

THE CHILD SAFE/CHILD PROTECTION POLICY FOR Home Based Learning Network of WA

This Child Safety Policy has been adopted by HBLN

This policy demonstrates the strong commitment of HBLN, Event Organisers, instructors and volunteers to child safety and establishing and maintaining child safe and child friendly environments.

Commitment to safety of young people

All young people who access the services of HBLN have a right to feel and be safe.

HBLN and Event Organisers(s) are committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people accessing our services and the welfare of the children in our care will always be our first priority. We aim to create a child safe and child friendly environment where young people feel safe and enjoy learning.

Where personal contact is required as part of the training provided, the appropriate procedures will be explained to the young person prior to the training being undertaken.

Scope

This policy applies to all instructors, volunteers, young people, visitors and members/event participants who access the services of HBLN.

Young people's rights to safety and participation

HBLN, event organisers, instructors and volunteers encourage young people to express their views, and make suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect young people. We encourage all young people who access our services to 'have a say' about those things that are important to them. We value diversity and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices.

We advise young people about what they can do if they feel unsafe. We listen to and act on any concerns young people, or their parents, raise with us.

Recruitment of employees and volunteers

HBLN will be diligent in the recruitment and screening of instructors and volunteers. Our statement of commitment to child safety and our requirements are included in all advertisements.

HBLN and Event Organiser(S)conduct criminal history assessments for people working with children, as required by *Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004* and subsequent amendments.

Support for instructors and volunteers

HBLN seeks to attract and retain the best instructors and volunteers. We provide support and supervision so people feel valued, respected and fairly treated. HBLN and Event Organisers have a code of conduct to provide guidance to our instructors and volunteers, all of whom acknowledge the requirements of the code. We also have a grievance procedure so that we can ensure that all issues raised can be addressed in a fair and equitable matter.

Reporting and responding to suspected abuse and neglect

HBLN will not tolerate incidents of child abuse.

HBLN and Event Organiser(s) are responsible for ensuring that instructors and volunteers are aware how to make appropriate reports of abuse.

Instructors and volunteers must notify the Department of Child Protection 1 800 622 258 as soon as practicable if they have a reasonable suspicion that a young person has been or is being abused or neglected.

A person does not necessarily exhaust his or her duty of care to a child by making a report to the Department of Child Protection – they may still have a role in supporting the child or young person. For example, instructors and volunteers may also report any form of abuse to HBLN for further support or to ensure that Event Organiser(s) take all reasonable steps to keep the child and others safe.

HBLN will support any instructor or volunteer that makes a report to the Department of Child Protection.

The Child Protection contact is the Event Organiser(s)

Related Policies and Procedures

The following policies and procedures also support HBLN child safe policy:

- Code of Conduct
- Template statement signed by instructor and volunteers indicating that they have read and will abide by the HBLN child safe policy
- Instructor and volunteer recruitment processes (including those relating to conducting criminal history assessments)
- Risk Management Strategy

Definitions of the following terms are included in the attached appendix:

Child, Child Abuse, Child Protection Contact Person, Trainer, Young Person.

THE CHILD SAFE/CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

DEFINITIONS

Child (Young person) – A child means a person under 18 years of age

Child Abuse – Children can be abused in different ways and child abuse includes a wide range of acts of omission and commission.

Physical Abuse – is commonly characterized by physical injury resulting from practices such as hitting, punching, kicking (marks from belt buckles, fingers); shaking (particularly young babies); burning (irons, cigarettes), biting, pulling out hair; alcohol or other drug administration.

Sexual Abuse – occurs when someone in a position of power to the child uses his/her power to involve the child in sexual activity. Behaviour can include sexual suggestion; exhibitionism, mutual masturbation, oral sex; showing pornographic material e.g. DVDs, internet; using children in the production of pornographic material; penile or other penetration of the genital or anal region; child prostitution.

Emotional Abuse – tends to be a chronic behavioural pattern directed at a child whereby a child's self esteem and social competence are undermined or eroded over time. Behaviours may include devaluing, ignoring, rejecting, corrupting, isolating, terrorising, chronic or extreme domestic violence in the children's presence.

Neglect – is characterized by the failure to provide for the child's basic needs. Behaviours may include inadequate supervision of young children for long periods of time; failure to provide adequate nutrition, clothing or personal hygiene; failure to provide needed or appropriate health care/medical treatment; disregard for potential hazards in the home; forcing the child to leave home early; allowing children to engage in chronic truancy.

Child Protection Contact Person – the Event Organiser(s) to be responsible for child protection matters during the event. The HBLN Coordinator will ensure that HBLN child protection procedures conform to the requirements of the relevant jurisdiction.

Criminal history assessment: a decision about whether a person is suitable to work with children based on the person's criminal history (if any) and the assessed risk of harm to children who receive the service.

Instructor – any person over the age of 18 who is contracted by HBLN or the Event Organiser(s) and is responsible for the care and safety of children in a recognised training course delivered under the HBLN.

Young person – term used instead of the word child to describe a person under the age of 18.