

Central Community Centre Inc

Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

Glossary of Terms

1. Involved Personnel are defined as:
 - All persons and their supervisors with direct contact with children
 - All Rabbinic, Chazzan, Choir and Mashgiach staff
 - The CCC Committee Members
 - The CCC Youth Leader
 - All Shule staff, casual employees, contractors, leaders and volunteers
 - Anyone involved in dealing with reports or allegations of child abuse or with access to children or young people's records
2. A Leader is defined as any person who:
 - is above the age of 18 years old and/or
 - is in a position of power with respect to the participant, i.e. who is in the leadership body in any capacity while the participant was attending the CCC
3. A Committee's Youth Member is defined as:
 - a member of the CCC Committee designated responsibility for the Youth portfolio
4. Children and Young people are defined as:
 - Any person/s under the age of 18 to which The CCC provides programs, services and events. These persons are under The CCC's duty of care by virtue of having participated in, or are currently participating in program or event.
5. Central Community Centre Inc ("CCC") includes the following:
 - Central Shule Chabad

Safeguarding and Protecting Children Statement

The CCC is a non-profit community organisation operating in Caulfield South. We provide, (among other things) informal educational programs, events, and services to our youth, from childhood through to young adult.

At the CCC, we believe that the welfare of all children and young people is of paramount importance, and that our organisation has an obligation to defend a child's right to care and protection. The Personnel have a responsibility to take action to protect children they suspect may be abused or neglected. We have a zero policy towards abuse or bullying of any kind.

In particular, we are committed to safeguarding children and young people in our care from:

- **Sexual abuse**
- **Physical abuse**
- **Emotional or psychological abuse**
- **Neglect**

Sexual abuse is any act in which a person with power or authority over a child (female or male) uses a child for sexual gratification. An abuser can be adult, adolescent or other children. Sexual abuse spans a range of contact and non-contact behaviour.

Non-contact behaviour includes:

- Making sexual comments or sexual innuendo (in person, in letters, or by telephone, text messages, email or gestures)
- Voyeurism – including commenting on physical attractiveness
- Exposing a child to pornography
- Nudity – an abuser exposing parts of their body or the child's body.

Contact behaviour includes:

- Fondling, kissing or licking
- Sexual penetration, fellatio, cunnilingus, anilingus or mutual masturbation
- Exploiting a child through prostitution or sexually explicit photography

Physical abuse occurs when a parent or caregiver or any person or people identified as having an authoritative role over a child or young person (the 'abuser') subjects a child or young person to non-accidental physically aggressive acts. The abuser may inflict an injury intentionally or inadvertently either as a result of physical punishment, or the aggressive treatment of a child. Physically abusive behaviour includes (but is not limited to) shoving, hitting, slapping, shaking, throwing, punching, biting, burning, or kicking.

Emotional or psychological abuse occurs when a caregiver or parent or any person or people identified as having an authoritative role over a child or young person repeatedly rejects, ostracises or threatens a child. Often there is a pattern of emotional or psychological abuse, rather than a single incident.

Such abuse may involve humiliating, terrorising, name-calling, belittlement, inappropriate symbolic acts or continual coldness or ostracism from the caregiver or parent, to an extent that results in significantly damaging the child's physical, intellectual or emotional wellbeing and development.

Neglect occurs when a parent or caregiver or any person or people identified as having an authoritative role over a child or young person fails to provide a child with the basic necessities of life. Such neglect includes the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical attention or supervision to the extent that the child's health and development is, or is likely to be, significantly harmed.

The CCC expects all involved Personnel within our organisation, regardless of their role or level of responsibility, to safeguard children and young people from such harm by:

- Adopting the Code of Practice and Behaviour we have set as our standard when carrying out their roles
- Report any abuse or neglect of which they become aware of, by following our 'Responding to Child Abuse Reports and Allegations' policy and procedure. This is regardless of whether that abuse is being perpetrated by Personnel within our organisation, or by those outside our organisation, including those from the child's family, extended family, their family's extended network or strangers

The CCC is committed to ensuring that all our involved Personnel, including all employees and volunteers will be informed of our 'Safeguarding Children and Young People' Policy, and will be given a hard copy of the Policy.

Our organisation's commitment to providing a safe environment for the children and young people to whom we provide services is endorsed and approved by the CCC committee of management.

Practice and Behaviour Guidelines

Purpose

The CCC aims to provide children and young people with a positive, professional and caring environment that enriches their emotional and social wellbeing, as well as empowering our youth through our informal education programs, event and services. We are committed to safeguarding children and young people in our care and ensuring that they feel safe at all times. Accordingly we wish to ensure that our Personnel strive for the highest possible standards with respect to safeguarding children and young people from abuse. To that end we have developed these practice and behaviour guidelines to identify, and so prevent, behaviour that may be harmful to the children and young people in our care.

Application

All Personnel, from our staff members and employees to our volunteers and Committee Members are required to observe these practice and behaviour guidelines. Developed to protect children and young people engaged in all services, these guidelines have been formally approved and endorsed by the CCC's committee of management.

