

Procedure number	GRM021	Version	03
Drafted by	Operations Manager	Approved by	NCEO
Approved date	June 2024	Review date	June 2026
NSMHS 2010 Reference	Standard 2 – Safety		

GROW is committed to providing a safe environment for all children and young people attending the program and any social events. Our policy complies with the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017, and the Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016 and aligns with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

GROW values and respects children and young people regardless of their abilities, sex, gender, or social, economic, or cultural background. Bullying and harassment won't be tolerated.

Scope of policy

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, work placement students and contractors. They are required to accept and act in accordance with the policy.

Communication

This child-safe policy and related documents are available to children, young people, and their families on our website.

This child-safe policy and related documents are provided to all employees, volunteers, work placement students and contractors as part of their induction following recruitment.

We provide clear age-appropriate or developmentally appropriate explanations to children and young people including their right to safety, their right to be listened to and that they can provide feedback or make a complaint if they have a concern. The complaints can be made following the complaint procedure on GROW's website for each relevant program such as, but not limited to, Get Growing, Youth Program Groups and Socials.

Code of Conduct

Caring for children and young people brings additional responsibilities for all employees, volunteers, work placement students and contractors. We are responsible for promoting and protecting the safety and well-being of children and young people by:

- Complying with the organisation's child-safe policy at all times and taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and protection of children and young people.
- Treating everyone including those of different races, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical ability or attributes and religious beliefs with respect and honesty and ensuring equity is upheld.
- Being a positive role model to children and young people in all conduct.
- Setting clear boundaries and maintaining professional, ethical, and appropriate behaviors with children and young people – boundaries help everyone to understand their roles and responsibilities.
- Listening and responding appropriately to the views and concerns of children and young people
- Being alert to bullying behaviors and responding promptly and appropriately.

- Ensuring another approved support person is always present or in sight when conducting Get Growing or other activities with children.
- Being alert to children and young people who have been harmed or may be at risk of harm and reporting any concern quickly to the Child Abuse Report Line.
- Responding quickly, fairly, and transparently to any complaints made by a child, young person, or their parent/guardian.
- Encouraging children and young people to 'have a say' on issues during Get Growing and Youth program groups that are important to them.

Employees, volunteers, work placement students or contractors must not:

- Engage in rough physical games.
- Share any personal information such as but not limited to contact numbers, address, social media profiles.
- Supervise or be on their own with any other person's child when engaged in Grow's social activities: the parent/guardian is responsible for the supervision of the child. For example, but not limited to, walking, and sleeping activities.
- Develop any 'special' relationships with children and young people that could be seen as favoritism such as the offering of gifts or special treatment.
- Do things of a personal nature that a child or young person can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes.
- Discriminate any child or young person because of age, gender, cultural background, religion, vulnerability, or sexuality.

Breaches or suspected breaches of GROW's Code of Conduct by employees, volunteers, work placement students or contractors should be reported as soon as practicable to management either in person or via email at National@grow.org.au. Breaches or suspected breaches of GROW's Code of Conduct will be taken seriously and dealt with quickly, fairly, and transparently.

Any employee, volunteer, work placement student or contractor who breaches the Code of Conduct will face disciplinary action and, depending on the severity of the breach, may have their employment or contract terminated.

Recruitment

To ensure we engage the most suitable people to work with children and young people we have the following recruitment practices in place:

- Our commitment to child safety is included in all job advertisements.
- Clear position descriptions that include our commitment to child safety and wellbeing.
- Face-to-face interviews that use behavioral questions to determine the applicant's knowledge of child safety and protection.
- At least two referee checks and qualification checks.
- Requirement to provide current Working with Children Checks (WWCC).

All employees, volunteers, work placement students or contractors working in a role with children and young people must hold a current, not prohibited WWCC issued by the Screening Unit of the Department of Human Services or equivalent departments and provide evidence of this

prior to employment and renew every 5 years. GROW will link all WWCCs and will verify the accuracy of all WWCCs in the Department of Human Services Screening Unit portal as required.

GROW will immediately contact the Department of Human Services Screening Unit when we become aware of assessable information regarding any person involved with GROW, including any serious criminal offence, child protection information, or disciplinary or misconduct information.

Training, supervision, and support

We have strategies to train, educate and support employees, volunteers, work placement students and contractors to understand our organisation's child-safe policy, their mandatory reporting obligations, how to build culturally safe environments and their responsibilities to create a child-safe and friendly environment. Our strategies include:

- Training:
 - as part of their induction, ensure all workers read and understand the Mandatory Reporting Information Booklet available at: https://dhs.sa.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/103179/CSE-Mandatory-notification-information-booklet.PDF
 - include child safety as a standing item on branch staff meeting agendas.
- Supervision:
 - regular supervision by the Manager and staff that includes a focus on child safety and wellbeing.
- Support:
 - an induction process for all new employees, volunteers, work placement students and contractors including a copy of this policy and procedure documents.

Reporting and responding to harm or risk of harm.

We aim to ensure that children and young people are safe from harm and risk of 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.

Mandated reporters in our organisation are employees, volunteers, work placement students and contractors who:

- provide services to children and young people.
- hold a management position in the organisation the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of those services to children and young people.

