

# Child Protection Policy

## Policy Statement

At KidsKinetic, the safety and well-being of all children participating in our programs are our top priorities. To ensure their protection, all staff and volunteers must undergo comprehensive background checks and complete child protection training. Any suspicions or reports of abuse must be immediately reported to the designated Child Protection Officer.

### 1. Purpose and Scope

**Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to establish clear guidelines and procedures to safeguard children from abuse and maltreatment while participating in KidsKinetic programs. This policy aims to create a safe and supportive environment where children can thrive and feel secure. By implementing this policy, we aim to:

- Ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in KidsKinetic programs.
- Provide staff and volunteers with the necessary training and guidelines to recognise and respond to child abuse.
- Foster a culture of vigilance and responsibility towards child protection.
- Establish a clear protocol for reporting and managing allegations or suspicions of abuse.
- Promote the well-being and best interests of the child as a primary consideration in all activities and decisions.

**Scope:** This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, contractors, and any other individuals working with or interacting with children under the auspices of KidsKinetic. It encompasses all activities, programs, and events conducted by KidsKinetic, whether on-site, off-site, or online. Specifically, it covers:

- Recruitment and vetting processes for staff and volunteers.
- Mandatory child protection training for all personnel.
- Procedures for identifying, reporting, and managing cases of suspected child abuse.
- Supervision and monitoring protocols to prevent opportunities for abuse.
- Guidelines for creating and maintaining a safe environment for children.
- Procedures for supporting children who may be victims of abuse.
- Continuous evaluation and improvement of child protection measures.

## 2. Definitions

**2.1 Child Abuse:** Any form of physical, emotional, or sexual maltreatment or neglect that causes harm or potential harm to a child's health, development, or dignity.

**2.2 Child Protection Officer (CPO):** A designated staff member responsible for overseeing child protection measures and handling reports of abuse or neglect.

**2.3 Background Check:** A thorough screening process to verify the history and suitability of individuals working with children.

## Procedures

### 3. Recruitment and Background Check

**3.1 Screening:** All prospective staff and volunteers must undergo a rigorous recruitment process, including detailed background checks and reference verification.

**3.2 Criminal Records:** A thorough check of criminal records and any history of child-related offenses is mandatory.

**3.3 Interview:** In-depth interviews will be conducted to assess candidates' suitability and understanding of child protection principles.

#### **4. Child Protection Training**

**4.1 Mandatory Training:** All staff and volunteers are required to complete comprehensive child protection training before commencing their roles.

**4.2 Ongoing Education:** Regular refresher courses and updated training sessions will be provided to ensure continuous awareness and knowledge.

#### **5. Reporting and Responding to Suspicions of Abuse**

**5.1 Immediate Reporting:** Any suspicions or disclosures of child abuse must be reported immediately to the designated Child Protection Officer.

**5.2 Documentation:** Detailed records of all reports, investigations, and actions taken must be maintained securely and confidentially.

**5.3 Support for Affected Children:** Provide appropriate support and care for children who disclose abuse or are identified as victims of abuse.

#### **6. Supervision and Monitoring**

**6.1 Supervision Protocols:** Implement strict supervision protocols to ensure that children are never left alone with an adult without oversight.

**6.2 Open-Door Policy:** Encourage an open-door policy where children feel comfortable reporting concerns or incidents to staff.

#### **7. Creating a Safe Environment**

**7.1 Safe Spaces:** Design and maintain safe physical spaces for children to engage in activities, free from hazards and risks.

**7.2 Positive Relationships:** Foster positive, trusting relationships between staff and children, ensuring children feel valued and respected.

**7.3 Code of Conduct:** Enforce a strict code of conduct for all staff and volunteers, outlining acceptable and unacceptable behaviours.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **Child Protection Officer (CPO)**

- Oversee the implementation of the Child Protection Policy.
- Handle all reports of child abuse and ensure appropriate actions are taken.
- Provide guidance and support to staff and volunteers on child protection issues.

#### **All Staff and Volunteers**

- Adhere to the Child Protection Policy and procedures.
- Complete mandatory child protection training.
- Report any suspicions or disclosures of abuse immediately to the CPO.

## **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Director to ensure it remains up-to-date and effective in protecting children. Any amendments will be communicated to all staff and volunteers.

**Reviewed: July 2024**