish photographs of a Child/Children on SHF accounts without written consent from the Child's/Children's legal parent or guardian.

### 10. Further information

For further information on this policy please contact the General Manager (employees) or Volunteer Services (volunteers/members) [vservices@shf.org.au](mailto:vservices@shf.org.au), who will direct you to the relevant person/team.

### 11. References

Legislation:

- *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)*;
- *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Regulation 2012 (NSW)*;
- *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 (NSW)*;
- *Child Protection (Working with Children) Regulations 2013 (NSW)*;
- *Child Protection (Working with Children) Amendment (Miscellaneous) Regulations 2013 (NSW)*;
- *Child Protection (Working With Children) Amendment (Statutory Review) Act 2018*;
- *Victims Rights and Support Act 2013*;
- *Ombudsman Act 1974 (Part 3A) (NSW)*;
- *Criminal Code Act 1995 (Commonwealth)*; and
- *Crimes Act 1900 (NSW)*.



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### **SHF Policies**

- Sydney Heritage Fleet Constitution (under review)
- Sydney Heritage Fleet Social Media and Communications Policy, 2018
- Sydney Heritage Fleet Complaint Handling Policy (to be written)
- Sydney Heritage Fleet Child Safety Procedures, 2019

### **12. Approval and Review**

Approved by the Sydney Maritime Museum Ltd Board of Directors on 27.02.19

This policy will be reviewed and revised annually or as required by the Child Safety Officer. Feedback will be sought from SHF Staff and Volunteers. The review will assess policy success and adherence. The review will also implement necessary alterations due to updated information and Child Safety legislation



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### APPENDIX 1 SHF CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the Sydney Heritage Fleet's current Child Safety Policy and agree that in the course of my association with the Sydney Heritage Fleet (SHF), I must:

- comply with relevant policy, procedures and guidelines and with instructions from supervising crew;
- treat Children with respect regardless of race, colour, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status;
- ensure that the language I use when with Children is age and culturally appropriate and not harassing, abusive, sexually provocative or demeaning;
- ensure that I do not engage in any form of sexual intercourse or sexual activity with Children,
- ensure that I do not possess, supply or use alcohol or illegal drugs during the running of any activity involving Children;
- wherever possible, ensure that another Adult is present when working in the proximity of Children;
- ensure that I do not invite unaccompanied Children to any area of the ship or wharf or to meet me away from the ship;
- ensure that I sleep in a section of the ship that is not close to Children unless absolutely necessary, in which case I must obtain my supervisor's permission, and ensure that another Adult is present;
- use any computers, mobile phones, video cameras, cameras or social media appropriately, and never exploit or harass Children or access Child Exploitation material through any medium;
- not seek to establish social contact with Children participating in SHF activities outside of my SHF duties, including on social media;
- not use physical punishment on Children;
- comply with all relevant Australian and local legislation; and
- immediately report concerns or allegations of Child Exploitation and abuse and policy non-compliance in accordance with appropriate procedures.

Further, when photographing or filming a Child or using Children's images for work-related purposes, I must:



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- obtain informed consent from the Child and parent or guardian of the Child before photographing or filming a child. As part of this I must explain how the photograph or film will be used;
- ensure that photographs, films, videos and DVDs present Children in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner. Children should be adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive;
- ensure that images are honest representations of the context and the facts; and
- ensure that file labels, meta data or text descriptions do not reveal identifying information about a Child when sending images electronically or publishing images in any form.

I understand that the onus is on me, as a person associated with the SHF, to use common sense and avoid actions or behaviours that could be construed as Child Abuse and/or Exploitation.

Signed:

Name:

Date: