



CHILD SAFETY POLICY

January 2026



St John

Contents

ST JOHN NSW VALUES	3
CHILD SAFETY POLICY	4
1. INTRODUCTION	4
2. YOUTH LEADERSHIP AND GUIDELINES	8
3. REPORTING	11
4. RECRUITMENT, SCREENING AND TRAINING	18
5. RISK MANAGEMENT & DOCUMENTATION	19
6. STATUTORY OBLIGATIONS: WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK	19
7. LEGISLATION	19
8. RELATED POLICIES	20
9. SUPPORT SERVICES	20
10. POLICY REVIEW	20
11. APPENDICIES	20

Document Control

Version	Date	Author/s	Comments/ Key Changes
v1.0	14/01/2025	Vanessa Lorford-Mills	Updated in line with Child Safety Requirements
v1.1			

ST JOHN NSW VALUES

Our values define who we are. They guide our actions and behaviour. They influence the way we work with each other, our customers and communities.



RESPECT

We are ambassadors for St John. We are respected for the work that we do and the way that we do it. We recognise our strength comes from our diversity. We have the courage to be authentic and true.



INTEGRITY

We do the right thing. We are honest and trustworthy. We are accountable for our actions and take ownership of our shared goals. We are there when you need us. You can depend on us.



LEADERSHIP

We are the custodians of our future. We enable our teams to grow and succeed. We lead by example and learn from our mistakes. Our passion and commitment engage and inspire.



COMMUNICATION

We are sincere in our voice and actions. We share ideas and listen to each other, our customers and community. We are open and transparent in all that we do.



COLLABORATION

We work best when we work together. We care for our colleagues and our

community. We take initiative, generate new ideas and embrace change. We share success. Together we can make a difference.

CHILD SAFETY POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of Commitment

St John Ambulance Australia (NSW) (St John NSW) is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people (children) by creating and maintaining an environment where Members act in the best interest of children and young people at all times.

St John NSW is committed to adhering to the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. These principles provide a nationally consistent approach to promoting a culture of child safety and wellbeing.

St John NSW will always strive to safeguard children from experiencing grooming, neglect, abuse, harm or exploitation of any kind, during or as a result of their involvement with St John NSW.

1.2 Statement of Policy

St John is a child safe organisation. We have a zero-tolerance policy towards bullying, neglect, harm, all forms of child abuse and potential for harm and abuse. This Policy provides a message that everybody within St John NSW has a responsibility to provide a safe environment to children.

St John cares about keeping children and young people safe. Protecting and promoting the emotional, physical, cultural, sexual, and spiritual wellbeing of children is central to all aspects of the operations and culture of St John NSW.

St John NSW acknowledges the power imbalance exists between children and adults and as such is committed to listening to children, empowering them by taking their views and opinions seriously and responding appropriately and in a timely manner to any concerns they raise with adult members.

St John NSW in creating a safe organisation child strives to maintain full compliance with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, the applicable child safety legislation, and best practice.

To maintain a child safe organisation, St John NSW will continue to ensure:

a) Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.

- Places child safety and wellbeing as a priority in organisational leadership, governance and culture.
- Makes child safety and wellbeing an integral part of the requirements of the leadership of the organisation, considerations for all policies and procedures, and its overall risk management.
- Seeks to engage children in the review of key policies, procedures, programs and resources.

b) Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

- In being child focused provides children with an understanding of their rights, personal safety

and protective behaviours and self-autonomy in an age-appropriate manner.

- Is committed to ensuring that children understand they have the right to feel safe, be listened to, have their cultural values respected, not be unjustly discriminated against based on their religion or beliefs.
- Support children within St John to participate in decisions affecting them.
- Requires all Members to take children seriously, to listen to them, watch out for them, and to intervene when abuse/harm of any kind is suspected or disclosed.
- Seeks to engage children and young people in the development and creation of child friendly materials.

c) Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.

- Keeps families and the communities within St John informed about child safety and wellbeing in St John NSW.

d) Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.

- Is committed to equity and diversity so that all children are welcomed and their individual vulnerabilities accommodated regardless of race, religion.
- Is committed to racial, cultural, religious, and spiritual safety of all children.
- Respects the values, culture and heritage of Indigenous Australians and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

e) People working with children are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.

- Will not knowingly engage – directly or indirectly – anyone who poses a risk to children and that does not strictly apply child safe recruitment practices.
- Will utilise best practice recruitment and screening processes for Members and Contractors.
- Will provide all Members with support regarding child safety through multiple channels, including training, availability of Child Wellbeing Lead and Officers, and other suitably qualified people within St John.

f) Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.

- Provides child friendly avenues for feedback and complaints.
- Provides clear pathways to raise and report concerns about the safety of children who are owed a duty of care by the organisation both internally and externally.
- Requires every Adult Member of St John NSW to report allegations of child abuse, neglect, harm or exploitation of any kind as if they were a mandated reporter through this policy even if not already mandated through legislation to the police and/or the relevant state or territory child protection authority.
- Takes seriously all allegations of child abuse, neglect, harm or exploitation of any kind (noting this includes identified risks of harm) and ensure that all allegations of child abuse, neglect, harm or exploitation of any kind by Members are thoroughly examined, risk-assessed, and, investigated and, if not already reported to police and the Department of Community & Justice, St John NSW will do so.
- Applies the principles of being trauma informed, and survivor focused.

g) Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.

- Has procedures regarding creating safe spaces for children in which the opportunity for children being harmed is minimised.
- Is committed to providing a safe environment for children at our meetings, events, camps, and activity where adults are familiar with the Child Safety at Events Policy.
- Has a policy and procedures regarding safe communications, including electronic communications and use of all images (video, or photographic) of children.

h) Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.

- Provides all Members (adult and child) with Child Safety Training and opportunities to develop an understanding of grooming, indicators of abuse, all forms of child abuse, harm or exploitation of any kind.
- Requires all Members to be aware of their responsibilities under legislation, this policy, and those in the Code of Conduct.
- Has clear procedures for non-compliance with child safety requirements.
- Nominates the CEO or the GM PPC as a delegate as the 'head' of the organisation for the purpose of the Reportable Conduct Scheme in the applicable jurisdiction.

i) Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved.

- Commits to reviewing this Policy every two years or earlier if there are legislative or other public policy changes relevant to child safety.
- Commits to reviewing this Policy if Members raise concerns not adequately covered by this Policy.
- Commits to the review process being done in consultation with the CEO, the Board, children in St John NSW and Members/external experts working in the child safeguarding space.

j) Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

- Makes this Policy and associated Policies and Procedures publicly available and accessible.

1.3 Scope

This policy applies to all volunteer and staff members of St John NSW (and Contractors) and to the broad range of situations where interaction with children may occur in the delivery of St John NSW services. All Members may come into contact with children during the course of their work or volunteering or be involved in making decisions that influence the safety of children.

1.4 Responsibilities

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and General Manager People Performance and Culture (GM PPC) hold responsibility for implementation and review of Child Safety Policy and practices.

The Lead Child Wellbeing Officer (GM PPC) has been delegated by the Board to provide child safety leadership to Child Wellbeing Officers and manages and reports child safety issues to the CEO, the Board and external authorities as required.

The Senior Child Wellbeing Officer (Performance, People & Culture Manager) assists the Lead Child Wellbeing Officer to manage and report child safety issues and provides updates to the Child Wellbeing Officers.

Designated, trained Child Wellbeing Officers hold responsibility for providing first-line support and

guidance to all members with respect to child safety.

All members are responsible for:

- Following the Child Safety Policy of St John NSW.
- Protecting children and young person from all forms of harm, abuse, bullying and exploitation.
- Creating and maintaining a safe culture for children and young people.
- Seeking support re child safety concerns with Child Wellbeing Officers.
- Report concerns relating to the safety and welfare of children and young people to the Police and/or Department of Communities & Justice as appropriate.

1.5 Definitions

Adult: Any person aged 18 years or older. An **adult member** is a volunteer or staff member of St John NSW aged 18 years and over.

Allegation: An assertion made, that has not been found substantiated or unsubstantiated through investigation.

Child and young person refers to any person (both members of St John NSW and members of the public) up to 18 years of age. This would include but not limited to bystanders and patients. *The term children or child also encompasses young people in this document.

Child Abuse is an act or omission that endangers a child's physical or emotional health or development. It can be an exploitation of the power that adults, and sometimes other children, have over children that causes harm, may cause harm, or threatens harm to a child, even if the harm is not intentional. Child abuse often occurs in a context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.

See Appendix 1 for key definitions

Child Wellbeing Officers provides child safety leadership and support to protect all children and young people in every part of St John NSW.

Contractor is a person or entity contracted to perform work for, or provide services to, St John. Contractor does not include a person or entity engaged to facilitate or perform work or a service on behalf of St John, who for other intents and purpose may be considered a contractor.

Immediate risk is defined as to what extent, any child is in immediate danger of harm, determine whether immediate interventions should be initiated or maintained to provide appropriate protection for the child. A child may be assessed as in need of immediate intervention if the level of risk is identified as likely (probable), not just possible (may occur); the probable harm will have a detrimental effect on the child if it does not occur; and there is not a parent/guardian/carer able and willing to protect the child from future harm (and is not the alleged abuser).

Lead Child Wellbeing Officer provides child safety leadership to Child Wellbeing Officers and manages and reports child safety issues to the CEO, and relevant external authorities.

National Principles for Child Safe Organisations: See

<https://www.childsafety.gov.au/resources/national-principles-child-safe-organisations>

Reportable Conduct is defined in the Children's Guardian Act 2019 (NSW) as any sexual offence, or sexual misconduct committed against, with or in the presence of a child (including a child pornography offence or an offence involving child abuse material), or any assault, ill-treatment or

neglect of a child or any behaviour that causes psychological harm to a child, whether or not, in any case, with the consent of the child. St John NSW is required to make reports about reportable conduct that occurs within St John to the NSW Children's Guardian. In NSW these reports are made to the Office of Children's Guardian. The Reportable Conduct Scheme is different from Mandatory Reporting.

1.6 Policy Context

This Child Safety Policy has been developed in line with the National Principles for a Child Safe Organisation and the NSW Child Safe Standards. The National Principles were developed out of the Child Safe Standards published by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in February 2019.

The National Principles are designed to provide a consistent, national approach to the embedding a child safe culture across organisations that engage with children and young people. While each of the ten principles relate to a particular aspect of organisation child safety, they are designed to work together to embed child safety across an organisation.

All of these standards and principles have their origin in The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) which also underpins St John NSW's approach to child safety. The Convention functions as the foundation for child protection globally, recognising children's rights as human rights. Key legislation across Australia and NSW guides the St John NSW approach to child safety. Key legislation can be viewed in section 8.

1.7 Statement of Commitment to Equity and Diversity

St John NSW is committed to creating an environment that welcomes all children. St John NSW recognises that all children can be vulnerable to abuse with a range of factors including gender, age, education culture, sexuality or disability impacting vulnerability to abuse and organisational responses.

St John NSW seeks to create an environment that welcomes all children, facilitates inclusion, and removes barriers to access through:

- A zero-tolerance approach to discrimination.
- Trying to facilitate communication in ways that minimise barriers.
- Increasing awareness of the importance of equity and understanding of diverse perspectives.

2. YOUTH LEADERSHIP AND GUIDELINES

2.1 Practices for Engaging with Children and Young People

Care must be taken when working or engaging with children and young people.

Adult Members should:

- Try to initiate communication to children and young people with a smile and give clear instructions using age-appropriate language and body behaviour.
- Speak slowly using a friendly tone.
- When speaking with a child or young person get down to their level so that they are face to face with them maintaining a child safe distance.
- Explain why they are asking a child or young person to do something.
- Never use physical contact to overcome a child or young person's resistance to a request.

- Try to stay within sight of other adults at all times, do not place themselves in a situation where they are alone with a child, including travel to and from St John NSW activities.
- Avoid touching a child unless it is essential for them to:
 - provide assistance in the event that a child or young person is injured.
 - reassure or calm a distressed child – and then the touch must be with consent, minimal and only to ‘neutral’ areas of the body.
 - intervene to ensure the safety of a child.

If an adult member needs to touch a child, as part of providing first aid, reassurance (which should only occur in very limited circumstances), or safety concern, they should ensure they have another adult member with them, and:

- Where a parent/guardian is not with the child, Members seek consent in an age-appropriate manner as far as the circumstances will allow;
- Only touch the child’s ‘neutral’ areas of their body such as the arm or shoulder;
- Not engage in any unobserved contact with a child; and
- If ongoing first aid or reassurance is required seek assistance from another adult.

Please note that all Members are expected to report child safety concerns, not just those who are mandated to do so by law and internal reporting processes must never delay external reporting responsibilities to police and/or the relevant child protection agency.

2.2 Engaging with Children and Young People Online

When engaging with children and young people in real and virtual spaces, adult members should ensure:

- They do not contact St John NSW members who are under the age of 18 years via social media to establish direct one-on-one communication with Juniors or Cadets. Cadets over the age of 16 years of age can be included in social media pages, groups, forums, or group messages given there are at least two adults present.
- Any child under 16 years of age must be contacted through their parent/guardian.
- Direct communication with children over 16 years of age should be done via St John NSW email ensuring that guardians and/or divisional leaders are also included in the email. In the case of an emergency parents/carers and cadets can be contacted via phone.
- Any groups or pages on social media must have two moderators who are responsible for the maintenance of member access and the content posted. Members who leave St John must be removed from any online communication channels.
- Avoid posting meeting invitations and links on social media pages. This information should be emailed as a group email to divisional members or available on DEMS.
- Ensure children are not exposed to inappropriate images, films, music, and websites including mature content, indecent images (pornography) and violence.
- They comply with the St John NSW Social Media Policy.

Video conferencing is to be used for group learning only and not individual learning. Hosts should ensure that videoconferencing chats are set up to allow messages to be sent to the whole group or the host only. If online sessions/interactions are to be recorded parental consent must be secured and cadet/junior webcams turned off.

When videoconferencing with cadets and juniors members should:

- Dress in clothing that would be suitable for a face-to-face divisional meeting or a mufti day at school.
- Remove any sensitive personal items from view of the computer's camera.
- Avoid joining training from their bedroom or personal spaces where possible or otherwise impose blurring or another background.

2.3 Engaging with Parents and Carers

St John NSW recognises that families, parents, and carers have the primary responsibility for the upbringing of their children. As such, we are committed to engaging parents and carers in the child safety process through strategies, including but not limited to:

- Seeking feedback from families, parents and carers in the review of key policies and procedures.
- Seeking feedback from families, parents and carers when developing new materials; and
- Providing information and resources on St John NSW child safety practices to families, parents, and carers.

2.4 Expectation of Children

Children should:

- Show respect for others
- Treat others with honesty, caring, respect and kindness
- Listen to others
- Be made aware of safety requirements including those relating to child safety
- Tell an adult member, parent/guardian if they feel unsafe or uncomfortable in any situation so they can help
- Tell an adult member, parent/guardian if they are unhappy with the way they are being treated
- Participate fairly and allow the same of others
- Not to engage in any sexually harmful behaviour with other children
- Report inappropriate behaviour, unsafe situations, or harm; and
- Abide by the St John Youth Child Safety Code of Conduct.

3. REPORTING

3.1 Reporting Principals

Child safety concerns may arise in a variety of ways, through direct disclosure, observation or information received from others. All members must remain open and aware to the various ways abuse and neglect concerns may arise.

Child abuse and/or neglect may occur at St John NSW events and meetings, however, may also occur away from St John NSW events and meetings.

It is vital all members adhere to the process for reporting concerns without delay.