Commitment

1. You should read these Practice and Behaviour Guidelines in conjunction with:
 - The specific requirements of your role as defined in your contract OR Job Description.
 - Other relevant Policy and Procedure documents, including
 - The CCC's 'Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy' statement
 - The CCC's 'Responding to Child Abuse Reports and Allegations' Policy
 - The CCC's 'Children's Rights' Statement
 - All applicable prevailing laws under Victorian and Federal legislation.
 - General community expectations in relation to appropriate behaviour between adults and children.
2. As part of your commitment to observing the practice and behaviour guidelines you will be required to sign a 'Commitment to the CCC's Practice and Behaviour Guidelines Statement'
3. We consider a failure to observe these guidelines as misconduct, and will take appropriate disciplinary action. Such disciplinary action may, depending on the seriousness of the misconduct, include suspension while matters are investigated and/or dismissal. In addition to any disciplinary proceedings, we will report to the police all instances in which a breach of the law has or may have occurred.

Exceptions

There may be exceptional situations where these guidelines do not apply, for example in an emergency situation. However, it is crucial that, where possible, you seek authorisation from a Member of the CCC Committee or the Committee's Youth Member or the Youth Leader prior to taking action that contravenes these guidelines, or that you advise the Member of the CCC Committee or the Committee's Youth Member or the Youth Leader as soon as possible after any incident in which these guidelines are breached.

The Guidelines

Our practice and behaviour guidelines address the major areas where you interact with the children and young people who take part in our programs, services and events. We have developed these practice and behaviour guidelines to help you to safeguard those children and young people from abuse or neglect.

Sexual Misconduct

Under no circumstances is any form of 'sexual behaviour' to occur between, with, or in the presence of, children and/or young people participating in any of our programs, services and events. Sexual conduct, involving a person placed in a position of authority, whether consensual or not, may constitute sexual abuse. Engaging in sexual behaviour while participating in our services is prohibited even if the young persons involved may be above the legal age of consent. The CCC recognise that consensual sexual conduct can still lead to sexual abuse and that consent does not necessarily obviate the definition of abuse.

Sexual Behaviour between a Leader and a Participant

'Sexual behaviour' between two people where the relationship is formed under circumstances of authority or power within the CCC is unacceptable. For this reason, under no circumstances is any form of 'sexual behaviour' to occur between a Leader and a participant, regardless of whether it is during the CCC time or outside of it. For the purposes of this rule, a Leader is defined as any person who:

- is above the age of 18 years old and/or
- has been in a position of power with respect to the participant, i.e. who has been in the leadership body in any capacity while the participant was attending the CCC

For the purposes of this rule, a participant is defined as any person who:

- attends or has attended the CCC
- is under the age of 18 years old
- is provided with education and/or development by a Leader within the CCC

'Sexual behaviour' needs to be interpreted widely, to encompass the entire range of actions that would reasonably be considered to be sexual in nature, including but not limited to:

- 'Contact behaviour', such as sexual intercourse, kissing, fondling, licking, sexual penetration, fellatio, cunnilingus or anilingus or mutual masturbation or exploiting a child through prostitution or sexually explicit photography
- 'Non-contact behaviour', such as flirting, sexual innuendo, inappropriate text messaging (printed matter, through emails, Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, Skype) inappropriate photography or exposure to pornography or nudity.

Sexual Behaviour between Participants

Under no circumstances is any form of 'sexual behaviour' to occur between any participants in any activity organised by the CCC. Again, 'Sexual Behaviour' needs to be interpreted widely, to encompass the entire range of actions that would reasonably be considered to be sexual in nature, including but not limited to:

- 'contact behaviour', such as sexual intercourse, kissing, fondling, sexual penetration or exploiting another child through prostitution
- 'non-contact behaviour', such as inappropriate sexual insinuation, sexual innuendo, inappropriate text messaging, inappropriate photography or exposure to pornography or nudity

Engaging in sexual behaviour is prohibited even if the young persons involved may be above the legal age of consent.

Sexual Behaviour between Leaders

Under no circumstances is any form of 'sexual behaviour' to occur between two Leaders in the presence of any children while participating in our activities. Sexual behaviour needs to be interpreted widely, and "partnered Leaders" need to take responsibility for ensuring that any behaviour that a reasonable person would interpret as sexual is kept in the strictest of privacy. This might include (but not limited to) sexual intercourse, kissing, fondling, flirting, sexual innuendo, inappropriate texting, photography, or any exposure to pornography or nudity. The CCC expects all Personnel to respect each other as colleagues and appreciate each other's boundaries.

Sexual Relationships – Beyond formal CCC activities

The CCC takes all reasonable steps to prevent the establishment of a sexual relationship between Personnel and a participant within the CCC activities. However, the CCC cannot remain responsible for relationships that may form beyond the formal the CCC activities. Beyond the CCC activities Leaders and participants are at liberty to have relationships however, there remains a clear onus upon the Leader to ensure that such a relationship is entirely separate from the CCC, that the relationship is consensual, and that no reasonable interpretation of the relationship might consider its formation as being linked to the CCC or the Personnel's role of power and authority, at any time, over the participant.

