



Child Protection Manual

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CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

1. Purpose

Kids Hope Aus Ltd (Kids Hope) aims to impact the lives of children in Australian schools in a positive way through early intervention mentoring. In every state and territory of Australia, its programs exist to develop emotional and social resilience in children, thereby enhancing their capacity to learn.

The Kids Hope Child Protection Policy is built on the Australian Government Child Protection Legislation. Details of Child Protection Legislation relating to each State and Territory can be found at:

<https://www3.aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/australian-child-protection-legislation>

Many principles of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (1989) are embedded in this legislation. Specifically, see Article 19, which states "*State Parties shall protect the child from all forms of physical and mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse.*"

This Policy affirms our commitment to the wellbeing and safety of children and their protection from abuse and exploitation. Under this Policy, a 'child' is a person under 18 years of age.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to all persons engaged by Kids Hope, whether they are appointed permanently, temporarily, on work experience, as volunteers, or as members of committees or boards, including Kids Hope's directors, executive team, ambassadors, patrons, campaign advocates, fundraisers, Coordinators, Mentors and any other program volunteers who may come into contact with children in the course of their involvement with Kids Hope (collectively, Kids Hope Team Members). This Policy must be read and acknowledged by all Kids Hope Team Members as part of the engagement process.

3. Related policies

This Policy is to be read in conjunction with the following Kids Hope policies and documents:

- *Code of Conduct;*
- *Reporting and Responding Policy;* and
- *Child Protection Statement.*

4. Relevant legislation

This Policy is underpinned by the following legislation including any amendment or re-enactment of it:

- *Children and Young People Act 2008 (ACT)*
- *Working with Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011 (ACT)*
- *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)*
- *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 (NSW)*
- *Care and Protection of Children Act 2007 (NT)*
- *Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld)*
- *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld)*
- *Children's Protection Act 1993 (SA)*
- *Children, Young Person's and their Families Act 1997 (Tas)*
- *Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013 (Tas)*
- *Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic)*
- *Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)*
- *Children and Community Services Act 2004 (WA)*
- *Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004 (WA)*

5. The ten principles for child safe organisations

Adherence to this Policy will ensure that we achieve:

1. A commitment to child safety and wellbeing which is embedded in our organisational leadership, governance and culture.
2. An environment where children who are involved in our programs are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
3. A situation where all Kids Hope families and connected communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
4. Equity for all participants is promoted throughout our programs, and diverse needs are taken into account.
5. A situation where all Kids Hope Team Members working with children are suitable and supported to uphold child safety and the wellbeing of our participants.
6. Child-focused processing of complaints and reports of child abuse in which we are responsive and accessible to children, families, staff and volunteers.
7. An environment where all Kids Hope Team Members are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through ongoing education and training.
8. An environment (physical and online) in which we promote the safety and wellbeing of children, while minimising the opportunity for harm and abuse to occur.
9. An open approach to regular review, both internal and external, and the subsequent improvement of this Policy and all other child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures.
10. Policies and procedures which document how we are a child safe organisation.

Kids Hope will ensure that Child Safe branding is displayed in its offices, on its website, in publications and at events.

6. Statement of Policy

We believe that child protection is both an individual and a corporate responsibility. All Kids Hope Team Members share in the responsibility of taking appropriate measures to protect the children we serve.

Each Kids Hope Team Member has a responsibility to:

- Ensure they understand and meet the expectation of all Kids Hope policies, including this Policy and our *Code of Conduct*;
- Agree to and abide by our *Child Protection Statement*;
- Seek the guidance of their manager, Coordinator or the CEO of Kids Hope if they are unclear about anything related to this Policy or any other Kids Hope policies;
- Take action if they become aware of any breaches of this Policy, the *Code of Conduct* or the *Child Protection Statement*, including their own breaches or those of others; and
- Make a report in line with the *Reporting and Responding Policy* if they become aware of any abuse or neglect of a child, or any concerns relating to the safety, welfare or wellbeing of a child, including where this is occurring outside Kids Hope's programs.

The Board and CEO of Kids Hope will take action to ensure that every person who shares in the work of Kids Hope is aware of their responsibilities arising from child protection legislation and this Policy and they will be assisted in meeting these responsibilities as outlined in this Policy.

7. Program procedures

Recruitment, Selection and Screening

Kids Hope provides guidelines and processes for the recruitment, screening and selection of all volunteers and staff to ensure they are safe and suitable to work with children.

Throughout our recruitment process, including through advertising, position descriptions and interviews, and through our training of Mentors, Coordinators, staff and volunteers, we clearly communicate that a commitment to safeguarding children is an integral part of involvement with Kids Hope.

