

Every Nation Melbourne Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Introduction

Every Nation Melbourne is committed to providing a child-safe and child-friendly environment that fosters children's flourishing and wellbeing. We have a zero tolerance approach to child abuse and harm.

Every Nation Melbourne adopts the ChildSafe SP3 system and is committed to sound implementation of it. This policy is intended to help Every Nation Melbourne achieve a widespread culture of prioritising child safety and wellbeing.

This policy must be followed by every person involved in ministry in Every Nation Melbourne. A ministry is any activity authorised by Every Nation Melbourne.

Definitions

Executive Committee means the President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and two General Representatives.

Child abuse means:

- a sexual offence committed against a child
- an offence committed against a child under section 49M(1) of the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic), such as grooming
- physical violence against a child
- causing serious emotional or psychological harm to a child
- serious neglect of a child.
- Harm is damage to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child or young person, including as a result of child abuse by adults or the conduct of other children. It includes physical, emotional, sexual and psychological harm. Harm can arise from a single act or event and can also be cumulative, that is, arising as a result of a series of acts or events over a period of time.

Child/Children means a person who is under the age of 18 years.

Concerns and complaints

A concern refers to any potential issue that could impact negatively on the safety and wellbeing of children.

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction to Every Nation Melbourne related to one or more of the following:

- our services or dealings with individuals
- allegations of abuse or misconduct by a staff member, a volunteer or another individual associated with Every Nation Melbourne

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- disclosures of abuse or harm made by a child or young person
- the conduct of a child or young person at Every Nation Melbourne
- the inadequate handling of a prior concern
- general concerns about the safety of a group of children or activity.

The People Responsible

The Executive Committee accepts ultimate responsibility for ensuring Every Nation Melbourne is child-safe. The Executive Committee has the role of making sure Every Nation Melbourne prioritises children's safety and that action is taken when anyone raises concerns about children's safety. They will also champion and model a child safe culture at Every Nation Melbourne. The Executive Committee will make sure that staff and volunteers are conducting risk assessments and taking action to manage risks in accordance with this policy. They will also ensure that appropriate child safety training for staff and volunteers is identified and completed. The Executive Committee will review the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy annually.

The Executive Committee appoints Ken Johnston as Risk Management Officer ('RMO'). The RMO is responsible for overseeing the integration of ChildSafe SP3 into Every Nation Melbourne as a whole, and reporting each half year to the Executive Committee on this.

The Coordinators in Every Nation Melbourne, and their respective ministry areas, are set out in Item 1, Schedule 1. Each Coordinator is responsible for ensuring the implementation of ChildSafe SP3 into their ministry area, and reporting quarterly to the RMO on this.

Team Leaders are the people in Every Nation Melbourne, who hold recognised positions in, or who are responsible for, Team Members and participants in Church ministries. Team Members are unpaid people who are invited by Team Leaders to assist them in their ministry.

Beyond this we encourage anyone involved with Every Nation Melbourne to report a child safety concern. The Executive Committee will work to create a positive culture around reporting so that people feel comfortable to raise concerns. Everyone at Every Nation Melbourne has a role in identifying and managing risks of child abuse and harm.

Screening of Staff and Volunteers

A person must have a valid 'Working with Children Check', and be screened (including reference-checked) in accordance with the Appointment Procedure before serving in any ministry position listed in Item 2, Schedule 1.

A person who has been charged with a violent or sexually-related offence (whether convicted or not) cannot be involved in child-related programs or work in immediate proximity to child-related programs.

Training and Child Safety Persons

The RMO, Coordinators, Team Leaders and Team Members must be trained (face-to face and online) in accordance with the Training Procedure.

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The RMO must maintain a training register. Refresher training must be held every 2 years.

Child safety persons are introduced to children so they know and understand who the appointed officers are, and how and when they may contact them. Photos and names of the child safety persons are displayed on our website.

Accountability

No-one is accountable to themselves. Everyone is accountable to someone-else.

A Team Member or Team Leader cannot go ahead with an activity unless 'Permission to-Proceed' has been granted by the Coordinator using the Permission to Proceed Procedure. This is a critical, foundational principle for all ministries at Every Nation Melbourne.

General Rules for Conduct

Every person involved in ministry at Every Nation Melbourne must treat the safety and care of children as paramount.

Every Nation Melbourne adopts the Code of Practice set out in pages 15 - 28 of the SP3 Team Members Guide. Each person involved in ministry in Every Nation Melbourne, including every Team Member, Team Leader and Coordinator, must comply with the Code of Practice. Failure to do so will result in discipline under the Discipline Procedure.

Incident Reporting & Complaint Procedure

Allegations of abuse are very serious and require a high degree of care when handling. Children should be believed.