Positive Behavioural Management

We strive to ensure that children and young people participating in our programs, services and events are aware of the acceptable limits of their behaviour so that we can provide a positive experience for all participants. However, there are times when Personnel may be required to use appropriate techniques and behaviour management strategies to ensure an effective and positive environment. The safety and wellbeing of the children, young people or Personnel participating in our programs, services and events is paramount.

We require our Personnel to use strategies that are fair, respectful and appropriate to the developmental stage of the children or young people involved. The child or young person needs to be provided with clear directions and given an opportunity to redirect their misbehaviour in a positive manner. Under no circumstance are our Personnel to take disciplinary action involving physical punishment or any form of treatment that could reasonably be considered as degrading, cruel, frightening or humiliating.

Adhering to role boundaries

Our Personnel should not, of their own volition or at the request of a service user, act outside the confines of their duties when helping to deliver our programs, services and events.

The CCC Personnel

- Must not provide unauthorised transportation (e.g., lifts home or to activities) to any youth in our care
- Must not engage in activities with children or young people who are clients/members of our organisation outside authorised programs, services and events, such as extra play dates and trips
- Must not provide any form of support to a child or young person or their family, unrelated to our programs, services and events
- Must not seek or have contact with children or young people (or former participants) outside programs, services and events
- May accept an invitation to attend a private social function of a child or young person who has participated, or is participating in our services only if the invitation was issued by the parent of the child or young person

If any of our Personnel become aware of a situation in which a child or young person requires assistance that is beyond the confines of that person's role, or beyond the scope of the Shule's usual service, they should at the earliest opportunity:

- Refer the matter to the police and/or an appropriate support agency (see Appendix for a listing of contact details of relevant agencies) or
- Refer the child or young person to an appropriate support agency or
- Contact the child or young person's parent or guardian or
- Seek advice from a Member of the CCC Committee or the Committee's Youth Member.

Use of language

Language and/or tone of voice used in the presence of children and young people should:

- Provide clear direction, boost their confidence, encourage or affirm them
- Not be harmful to children – in this respect, avoid swearing and language that is:
 - Discriminatory, racist or sexist
 - Derogatory, belittling or negative, (e.g., by calling a child a 'loser' or telling them they are 'too fat')
 - Intended to threaten or frighten
 - Profane or sexual

Supervision

Personnel are responsible for supervising the children and young people to which the CCC provides programs, services and events, to ensure that participants:

- Engage positively with our programs, services and events, for example gain friendships
- Behave appropriately toward one another (e.g., listening with respect and being courteous in discussions, no bullying or untoward behaviour)
- Are in a safe environment and are protected from external threats and intrusions, for example, supervised at all times with no access for intruders etc.

Our Personnel are required to avoid one-on-one unsupervised situations with children and young people to whom we provide services, and (where possible) to conduct all activities and/or discussion with service recipients in view of other Personnel.

Use of Electronic Communications

Whenever a member of Personnel makes a telephone call to a participant, sends a participant a text message or email, or communicates with a participant via a social networking site, the Personnel must have a legitimate CCC related purpose for engaging in the communication. This does not mean that the Personnel must limit the communication to purely service related matters as a personal relationship between Personnel and a participant may be essential for informal education. But it does mean that the communication cannot be either, in fact or in reality, for purely social reasons. Some legitimate Shule related purposes include:

- advising the participant about a youth activity, e.g. calling a participant to remind them that a camp sign up or an activity registration is closing soon
- advising the participant about a relevant community event, e.g. sending a participant a text message with the time and location of a Yom Tov ceremony
- encouraging participants to think about issues and debate a topic that relates to the ideology of the Shule, e.g. posting the Parashah Trivia questions an article or information from Chabad Sparks or the Betar Facebook page.

Even if the communication is for a legitimate Shule related purpose, Personnel:

- must not communicate anything that a reasonable observer could view as being of a sexual or abusive nature
- are forbidden from using such communication to promote unauthorised 'social' activity or to arrange unauthorised contact
- are forbidden from requesting the participant to keep a communication a secret from their parents.

In order to avoid any doubt about the appropriateness of communication, Personnel may choose to copy email and text messages sent to a child or young person to their parent/guardian. Personnel are encouraged to do so for events such as camps and overnight activities.

Instant Messaging and Social Networking

Leaders are to recognise the risk in communicating with participants via Internet chat rooms (or other online forums) or online instant messaging services. In recognising these risks, Leaders are not permitted to communicate with participants via these means. The CCC recognises that social networking websites such as Facebook, MySpace and Twitter are important tools in communicating the Shule's message of the day and encouraging participants to be actively involved in the CCC.