Mandated reporters have a legal obligation to report to the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) on 13 14 78 as soon as practicable if they have a suspicion that a child or young person has been harmed or may be at risk of harm. If the child or young person is at immediate risk, report to Australian Police 000.

Even if not a mandated reporter, any person can report harm or risk of harm to a child or young person. The individual who identifies the harm or risk of harm is encouraged to make the report to

state authorities and can request support from another employee to do so if required.

Information about making appropriate reports of harm or risk of harm is state-based and available online.

All adult employees/volunteers (even if not mandated reporters) have a legal obligation to report child sexual abuse by another worker to the police and to protect a child from sexual abuse by another worker. Failure to meet these obligations may be considered a criminal offence.

Following a report being made to your state authorities, employees/volunteers must make an internal report to management.

We will be guided by the Department for Child Protection and/or authorities after a report has been made as to whether we can conduct an internal investigation.

If an employee/volunteer/work placement student or contractor is reported to the Department for Child Protection and/or authorities for causing harm or risk of harm to a child or young person, they will be removed from any role that involves working with any child or young person until authorities have concluded their investigation.

Following a report to the Department for Child Protection and/or authorities we will support the child or young person in accordance with advice from the authorities.

We will document all information received regarding the report and store this securely in a separate file.

Reporting and responding to general complaints or feedback.

Providing opportunities for complaints and feedback ensures that children, young people, and their families feel valued and respected and enables us to improve the quality of our service.

Compliments, complaints or feedback can be provided directly to management through the GROW website. <https://grow.org.au/complaints-policy/>

We will deal with all complaints and feedback received promptly, sensitively, and fairly. We will:

- listen to the complaint/feedback.
- the person receiving the complaint will make a record of it.
- advise of the time expected for an outcome.
- if an employee receives a complaint, they must forward it to management as soon as possible.
- management will respond to the complainant with an outcome in a timely manner.
- document and securely store decisions and actions taken in response to complaints and feedback in accordance with confidentiality.
- make sure that procedural fairness is always followed.

If the child, young person or their family is not happy with the outcome of the complaints process they can contact the Commissioner for Children and Young People in each state.

- Australian Human Rights Commission Online: www.humanrights.gov.au.
- Equal Opportunities Commission in each state

Risk Management

Identified risk	Actions to minimise risk
Physical contact	<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.
Online communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cyber safety and social media guidelines are in place and provided to all employees and volunteers. appropriate supervision is provided for all online activities. Employees/volunteers/contractors must not communicate with children or young people via social media.
Transport of children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employees/Volunteers must not transport a child or young person.
Supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and young people are to be supervised by parents/guardians at all times. Where Get Growing is delivered in a school, it must be in the presence of a school support staff member.
Taking images of children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employees or volunteers must not take pictures of any children without written consent from their parents.
The physical environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct risk assessments for all Grow Group activities. Ensure all equipment is in good working order.
Privacy and confidentiality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All documents containing confidential information about a child or young person will be stored privately in a locked filing cabinet (or similar place with restricted access) Employees must not disclose information regarding any child or young person.

Related policies and procedures

- Appendix 1 – Checklist for child safety requirements at all grow socials.
- GRM010 Grow Child Safety Procedure
- GRM55_Form_Risk_Assessment_Checklist_for_Venues
- GRM001_Policy_Risk_Management_and_Framework
- GRM011_Procedure_Group_and_Social_Venue_Suitability_and_Safety
- GRM018_Policy_Safe_Transportation_of_GROW_Members
- GRM52_Form_Incident_Accident_Report
- GRM56_Form_Risk_Assessment_Live-in_Weekend
- GRM61_Form_Information_and_Acknowledgement_for_minors_attending_GROW
- GRM67_Form_Venue_Overview

Policy Review

We will, at a minimum, review this policy and the related procedures once every 2 years as required by the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017. We will also review this policy when:

- 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
- concerns are raised by anyone involved in your organisation about child safety or welfare in the organisation
- awareness or compliance to the child safe policy and/or procedures is low
- legislative changes/requirements.

We will lodge a new child safe environments compliance statement with the Department of Human Services each time we review and update this policy.

APPENDIX -1

CHECKLIST FOR CHILD SAFETY REQUIREMENTS AT ALL GROW SOCIALS

All GROW socials are alcohol and drug free events. People cannot attend when under the influence of either. GROW socials are to be gentle – no aggression or intimidation or similar allowed. Please call emergency numbers where there are any aggressive or violent behaviors and remove yourselves from the area to safety. Please contact your program worker or manager in your state to report this as an incident immediately or within the following 24 hours.

SL	Checklist	Answer/Notes
1.	How many children attending this social? A child is any person under the age of 18	
2.	Is the legal parent or guardian present for each child?	
3.	Is the Organiser attending and do they have a WWCC?	
•	Child Safety Requirements	
4.	Each child must only be supervised by their legal parent/guardian	
5.	No other person can be alone with any child present at this social at any time	
6.	No other person is to touch a child at this social	
7.	No other person is to take a child to the toilet or any other venue or activity	
8.	No other person except the legal parent/guardian is to give any food, drink, or medication to the child present at this social	
9.	No GROW social can be held at a venue where alcohol is served	
10.	Do not share any personal information at all with a child	
11.	People must not discriminate toward any person or child attending the social/activities	