- If there is an immediate risk of harm to the child and young person, report this matter to the police (000) immediately.
- Thereafter they notify the Lead Child Wellbeing Officer or Senior Wellbeing Officer as soon as possible.
- If there is no immediate risk to the child and young person, the member needs to report to the Child Wellbeing Officer as soon as possible and then the Department of Communities and Justice via the Child Protection Helpline (telephone 132111).
- The Child Wellbeing Officer will report to the Lead Child Wellbeing Officer or to Senior Child Wellbeing Officer immediately; or
- The member may wish to report directly to either the Lead Child Wellbeing Officer or Senior Child Wellbeing Officer.

Members will ensure that where concerns arise, confidentiality is maintained as far as possible. This means that the members involved only share information with the Child Wellbeing Officer, Senior Child Wellbeing Officer, or Lead Child Wellbeing Officer unless another member of St John NSW needs to know to keep the child safe.

The member needs to follow the reporting process and only disclose information to people on a need-to-know basis.

St John NSW Support Services will be offered to everyone involved. St John NSW Support Services include:

- Peer Support Services – 0413 293 812
- Chaplaincy – 0423 854 789
- Volunteer & Employee Assistance Program - 1300 361 008

St John NSW will provide support to any person disclosing or supplying information in good faith. If there is any retaliation, St John NSW will take all possible steps to address this and will protect the person from any form of harassment or discrimination, bias, demotion, termination of membership or employment or threats of any of the above that is within its power.

If a person who has made a report believes retaliatory action or victimisation has occurred or they have been threatened, they are to report this to the:

GM People, Performance & Culture (GM PPC) or the People & Culture Manager or through the Whistle-blower hotline on:

1300 30 45 50; or

<http://stjohnnsw.stoplinereport.com>

3.2 Board and Executive Monitoring

Consistent with the commitment of St John NSW to the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and the mandatory reporting process, any breach of this Child Safety Policy will be reported to the St John NSW Board Chair and Board in near real time to ensure the organisational and individual exposure, treatment and risks are noted and managed. Management will brief the St John NSW Board on Child Safety quarterly at each meeting as a standing agenda item, to keep the Board apprised of Child Safety issues impacting St John NSW and compliance with this Policy.

3.3 Legislation Update

The following pieces of legislation are key to informing and developing our reporting processes.

Legal obligations of individuals

Adopting recommendations from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, the NSW Government has introduced a “failure to protect” and “failure to report” criminal offences.

The NSW “**failure to protect**” offence applies where an adult:

- knows there is a risk that another adult associated with the organisation will commit a sexual offence, serious physical abuse or serious neglect offence against a child.
- has the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, and
- negligently fails to reduce or remove the risk.

The “**failure to report**” offence applies where any adult knows, believes, or should reasonably know that a child has been sexually or physically abused and fails to report that to the police. This legislation applies to all adults in NSW.

Reportable conduct includes:

- any sexual offence or sexual misconduct committed against, with or in the presence of a child including a child pornography offence.
- any assault, ill-treatment, or neglect of a child; and
- any behaviour that causes psychological harm to a child – even if the child consented to the behaviour.

St John NSW is legally required to report to the NSW Office of the Children’s Guardian for any incidences where a member engages in or has engaged in any of the above conduct. If any member believes that a member has committed the above conduct, they must report to the Police and/or the Department of Communities and Justice as well as the Child Wellbeing Officer, Senior Child Wellbeing and/or the Lead Child Wellbeing Officer as soon as practicable.

Grooming Offences

The new offence of **grooming a parent or carer** to access a child and a broader offence of grooming children will cover any adult who offers a child/young person gifts or money with the intention of gaining their trust and making it easier to access the child/young person in their care for unlawful sexual activity.

This broader offence will capture common grooming behaviour, like giving a child gifts or money, which can be used to gain a child’s trust as well as behaviour towards the child’s family.

Legal obligations of St John NSW as an organisation

As an entity, St John NSW is subject to the Reportable Conduct Scheme. The CEO of St John has an obligation to report conduct occurring within or in connection to St John of the following nature:

- any sexual offence or sexual misconduct committed against, with or in the presence of a child including a child pornography offence;
- any assault, ill-treatment, or neglect of a child; and
- any behaviour that causes psychological harm to a child – even if the child consented to the behaviour.

Under the Reportable Conduct Scheme, St John NSW is legally required to report to the NSW Office of the Children’s Guardian for any incidences where a member allegedly engages in or has engaged in any of the above conduct. If any member believes that a member has committed the above conduct or had an allegation reported to them, they must report to the police and/or the Community Services Directorate (ACT) or the Department of Communities and Justice (NSW) as well as the Child Wellbeing Officer, Senior Child Wellbeing and/or the Lead Child Wellbeing Officer as soon as practicable.

3.3 Reporting and Complaint Process

All members are required to immediately report any suspected, known, or disclosed instances of child safety abuse or concerns to the police and/or Department of Communities and Justice as well as a Child Wellbeing Officer. The Child Wellbeing Officer is responsible for reporting the matter to the Lead/Senior Lead Wellbeing Officer. This includes concern for a child or young person when they attend St John NSW events or are provided care by St John.

The Lead/Senior Child Wellbeing Officer and the Child Wellbeing Officer can assist the member to make a report to the police or the Department of Communities and Justice.

Reassure the child or person reporting that this is being taken seriously. If appropriate talk to the person reporting the incident about what will happen remembering that you must not promise something you cannot control.

Incident reports are required for all child safety concerns. The report should outline details of the child and young person’s safety breach or allegation of improper conduct, the time and place it occurred, the name of any witness and a full description of what has occurred.