While it is encouraged to communicate to participants via these networks, Leaders must not communicate with participants in a way that would be inappropriate. For the benefit of protecting the participant and Leaders, Leaders are only permitted to communicate with participants via social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace and Twitter if:

- a Member of the CCC Committee or the Committee's Youth Member or the Youth Leader has given permission to set up an official page, group or profile
- a Member of the CCC Committee, the Committee's Youth Member or the Youth Leader has the ability to supervise the official page, group or profile in its entirety
- the Personnel responsible for the official page, group or profile has the ability to monitor the content, whether posted by children, other Leaders or third parties, and remove any material that may be considered offensive or inappropriate

Personnel must appreciate that while the CCC trusts them in their activities online, it is only for the benefit of them, the Shule and the participants that more than one person has the ability to supervise content between Leaders and participants. A Leader must not communicate with children outside the CCC, such as siblings or friends of participants, if those children are only known to the Leaders via the participant.

Outside Contact

As a first starting point, Leaders must not organise face-to-face contact with participants outside of regular CCC youth activities. Without limiting the breadth of the concept, regular activities are generally those which are overseen by the Shule Committee and known about by parents/guardians. Of course, this rule does not prevent Leaders from seeing participants at school if the Leader is there with the specific permission of the school to run educational or recruitment activities. If, however, a Leader still needs to organise to meet a participant outside of regular youth program time at the Shule or the school context, the Leader must:

- inform a Member of the CCC Committee, or the Committee's Youth Member or the Youth Leader why they are organising the meeting, and when and where the meeting is to take place
- gain permission from that Member of the CCC Committee, the Committee's Youth Member or the Youth Leader to go ahead with the meeting
- ensure that meeting occurs in a public place, e.g., a café, or in the presence of another Leader or the participant's parent/guardian

Under no circumstances is a Leader to organise to meet with a participant alone, especially in the participant's home, in the Leader's home or on the CCC premises. This rule does not apply to the provision of a separate service by the Leader, e.g. Hebrew or Bar Mitzvah tutoring or babysitting, that the parents/guardians of the participant have organised for the Leader to deliver. This must be communicated to a Member of the CCC Committee, the Committee's Youth Member or the Youth Leader to ensure there is no confusion or compromise of the CCC's commitment to **'Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy'**.

As a second starting point, Leaders must generally not attend private social functions that they have been invited to by a participant. One discrete exception to this rule is when the invitation is to a participant's bar or bat mitzvah. If, however, a Leader still wants to attend a private social function that they have been invited to by a participant, e.g. a participant's 18th birthday party, they must meet at least one of these conditions:

- the Leader is known to the participant parent(s)/guardian and the participant's parents/guardian sanction the invite
- inform the CCC President or the Committee's Youth Member why they want to attend the function, and when and where the function is to take place
- satisfy the CCC President or the Committee's Youth Member that it is appropriate and consistent with their role as a Youth Leader to attend

These points obviously do not apply where the Leader is brother or a sister of the participant.

Giving gifts

Giving gifts by our service delivery Personnel to children and young people to whom we provide service is subject to:

- The gift being in a manner of a reward or prize, and in a public manner
- Parents or other responsible adults being made aware of any gift given.

Photography and images of children

Under these guidelines:

- Children and young people to whom we deliver service are to be photographed while involved in our programs, services and events only if:
 - a Member of the CCC Committee, the Committee's Youth Member or the Youth Leader
 - The context is directly related to participation in our programs, services and events
 - The child is appropriately dressed and posed
 - The image is taken in the presence of other Personnel or a responsible adult

Images are not to be distributed (including as an attachment to an email) to anyone outside our organizations other than the child photographed or their parents without the parent and the Shule Committee's knowledge and approval.

Images (digital or hard copy) are to be stored in a manner that prevents unauthorised access by anyone outside our organization. Images (digital or hard copy) are to be destroyed or deleted as soon as they are no longer required.

Physical Contact with Children and Young People

Any physical contact with children and young people must be appropriate to the delivery of our activities, e.g. helping children put on life vests before going canoeing on summer camp, and based on the needs of the child or young person (such as to assist or comfort a distressed young person) rather than on the needs of Leaders. Under no circumstances should any Leader have contact with children or young people participating in our activities that:

- involves touching - of genitals, buttocks, the breast area (female children) other than as part of delivering medical or allied health services
- would appear to a reasonable observer to have a sexual connotation
- is intended to cause pain or distress to the child or young person – e.g., corporal punishment
- is overly physical – as is, for example, wrestling, horseplay, tickling or other roughhousing
- is unnecessary – as is, for example, assisting with toileting when a child does not require assistance
- is initiated against the wishes of the child or young person, except if such contact may be necessary to prevent injury to the child/young person or to others, in which case:
 - physical restraint should be a last resort
 - the level of force used must be appropriate to the specific circumstances, and aimed solely at restraining the child or young person to prevent them causing harm to themselves or others
 - the incident must be reported to a Member of the CCC Committee, the Committee's Youth Member or the Youth Leader as soon as possible.

Personnel are required to report to a Member of the CCC Committee, the Committee's Youth Member or the Youth Leader any physical contact initiated by a child or young person that is sexual and/or inappropriate, for example, acts of physical or sexual aggression, as soon as possible, to enable the situation to be managed in the interests and safety of the child or young person, the Leaders, any other participants and the Shule.