Incidents must be reported in accordance with the Child Harm & Abuse Complaint Policy, recorded on an Incident Report, and where applicable investigated in accordance with the Investigations Procedure. Steps must be taken to ensure the safety of children while an investigation is underway. These steps may include:

- Staff and volunteers being stood down during an investigation or terminated following an investigation
- Staff and volunteers having their duties altered so they do not engage with children at Every Nation Melbourne
- Not allowing unsupervised contact with children at Every Nation Melbourne

Complaints can be emailed to complaints@enmelbourne.org or you can speak with the Risk Management Officer or any member of the Executive Committee. If there is concern for the immediate safety of a child, immediately call 000.

The Commission for Children and Young People Reportable Conduct Scheme applies to Every Nation Melbourne and its staff and volunteers and will be contacted in accordance with State Legislation.

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Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children

Every Nation Melbourne is publicly committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the First Nations people of Australia.

Every Nation Melbourne Inc. publicly commits to the safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. We have expressed this commitment in this document and also on our website. This commitment includes an organisation wide posture to ensure:

1. A child's ability to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights is encouraged and actively supported.
2. The organisation actively supports and facilitates participation and inclusion within it by Aboriginal children, young people and their families.
3. All of the organisation's policies, procedures, systems and processes together create a culturally safe and inclusive environment and meet the needs of Aboriginal children, young people and their families.
4. The organisation pays particular attention to the needs of Aboriginal children and young people and provides/promotes a culturally safe environment for them.

All staff and volunteers must encourage and support children to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights. Staff and volunteers must actively support and facilitate participation and inclusion within the organisation by Aboriginal children and their families.

At Every Nation Melbourne racism will not be tolerated. Staff and volunteers who have been found to engage in or promote racist rhetoric will be required to meet a representative of the Executive Committee for a disciplinary meeting. It is intended the nature of this meeting will be rehabilitative and educational but in some contexts the Executive Committee reserves recourse to punitive actions.

The Executive Committee has a responsibility to help everyone involved in Every Nation Melbourne to acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal culture and understand its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children.

Relevant legislation and standards

This policy is made in accordance with relevant legislation and standards in mind, including but not limited to:

- [Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 \(Vic\)](#)
- [Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 \(Vic\)](#)
- [Crimes Act 1958 \(Vic\)](#) (including Failure to Protect and Failure to Disclose offences)
- [Wrongs Act 1958 \(Vic\)](#) (including Part XIII – Organisational liability for child abuse)
- [Reportable Conduct Scheme](#)
- [Child Safe Standards](#)

Record-keeping and Information Sharing

Information and documents that contain personal information must be stored confidentially and securely in accordance with Every Nation Melbourne Privacy Policy. All child safety complaints,

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concerns, incidents and near misses will be recorded in the incident reporting system, Safety Management Online.

Records which may assist with the investigation of a complaint or safety concern will be identified and kept as part of the record of an investigation. Records will be kept even if an investigation does not substantiate a complaint. We will record and keep the outcome of any investigations, and the resolution of any complaints. This includes findings made, reasons for decisions and actions taken. Records will be stored securely and kept by Every Nation Melbourne for at least 45 years.

Every Nation Melbourne may share relevant information to promote the safety and wellbeing of children, where it is appropriate and in their best interests. Every Nation Melbourne will keep information about complaints confidential, except where it is necessary to share information to respond properly to a complaint or to prioritise child safety. We may also need to share information about incidents or complaints with external authorities to comply with the law or to prioritise safety.

Other documents

The procedures and other documents that will be used by Every Nation Melbourne to implement this policy are set out in Items 3 and 4 in Schedule 1. Review 23. This policy must be reviewed and updated by June 30, 2021. The person responsible for this is named in Item 5 of Schedule 1.

Related documents include:

- Every Nation Melbourne Code of Conduct
- Every Nation Melbourne Child Harm Abuse and Complaint Policy
- Every Nation Melbourne Privacy Policy

This policy was adopted by resolution of the Executive Committee on December , 2019.



Signature of President



SCHEDULE 1

Item #	Description	Names and Positions
1.	The Coordinators in Every Nation Melbourne:	Keira Johnston for Kids Ministry
2.	The people that must have valid Working with Children Checks and be screened:	Each Church Staff Member Each Kids Church Worker Each Youth Ministry Leader
3.	Primary policies and procedures:	This Child Safe Policy The Child Harm, Abuse & Complaint Policy Recruitment procedure and/or Leader appointment procedure (CSE3-OA) Permission to proceed (CSE3-CP) Privacy policy
4.	Other relevant documents:	Training procedure Incident report form (CSE3-IR) Risk assessment procedure (CSE3-SS) Discipline procedure Resources summary index (CSE3-SP3R)
5.	Person responsible for ensuring policy is reviewed and updated:	Ken Johnston