The Lead Child Wellbeing Officer is responsible for managing and investigating the concerns promptly and appropriately. The Lead Child Wellbeing Officer reports concerns to the CEO. The CEO will report the concerns to the Board.

3.3.1 Internal Reporting Process

If a member has a concern:

- If there is an immediate risk of harm, contact the police immediately.
- After immediate risk is managed by police, then make a proper record as soon as possible to inform your statement to police and the notification to the Lead Child Wellbeing Officer or Senior Wellbeing Officer.
- If there is no immediate risk to the child, all members are required to immediately report any suspected, known, or disclosed instances of child safety abuse or concerns to the police and the Department of Communities and Justice [Child Wellbeing Unit \(CWU\)](#) via Child Protection Helpline (132111).
- The Member must also make a report to the Lead/Senior Lead Wellbeing Officer or the Child Wellbeing Officer and can seek assistance from them to make the report to police and/or the relevant child protection agency provided this does not delay the report.

- If a matter has not been reported to the police and/or the Department of Communities and Justice Child Wellbeing Unit (CWU), then any adult in St John NSW who becomes aware of a child safety issue must make that report.
- The Lead Child Wellbeing Officer reports concerns to CEO who will inform the Board and investigate the matter and make recommendations on the membership status whilst the investigation is being conducted.
- If the Lead Child Wellbeing Officer determines a Reportable Conduct may have occurred, they will inform the CEO who makes a report to the NSW Office of Children's Guardian.
- Where appropriate the Lead Child Wellbeing Officer will liaise with the police or the Department of Communities and Justice Child Wellbeing Unit (CWU) during their investigation and the St John NSW investigation must not 'cut across' their investigations.

3.3.2 Mandatory Reporter Process

All members of St John NSW must consider themselves to be Mandatory Reporters whether they are deemed so under legislation or not. Mandatory Reporters include people who deliver the following services wholly or partly to children as part of their paid or professional work, include Health Care Professional, Welfare workers (e.g. psychologist, social workers, youth workers, case workers), Education (teachers and principals), child services workers, residential services workers and law enforcement workers.

As a Mandatory Reporter if you have a concern for a welfare of a child or young person you must:

1. Report directly to police and/or the Department of Communities and Justice via the Child Protection Helpline 132111 or an eReport: <https://reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/s/article/How-to-create-an-eReport-in-the-Reporter-Community>. AND
2. If the issue arose within the context of St John NSW, thereafter advise the Lead Child Wellbeing Officer on 0432 750 968.

3.3.3 External Reporting Process

When an external report has not yet been made and, when the Lead/Senior Child Wellbeing Officer receives information from a Child Wellbeing Officer or member about a concern for a child, the Lead Child Wellbeing Officer will review the information available and determine the next course of action.

If the concern is **about abuse or neglect occurring** the Lead or Senior Child Wellbeing Officers will:

- Contact the relevant members (eg. Divisional Superintendent, Child Wellbeing Officer etc) to get more information about the child if that is required.
- Assemble the information available and should there be a basis for a reasonable belief to be formed forward available information to the Department of Communities and Justice via Child Protection Helpline 132111 or via an eReport
<https://reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/s/article/How-to-create-an-eReport-in-the-Reporter-Community>.
- If there is an immediate risk to the child's health and wellbeing, report to the police the incident or if it is an adult (related to historical abuse), encourage the adult to report to the police.
- Support the relevant members involved in the child's care throughout the process including involving the St John NSW Support Services Program when appropriate; and
- Provide an update and feedback will be provided to relevant members involved in the incident in line with privacy and confidentiality requirements. In most cases the information provided,

and who the information is provided to, will be based on what they need to know to continue to care for the child.

If the concern relates to internal misconduct or reach the threshold for Reportable Conduct, the Senior or Lead Child Wellbeing Officer will:

- Contact the Child Wellbeing Officer and any relevant persons to get more information (if required).
- Assemble the information available and should there be a basis for a reasonable belief to be formed report to the Department of Communities and Justice via the Child Protection Helpline 132111 or via eReport
- <https://reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/s/article/How-to-create-an-eReport-in-the-Reporter-Community>.
- If required, report to the police the incident or if it is an adult (related to historical abuse), encourage the adult to report to the police.
- Report the incident to the CEO so that a report can be made to NSW Office of Children's Guardian if it is Reportable Conduct (noting that Reportable Conduct must be reported within seven days).
- Review information available and depending on the severity of the incident, and in consultation with the CEO who will inform the Board, determine whether to suspend their volunteer or employment.
- Get advice from the police and/or the Department of Communities and Justice Child Wellbeing Unit (CWU) before proceeding with the investigation; and
- Support the members involved in the incident and child throughout the process including involving St John NSW Support Services when appropriate.

If the concern relates to community or external environment concerns the Senior or Lead Child Wellbeing Officer will:

- Contact the Event Coordinator if they have information relating to the child unless they are an alleged perpetrator.
- Contact the Child Wellbeing Officer and any relevant persons to get more information (if required).
- Assemble the information available and should there be a basis for a reasonable belief to be formed report to Child Protection Helpline 132111 or via eReport
- <https://reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/s/article/How-to-create-an-eReport-in-the-Reporter-Community>.
- If required, report the incident to the police.
- In adherence with privacy and confidentiality requirements provide appropriate feedback to members involved in the incident who have a need to know; and
- Offer St John NSW Support Services.