Overnight stays / Sleeping Arrangements

Overnight activities are to occur only with the authorisation of a Member of the CCC Committee, the Committee's Youth Member or the Youth Leader and with the consent of the parents/guardians of the children or young people involved. Practices and behaviour by our Personnel during an overnight stay must be consistent with the practices and behaviour expected during delivery of our programs, services and events at other times. Standards of conduct that must be observed by our Leaders and Personnel during a camp or sleepover include:

- providing children and young people with privacy when bathing and dressing
- observing appropriate dress standards when children and young people are present – such as no exposure to adult nudity
- not allowing children or young people to be exposed to pornographic material, for example, through movies, television, the Internet or magazines. Leaders must not expose or let children be exposed to any sexually explicit material, or material of a classification beyond the child's developmental age.
- not leaving children under the supervision or protection of unauthorised persons such as campsite staff
- not involving sleeping arrangements that may compromise the safety of children and young people such as unsupervised sleeping arrangements, or an adult sleeping in the same bed as a child or young person
- the right of children to contact their parents, or others, if they feel unsafe, uncomfortable or distressed during their stay
- parents expecting that their children can, if they wish, make contact

Change room arrangements

Personnel are required to supervise children and young people in change rooms and at the same time balance the requirement and rights of the child or young person to privacy. In addition:

- Personnel should avoid one-on-one situations with a child or young person in a change room area
- Personnel are not permitted to use the change room area to, for example, undress, while children and young people are present
- Personnel need to provide the level of supervision for preventing abuse by member of the public, adult service users, peer service users, or general misbehaviour while also respecting a child's privacy
- Female Personnel are not to enter male change rooms and male Personnel are not to enter female change rooms.

Use, Possession or Supply of Alcohol, Illicit Substances or Drugs

While on duty in regards to children's activities, Personnel must not:

- Use, possess or be under the influence of an illegal drug
- Use or be under the influence of alcohol
- Be incapacitated by any other legal drug such as prescription or over-the-counter drugs
- Supply alcohol, illicit substances or drugs (including tobacco) to children and young people participating in our programs, service and events.

Use of prescribed medications other than alcohol are permitted provided such use does not interfere with your ability to care for children involved in our service.

Transporting Children

Children and young people are to be transported only in circumstances that are directly related to the delivery of our programs, services and events (e.g., driving the children to the ice-skating rink for an excursion). An organized event may be okay, but children and young people may not be given casual lifts.

Children are to be transported only with prior authorisation from a Member of the CCC Committee or the Committee's Youth Member or the Youth Leader and from the child's parent/guardian. The only exception to the requirement to gain permission is where the Leader and the participant are siblings. Gaining approval involves providing information about the proposed journey, including:

- the form of transport proposed, such as private car, taxi, self-drive bus, bus with driver, train, plane or boat
- the reason for the journey
- the route to be followed, including any stops or side trips and an estimated time of arrival
- details of anyone who will be present during the journey other than our Personnel who are involved in the activity and/or delivering our programs, services and events.

Verbal permission (with a witness) is acceptable but written authorisation is preferred and encouraged.

Approval and Endorsement from the President and the CCC Committee

These guidelines have the approval and endorsement of the CCC President, Mr Phillip Goldman, and the CCC Committee. We take seriously our responsibility to deliver a safe environment that is caring, supportive and nurturing. We are committed to ensuring the safety of all children and young people to whom we provide services or who participate in our programs.

Phillip Goldman

CCC President

Date

The CCC considers a failure to observe our guidelines to be misconduct and will result in appropriate disciplinary action. In addition to any internal disciplinary proceedings, any breaches of law will be reported to the police.

Commitment
to Central Community Centre Inc
Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

I, _____
Name of employee or volunteer of Central Community Centre Inc

- have been provided with a copy, have read, and have understood the 'Practice and Behaviour Guidelines' of the Central Community Centre Inc
- understand my responsibilities in relation to ensuring and promoting the safety of children and young people and
- will observe the guidelines during my employment/time with the Central Community Centre Inc to ensure and promote the safety of children and young people participating in programs, services and events provided by the Central Community Centre Inc.

Signature of employee or volunteer

Date

Signature of witness

Date

Name of witness*

Position

* Witness must be a member of the Central Community Centre Shule Committee, the Committee's Youth Member or the office administration

Children's Rights Statement

The CCC believes that children who come to our programs, services and events should feel comfortable, be cared for and feel and be safe. All Personnel do their best to make sure children are protected from any harm.

It is not alright for anyone to hurt a young person, another child's or anyone's feelings or body. It is quite alright to say NO to a member of Personnel if they ask a child or young person to do something that makes them feel unsafe or uncomfortable.

If any child or young person ever feels unsafe or uncomfortable, the CCC will listen to them and act to help.

It is always okay to tell someone if you as a child or a young person do not feel comfortable or safe or if you have been hurt.

If you are unhappy with the way you are being treated please tell a parent/guardian, Leader or any one of the staff or employees or volunteers at the Shule.

Parent guidelines

The CCC is committed to creating a positive and safe environment during our programs, services and events so that all children can learn and have an enjoyable experience. We take the safety of your children and young people very seriously, and have put in place guidelines to improve protections from child abuse and in the event of an incident make a timely and targeted response.

In consideration of this we invite you as parents to be vigilant, talk to your child, hear what they say, make your own observations, and if you have concerns to bring them to the attention of the a CCC Committee member or other place or agency (e.g., police) with which you may feel comfortable or appropriate .

We call on parents/guardians whose children attend our programs, services and events to please:

- observe our guidelines for parents (see below)
- read and understand the CCC's 'Practice and Behaviour Guidelines'
- in the event of serious or ongoing breaches of these guidelines by any person, report the matter to a Member of the CCC Committee, the Committee's Youth Member or the Youth Leader so that appropriate action can be taken.

Our Guidelines for Parents

Your and other children's participation in the CCC's programs, services and events, is for their education and enjoyment. We believe that your role as parents is to support the Shule by:

- encouraging your child's participation in a positive and respectful manner
- advising the Personnel responsible for your child's safety during a program, service or event of any special needs that they may have developed during the course of the program, service or event. For example, they may suffer from asthma or allergies, or have difficulty hearing. This information will enable us to safely allow them to take part in activities.
- engaging with the Leader and our personnel positively, not criticising them in the presence of your child and reporting any concerns you have to a Member of the CCC Committee, the Committee's Youth Member or the Youth Leader.
- ensuring your child is picked up on time at the conclusion of an activity
- arranging with the Personnel in charge prior to an activity if your child is to be picked up by a person unknown to any of the Personnel and completing a Transport Authorisation Form
- engaging with children other than your own in a positive and respectful manner and not engaging in behaviour designed to belittle insult or intimidate them
- not engaging in, or threatening to engage in, violent or physical confrontations with any other person involved with the Shule
- not encouraging or inciting your child to commit violent acts or to breach the CCC rules
- advising the Personnel in charge of any changes to contact information for use in the event of an emergency

Serious or ongoing breaches of these guidelines are not tolerated. This may result in appropriate disciplinary action, including any breaches of law being reported to the police.

Above all, the safety of your children is our highest priority. We seek to create an open environment between parents, the CCC and its Committee to ensure the safety of your children at all times.

Responding to Child Abuse Reports and Allegations

Introduction

The CCC is committed to protecting all children and young people who attend our programs services and events. Accordingly we have developed this policy on how to respond to child abuse reports and allegations as a guide to all our Personnel in meeting their responsibilities in this area. Our Personnel are required to identify, report and respond to any concerns about, or incidents of, child abuse or neglect towards children or young people who attend our programs, services or events. Personnel are required to respond to abuse or neglect by anyone within our organisation or by other persons outside our organisation.

Endorsement

We take seriously our responsibility to deliver an educational and social environment that is caring, nurturing and safe. The CCC is committed to ensuring the safety of all children and young people who attend our programs, services and events. As part of that commitment to protecting children from abuse and neglect, the CCC Committee endorses this reporting and allegations policy

Scope

All Personnel are required to meet the requirements of our policy on responding to child abuse reports and allegations. No one within our organisation is exempt from meeting the standards and requirements set out in this policy.

Defining Abuse and Neglect

The CCC is committed to safeguarding the children and young people in our care from abuse in any form, as defined in our Safeguarding and Protecting Children statement.

Child abuse is an act by an adult that places a child in danger or causes significant harm to a child's wellbeing. A person committing child abuse may act intentionally to cause harm to a child or may fail to act to prevent harm. Child abuse can be emotional/psychological abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect, and a child may experience one or more forms of abuse.

Many factors influence our beliefs about what behaviour constitutes child abuse and neglect and the appropriate treatment of children. For example:

- experiences during childhood
- social and cultural expectations about raising children
- our experience as parents
- cultural and religious beliefs
- personal ethics and values
- education, training and work experience
- knowledge of laws and regulations

While the definition of child abuse helps to recognise abusive or neglectful behaviour, the abusive treatment of a child or young person commonly occurs in secret.

Children and young people are unlikely to tell you that they are experiencing abuse. They are more likely to express their distress via behaviour and physical signs. Therefore we recognise that it is important to be aware of the signs or indicators of abuse. Some signs of abuse are obvious and some are subtle and hard to detect. We recognise that one may need to observe and identify patterns of behaviour over a period of time.

Responsibilities

Our Personnel are required to report any instance of serious abuse or neglect (cases in which a child or young person has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm from abuse or neglect) immediately or, if that is not possible, no later than before the end of the activity that is currently running.

In taking a report of concern, or of an incident, from others within the organisation our Personnel are:

- not to assess the validity of such allegations or concerns, but to report all allegations or concerns to at least TWO of the following: the CCC President, the CCC Committee's Secretary and the Committee's Youth Member as described in this policy. (The validity of an allegation will then be assessed in the manner described in this policy.)
- to disregard factors such as the authority or position of the persons involved and any pre-existing views about the good character, or otherwise, of any person involved or under investigation.