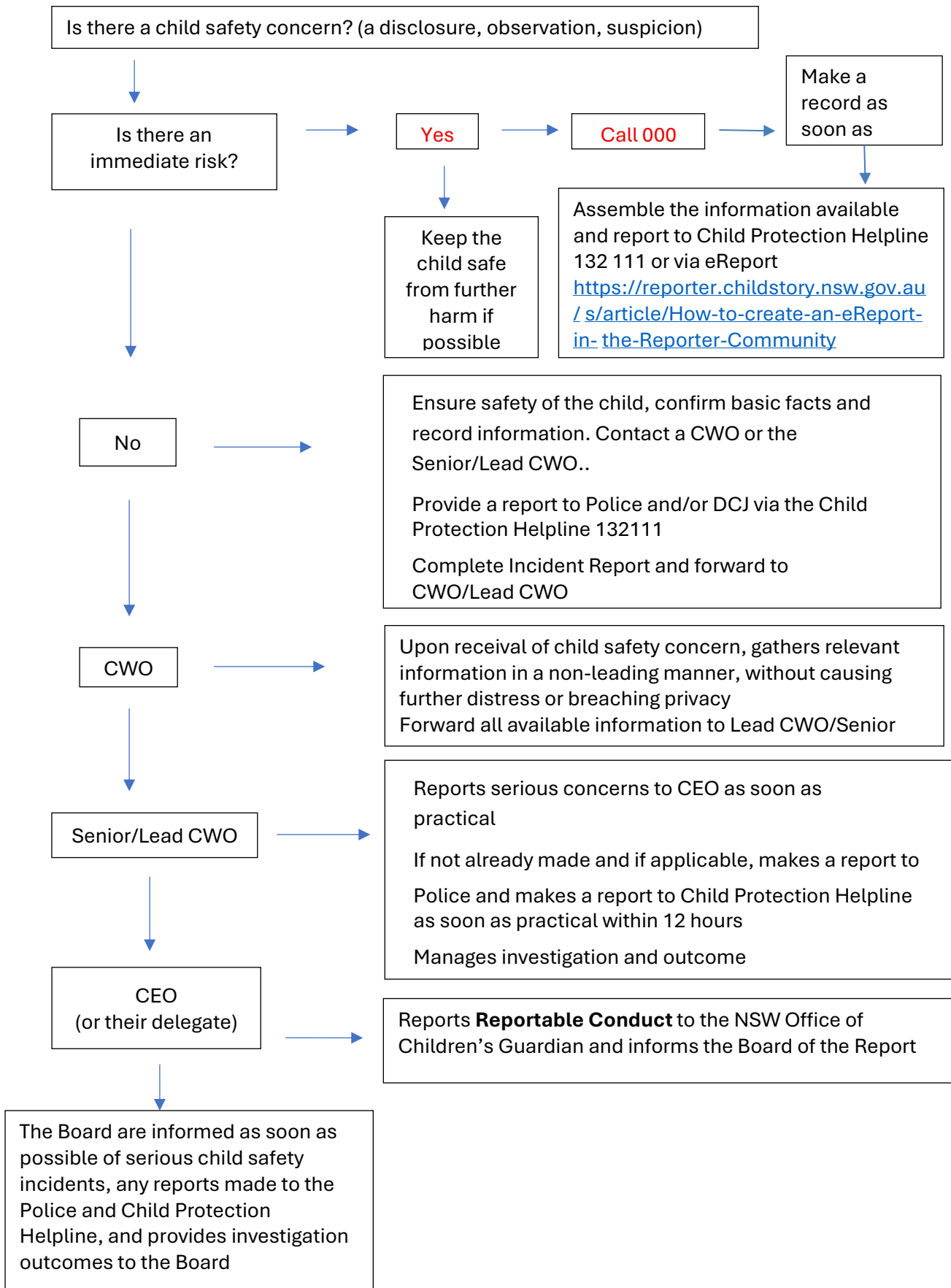
Members will ensure that where child safety concerns arise, confidentiality is maintained as far as possible. This means that the Members involved only share information internally with the most senior St John person on site, the Child Wellbeing Officer, Senior Child Wellbeing Officer, Lead Child Wellbeing Officer or anyone directly involved in the care of the child. Information must only be disclosed on a need-to-know basis.

St John will provide support to any person disclosing or supplying information in good faith. If there is any retaliation, the person will be protected, as far as St John is able, from any form of harassment or discrimination, bias, demotion, termination of membership or employment or threats of any of the above.

If a person who has made a report believes retaliatory action or victimisation has occurred or they have been threatened, they are to report this via the prescribed Whistle Blower hotline.

See Appendix C for Reporting & Complaints Handling Template

Child Safety Reporting Flowchart



3.4 Child Wellbeing Officers

There are a number of layers of child safety members within St John NSW. All adults are responsible for the safety and wellbeing of children. There are also many members who have trained to be Child Wellbeing Officers. A full list of Child Wellbeing Officers is available on the Members Intranet under Child Safety. Please visit

<https://stjohnnsw.sharepoint.com/SitePages/Child-Safety.aspx>

There are also two senior Child Wellbeing Officers. They may be contacted as follows:

Child Wellbeing Officers	Position	Contact
Lead Child Wellbeing Officer	General Manager People, Performance & Culture	0432 750 968 ** Available 7 days a week
Senior Child Wellbeing Officer	Performance, People & Culture Manager	0419 277 175 ** Available 7 days a week

4. RECRUITMENT, SCREENING AND TRAINING

Our commitment to child safety will be evident at every stage of engagement with prospective and new members. St John NSW is committed to ensuring all members uphold the values of our organisation and the principles of this policy.