Similarly, our Personnel are obliged to raise any concerns they might have in relation to:

- The CCC's policies designed to safeguard children and young people – such as outlined in our 'Practice and Behaviour Guidelines'
- Actions of other Personnel within our organisation that contravene our policies or that may otherwise have the potential to harm a child or young person.

All our Personnel retain the right to report directly to relevant authorities, such as police or Child Protection, any concerns they may have in relation to the safety and welfare of a child or young person, even if they have also reported that matter internally, in line with this policy.

Our policy also:

- prohibits all Personnel from discussing any concerns or allegations with any person – within or outside the CCC – unless such a discussion is necessary to give effect to this policy and comply with law. This prohibition is not designed to limit, in any way, our Personnel's rights and responsibilities to report their concerns or allegations, but rather as part of the CCC's commitment to ensuring privacy, confidentiality and natural justice.
- prohibits all Personnel from making deliberately false, misleading or vexatious allegations.

Consequences of Breaching Policy

If one of our Personnel fails to report instances, allegations, disclosures or concerns in relation to abuse or neglect of a child or young person – by Personnel within the organisation or by others – we view such failure as a serious matter that, depending on the circumstances, may result in disciplinary action or expulsion from the organisation. Police and/or other authorities may be notified.

Concerns or Allegations Regarding Abuse or Neglect by Family or Other External Sources

All Personnel are required to report any instance of child abuse or neglect that has resulted in, or is likely to result in, significant harm to a child or young person, to statutory child protection authorities and at least TWO of the following: the CCC President, the CCC Committee's Secretary and the Committee's Youth Member.

While Personnel retain the right to report any concern or allegation directly to the relevant authorities, we ask that they also inform and at least TWO of the following: the CCC President, the CCC Committee's Secretary and the Committee's Youth Member of any report they make to the relevant authorities, to enable our organisation to best provide support to the child or young person and their family, where appropriate.

If a child or young person is at imminent risk of harm or in immediate danger, our Personnel are required to report the situation directly to the state child protection authority or the police.

In situations where a child or young person is making an allegation, Personnel are required to:

- listen to the allegation or disclosure supportively, without dispute
- clarify the basic details, without seeking detailed information or asking suggestive or leading questions
- take notes as best as you can aiming to record child's words, descriptions, terms etc as accurately as possible
- transcribe notes to record (keep original notes) on the form what was said (where possible, noting the exact words used by the person making the allegation) any of the particulars relating to the abuse, e.g. place, time, any physical features that stand out, any other persons or pets, any special terms the perpetrator used, anything they can recall, it is all of importance
- date and sign the record
- explain to the child (if present) that other people may need to be told, in order to stop what is happening
- provide reassurance that the CCC will take immediate action in response to the allegation

In situations where Personnel become aware of abuse through observation of potential indicators, such as bruises or cuts, or by directly observing potentially abusive behaviour towards a child or young person, Personnel are required to use the CCC's 'Record of a Child Abuse Allegation, Disclosure or Concern' form to record their observations and concerns as accurately as possible.

The CCC President and/or the CCC Committee's Youth Member will oversee creation of a file to contain the completed 'Record of a Child Abuse Allegation, Disclosure or Concern' form, and any other documentation relating to the allegation and subsequent action.

So as to prevent access by unauthorised persons, the CCC must store any documentation associated with an allegation of abuse or neglect of a child or young person by having:

- hard-copy documentation stored in a locked filing cabinet (or similar)
- electronic documentation stored in a password-protected folder (or similar)

Concerns or allegations of abuse or neglect on the part of our employees or volunteers

All Personnel must report, immediately, to at least TWO of the following: the CCC President, the CCC Committee's Secretary and the Committee's Youth Member any instance, allegation, disclosure or reasonable concern of abuse or neglect of a child or young person arising from an action of any Personnel.

If a child or young person is at imminent risk of harm or in immediate danger, Personnel are required to report the situation directly to the Victorian Child Protection Authority or the police.

In situations where a child or young person is making an allegation, Personnel are required to:

- listen to the allegation or disclosure supportively, without dispute
- using the CCC's 'Record of a Child Abuse Allegation, Disclosure or Concern' form as a guide, clarify the basic details, without seeking detailed information or asking suggestive or leading questions
- record on the form what was said (where possible, noting the exact words used by the person making the allegation)
- date and sign the record
- explain to the child (if present) that other people may need to be told, in order to stop what is happening
- provide reassurance that the CCC will take immediate action in response to the allegation

In response to any instance of 'serious' abuse or neglect ('serious' being cases in which the abuse or neglect has resulted in, or is likely to result in, significant harm to a child or young person), the CCC President or a Member of the CCC Committee or the Committee's Youth Member must ensure that the incident is immediately reported to the police and/or the Victorian Child Protection Authority.

Personnel should note that any internal reporting itself should not delay, adversely influence or reinterpret the first witnesses account, or decision to make the report, in any way.

Mandatory reporting laws are unequivocal in making the first witness legally responsible for making the report, and assumes no interference from employees or colleagues etc.

The CCC President and/or the CCC Committee's Youth Member will investigate and take reasonable steps to deal with allegations of 'less serious' instances of abuse or neglect.