4.1 Recruitment and Screening

All advertisements for new positions at St John NSW will feature the organisation's commitment to child safety and the requirement to have or obtain a Working with Children Check.

St John NSW will ensure that all job applications, position descriptions and employment agreements will include the following commitment to child safety:

"St John NSW is a child safe organisation. We have a zero-tolerance policy toward all forms of child abuse and neglect."

St John NSW will address child safety in all interviews and reference checks for staff and volunteers. The closer the role to working with children the more rigorous the reference checking will be with respect to child safety.

4.2 Training and Supporting Members

All adult St John members will complete the Child Safety Awareness Training annually as part of St John NSW Membership Requirements.

St John NSW is committed to providing training and induction to new adult members and ongoing child safety training to all existing members.

Cadet Divisional Superintendents, Child Wellbeing Officers and the State Youth Team members will complete the National St John Child Safeguarding Training Program.

St John NSW is committed to providing a safe environment for children and young people at our meetings, events, camps, and activity where adults are familiar with the Child Safety Supervision Policy.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT & DOCUMENTATION

St John NSW is committed to taking the management of child safety seriously. St John NSW works closely with members to identify and mitigate risks to child safety in all environments in which we work (including online).

St John has risk management strategies in place to provide safe interactions and environments for children while balancing the prioritisation of their right to privacy, access to information, and facilitating social connections and learning opportunities. As such we work to enable children to be part of key risk management decisions.

In circumstances where a serious child safety incident has occurred or been reported the GM PPC and the Safety & Member Services Manager will ensure this is comprehensively reviewed and any learning arising is utilised to strengthen risk management approaches.

The GM PPC and the People & Culture Manager will maintain records of all child safety incident notifications, including child protection reports to Department of Communities and Justice, NSW Office of Children’s Guardian (Reportable Conduct Directorate), and the police.

The Lead Child Wellbeing Officer is responsible for ensuring that the Child Safety Reporting Register is maintained and updated.

6. STATUTORY OBLIGATIONS: WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK

St John NSW requires all members to hold a current Working with Children Check in accordance with the Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 (NSW). St John NSW will maintain the validity and currency of the Working with Child Check.

St John NSW is committed to fulfilling requirements under the act and further information about Working with Children Check and child related employment can be found at www.kids.nsw.gov.au

Members who’s Working with Children Check is suspended (or otherwise restricted), cancelled or not renewed will be unable to continue working or volunteering with St John NSW until such time as their Working with Children Check is current.

7. LEGISLATION

St John NSW is committed to the understanding and learnings of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. St John NSW recognises that children have rights as individuals and should be treated with dignity and respect

This policy is intended to ensure compliance of St John NSW and its members with The Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 and other relevant legislation. This legislation includes:

<i>Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998</i>
<i>Children’s Guardian Act 2019</i>
<i>Commission for Children and Young Persons Act 1998</i>
<i>Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012</i>
<i>Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998 (repealed)</i>
<i>Crimes Act 1900 (NSW)</i>
<i>Anti-Discrimination Act 1977</i>
<i>Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998</i>
<i>Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)</i>
<i>Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002</i>

8. RELATED POLICIES

This Policy should be read in conjunction with other St John NSW Policies including:

- Our Values & Behaviour Statement
- Child Safety Code of Conduct for Adult Members
- Child Safety Code of Conduct for Parents
- Child Safety Code of Conduct for Youth Members
- Cadets at Events Policy
- Managing Performance & Conduct Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Social Media Policy.

9. SUPPORT SERVICES

St John NSW offers several Support Services that are free and available to all members and their family. These programs offer private and confidential services to all members who are seeking assistance.

- Peer Support Services – 0481 994 578
- Chaplaincy - 0423 854 789; and
- Volunteer & Employee Assistance Program - 1300 361 008

For further information, please visit: [Peer Support](#)

10. POLICY REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed every 2 years or sooner should there be changes to legislative provisions or if concerns arise from a child safety investigation

The Lead Child Wellbeing Officer will review the policy as required in consultation with the CEO and the Board.

Any Policy updates and key messages required will be shared with all Members as part of their induction, child safety training and yearly organisational governance Policy Awareness and Understanding Declaration.

11. APPENDICIES

Appendix A: Key Definitions

In order to create a child safe environment, it is important for members to understand the various ways in which abuse of children people can occur. The following section defines the various forms of abuse and harm.

Cumulative Harm – involves repeated and ongoing abuse and/or neglect which detrimentally impacts a child’s development and well-being.

Emotional Abuse - can result in damage to the child’s physical, social, intellectual, or emotional development. This may involve being repeatedly rejected, name-called or put down. It may involve being frightened by threats or subjected to continual coldness so that self-esteem, physical, intellectual, and emotional growth are affected.

Family Violence – witnessing family violence is a specific form of emotional or psychological abuse. Family violence is defined as violence between members of a family or extended family or those fulfilling the role of family in a child or young person’s life. Exposure to family violence places children and young people at increased risk of physical injury and harm and has a significant impact on their well-being and development.