If an allegation has been made against any of our Personnel, the CCC President and/or the CCC Committee's Youth Member will:

- take any action necessary to safeguard the child or young person (or other children or young people in our care) from additional harm through options such as:
 - putting the person accused in a position where they do not work with children
 - providing additional supervision of the person accused
 - removing/suspending the person accused until the validity of the allegations is determined
- address the support needs of the person against whom the accusations are made by, for example, offering professional counselling
- make clear to all other Personnel who are aware of the allegation that:

- the allegation does not mean the person is guilty, and that the allegation will be properly investigated
- they are not to discuss the matter with any person, except as directed by police, Child Protection Authorities and/or the CCC President and/or the CCC Committee's Youth Member and only in direct relation to investigation of the allegation

The CCC President and/or the CCC Committee's Youth Member will oversee creation of a file to contain the completed 'Record of a Child Abuse Allegation, Disclosure or Concern' form, and any other documentation relating to the allegation and subsequent action. So as to prevent access by unauthorised persons, the CCC will store any documentation associated with an allegation of abuse or neglect of a child or young person by having:

- hard-copy documentation stored in a locked filing cabinet (or similar)
- electronic documentation stored in a password-protected folder (or similar).

Confidentiality and Privacy

The CCC will maintain the confidentiality and privacy of all concerned (including the alleged perpetrator), except if doing so would compromise the welfare of the child or young person and/or investigation of the allegation.

Documentation

As part of our policy for responding to reports or allegations of child abuse, we have developed a 'Record of a Child Abuse Allegation, Disclosure or Concern' form, which is to be used by any of our Personnel to document any allegation, disclosure, incident or concern regarding child abuse.

Record of a Child Abuse Allegation, Disclosure or Concern form

1. Please indicate what you are reporting: **(to be completed in all cases)**

- I was witness to inappropriate behaviour with a child (see sections 2 and 3)
- I have concerns that abuse may be occurring (see section 2 and 3)
- I was a witness to an incident with a child (see sections 2 and 4)
- a child has told me that they are being abused (see sections 2 and 5)
- I have received an allegation about abuse about a child from a 3rd party (see sections 2 and 5)
- I was involved in an incident with a child that you should be aware of (see sections 2 and 3)

2. Important information: **(to be completed in all cases)**

Your name: _____

Your contact details: _____

Name of child concerned: _____

Capacity in which child is known to you: _____

Any other useful information relating to the child: (e.g. home address, school attended, date of birth): _____

Is the child aware of this referral? Yes / No (if no, please explain why)

Is the main carer/relevant parent/guardian aware of this referral? Yes / No (if no, please explain why)

Name of other children involved (if applicable):

3. Concerns that abuse may be occurring / Report details

Please use the space below to record the concerns that you have regarding a child or adult who had contact with children.

These may include a:

- change in a child's/young person's attitude or behaviour
- child/young person acting in an unusually distressed manner
- child/young person being bullied or there is the appearance of bullying
- child/young person being sexually aroused
- child/young person appearing to be attracted to an adult or an adult appearing to be attracted to a child
- relationship that a child/young person and adult appear to be having

NOTE: Do not remove clothing to inspect a child if you do have concerns of physical or sexual abuse. Please also record any action you have taken. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Contact telephone number: _____

Date: _____

Received by* _____

* Please hand in this completed and signed form to the CCC President and/or the CCC Committee's Youth Member immediately.

4. Incident with a child

Please tick if one or more of the following have occurred

- I accidentally hurt a child
- a child misinterpreted or misunderstood something I have done
- I have had to use reasonable physical restraint
- I was witness to one of the above (please indicate which one)
- I was approached by a child wishing to have a relationship with me
- Other (details below)

Please provide further information, including any action you may have taken so far and the reason for doing so. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Contact telephone number: _____

Date: _____

Received by* _____

* Please hand in this completed and signed form to the CCC President and/or the CCC Committee's Youth Member immediately.

Allegation/Disclosure of Abuse

- Allegation received from: _____
- Date allegation was received: _____
- Name of person about whom allegation has been made: _____

Please use the space below to record the details of the allegation or disclosure you have received. This should be a factual account of the information you have received only. **Do not include assumptions or opinions of others.** Make sure you record details of dates and times and any other potentially useful information. If the disclosure has come from the child who is claiming that they are being abused, the conversation should be recorded in their words. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Contact telephone number: _____

Date: _____

Received by* _____

* Please hand in this completed and signed form to the CCC President and/or the CCC Committee's Youth Member immediately.

APPENDIX

List of support agencies

- 1. Victorian Police**
Phone 000 (Emergency assistance)
9524 9500 (Caulfield Police Station, Hawthorn Road, Caulfield South)

- 2. Department of Human Services Victorian Child Protection Unit (Southern Metropolitan Region)**
Phone 1300 655 795 (office hours)
131 278 (after hours)

- 3. Ambulance Victoria**
Phone 000 (Emergency assistance)

- 4. Hatzolah Ambulance Service**
Phone 9527 5111 (Emergency assistance)

- 5. Jewish Care**
Phone 8517 5999