Grooming – the offence of grooming concerns predatory conduct undertaken to prepare a child for sexual activity at a later time. The offence applies where an adult communicates by word or conduct with a child under the age of 16 years or with a person who has care, supervision, or authority for the child with the intention of facilitating a child’s involvement in sexual conduct, either with the groomer or another adult. Grooming does not necessarily involve any sexual contact or even discussion of sexual activity if it is deemed to have the purpose of facilitating sexual activity at a later time. The offence can be committed by any person aged 18 years or over.

Multi-dimensional harm - occurs where multiple abuse types are experienced at the same time e.g. sexual abuse also involves physical and emotional abuse.

Neglect – involves the failure to meet a child’s basic needs, such as providing adequate food, drink, shelter, clothing, supervision, hygiene, and medical attention to the extent that the child’s health and development are, or are likely to be, placed at risk.

Physical Abuse - occurs when a child suffers or is likely to suffer significant harm from an injury. The injury may be inflicted intentionally or may be the inadvertent consequence of physical punishment or physically aggressive treatment of a child. This may take the form of punching, beating, shaking, or otherwise harming a child.

Racial, cultural, religious, spiritual safety – is impacted through conduct that demonstrates contempt, ridicule, hatred, or negativity towards a child because of their race, culture, religion, or spiritual beliefs. Such conduct may be overt, such as direct racial vilification or discrimination, or covert such as demonstrating a lack of cultural respect (attitude and values) and awareness (knowledge and understanding) or failing to provide positive images about another culture. This conduct may result in significant emotional abuse of a child.

Sexual Abuse - occurs when a person uses power, force, or authority to involve a child in any form of sexual activity. Sexual abuse may involve touching or fondling; obscene or suggestive phone calls/texts; exhibitionism and or voyeurism; showing children or involving them in the production of pornographic images; penetration with penis, finger or other object into the mouth, anus or vagina.

Sexual exploitation - is considered a specific form of sexual abuse because children, by virtue of their age and development, are unable to give informed consent. Sexual exploitation of children takes different forms. It can include children being involved in sexually exploitive relationships, exposing a child to pornography, receiving money, goods, drugs, or favours in exchange for sex with one or more adults, or being exploited in sex work. In all cases, those exploiting the children have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, physical strength, economic or other resources, such as access to drugs or gifts.

Sexually harmful behaviour in children – refers to harmful behaviour perpetrated by a child (17 years of age or younger) to another child. Harmful behaviours in children are often an indicator that they have experienced abuse or neglect. Where sexually harmful behaviour occurs, organisations have a duty of care to both children. Note that in children under 10 years of age, such behaviour is usually referred to as sexually problematic behaviour.

Appendix B: Examples of When to Report Different Types of Abuse

Physical Abuse: You suspect a non-accidental injury or physical harm to a child/young person may have been caused by a parent/carer or other adult. You know of treatment of a child/young person by a parent/carer or other adult that may have caused or is likely to cause an injury or physical harm.

Neglect: Supervision; Shelter/Environment; Food; Hygiene/Clothing; Medical Care; Mental Health Care; Education - Not Enrolled; Education, Habitual Absence You suspect that a parent/carer is not adequately meeting a child's/young person's needs such as: supervision, shelter, medical care, hygiene/clothing, mental health care, schooling/education, nutrition, or other basic needs. A child/young person is a danger to self or others and parents/carers are not supervising or providing care.

Psychological Harm: A child/young person appears to be experiencing psychological/emotional distress and is a danger to self or others as a consequence of parent/carer behaviour. An underage marriage or similar union, where one or both partners is under 18 has occurred.

Relinquishing Care: Parent/carer states they will not or cannot continue to provide care for a child under the age of 16 or a young person over 16 and they are unable to make an informed decision (temporarily or permanently). Child/young person is in voluntary care for longer than legislation allows.

Carer Concern: Substance Abuse; Mental Health; Domestic Violence A child/young person is significantly affected by carer (parent/guardian) concerns such as substance abuse, mental health, or domestic violence.

Appendix C: Reporting and Complaints Template

If you believe a child or young person is at immediate risk of harm, contact the police on 000 immediately. If you are not sure, contact the Department of Communities and Justice via the Child Protection Hotline 132111 or a St John NSW Child Wellbeing Officer for guidance.

Following the report to the police and/or the Department of Communities and Justice via the Child Protection Helpline 132111 or an eReport:

<https://reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/s/login/?ec=302&startURL=%2Fs%2Farticle%2FHow-to-create-an-eReport-in-the-Reporter-Community>

The member is required to advise the Child Wellbeing Officer and complete this St John NSW reporting template.

St John NSW Child Safety Reporting Template

Date:

Details of person reporting the incident:

Name (Person reporting the incident):	
Position Title:	
Mobile No/Phone No:	
Email Address:	
Division/Area:	
Date of this Report:	

Details of concern:

Date of concern:	
Time:	
Location:	
Name(s) of child(ren) or young person(s) involved:	
Name(s) of members involved:	

Witness(es) if applicable:

Name	Position	Phone No	Email Address

Description:

Who was involved?	
What happened?	
Protective action taken or implemented? Include details such as reference number for any external report made to police or to DCJ.	
Other relevant information	

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Please forward completed form to Lead Child Wellbeing Officer or Child Wellbeing Officer immediately upon completion.



St John

stjohnnsw.com.au

1300 785 646

12 Lyonpark Road, Macquarie Park NSW