Recruitment of Coordinators and Mentors is not conducted by Kids Hope directly, but rather, by individual Churches. Kids Hope provides the Church with a position description to assist the Church with recruitment, but both Coordinators and Mentors are volunteers of the Church (not of Kids Hope).

Kids Hope and its participating churches will not accept applicants to become a Kids Hope Team Member if there is an existing/unresolved allegation of child abuse against the applicant.

The behaviours we expect of all Kids Hope Team Members are set out in our *Code of Conduct*, which has been approved by the Kids Hope Board. The Code is readily available to everyone involved in Kids Hope. Everyone involved in Kids Hope is to record their commitment to these standards of behaviour through annual completion of the *Child Protection Statement*.

Our recruitment procedures include:

- Pre-interview screening (conducted by individual Churches) of prospective Mentors and Coordinators, including the completion of a written application, which includes behavioural questions;
- Face-to-face interviews (which can be web-based), preferably with a third person present, for which Interview Guidelines are provided. The Guidelines include questions relating to our commitment to safeguarding children and are reviewed and updated regularly to ensure they reflect best practice child safe recruiting and screening standards. Interviews for Mentors are conducted by a Coordinator and interviews for a Coordinator are conducted by a Church Minister;
- Two reference checks, in addition to the recommendation of a church leader. The two references must be professional or equivalent and to Kids Hope's satisfaction. Reference checks for Mentors are undertaken by a Coordinator and reference checks for Coordinators are undertaken by a Church Minister;
- Undertaking a working with children check in the relevant State or Territory. Mentors' working with children checks are verified by Coordinators, who in turn self-verify. A Kids Hope Team Member will also verify Mentors' and Coordinators' working with children checks. Coordinators are to maintain detailed and accurate records in relation to the date and outcome of each check;
- For Mentors, applications are submitted to the Pastor for review. The Pastor reviews the names of all prospective mentors and completes the Pastoral Review, subject to working with children's check. The application is accepted or rejected based on the combination of the interview, pastor review or working with children's check.

Training and Development

We provide all new Kids Hope Team Members with information during their onboarding about our commitment to safeguarding children, including this Policy, our *Code of Conduct*, *Child Protection Statement* and *Reporting and Responding Policy*.

Onboarding for new Kids Hope Mentors includes training sessions on:

- Appropriate mentoring settings and locations at the school;
- Confidentiality;
- Child safe practices, including appropriate touch and reporting suspected abuse, including grooming; and
- Legal responsibilities, including mandatory reporting of disclosed, alleged or suspected child abuse or neglect.

Ongoing training in the areas of child abuse and child protection will be encouraged and facilitated by Kids Hope through ongoing communication and training sessions with Kids Hope Team Members where required. Email addresses must be kept up-to-date for Kids Hope communications.

School Orientation

The Church Coordinator will provide the school with Kids Hope guidelines to maintain appropriate mentoring spaces. The Church will maintain ongoing dialogue with participating schools in relation to:

- Maintaining appropriate mentoring spaces; and
- Other school protocols which may impact mentoring.

Staff and Volunteer Support and Supervision

Kids Hope Staff, Coordinators and Mentors will be supported and supervised in their roles as positive role models to the children. Concerns related to suitability to work with children will be addressed by the church leadership, to whom Mentors are accountable. If there are any concerns raised about a Mentor's suitability to work with a child during the course of volunteering, the Coordinator will ensure that the School Principal and Kids Hope are notified and the Mentor will immediately cease mentoring while the incident or concerns are being investigated (please see the *Reporting and Responding Policy* for further details).

Feedback of staff and volunteers is sought regularly in order to inform Kids Hope's evaluations of its programs and policies.

Child Participation and Empowerment

We involve children and their families to foster a safe, inclusive and supportive environment. We provide information to families and carers about:

- our commitment to safeguarding children and their rights;
- the behaviour we expect of the Kids Hope team and families when accessing our programs; and
- our *Reporting and Responding Policy*.

We embed the principles of family-centred practice in our program delivery. Children and families may be consulted via a Feedback Form and interviewed as part of creating a child-safe environment.

Screening

Kids Hope takes measures to screen out all people who might seek to use Kids Hope to harm children, or whose past actions indicate an unacceptable risk of such harm.

These measures include addressing safeguarding in job advertisements (when feasible), applications, interviews and references. Safeguarding screening measures are applied to all candidates for employment as a Kids Hope Team Member who will have access to children or to their personal data. During the interview process, applicants are asked about previous work with children. For references supplied by applicants, questions are asked regarding the suitability of the candidate to work with vulnerable children or for a child-focused agency. Documentation of references is kept on file.

Managing personal and other health support needs

A health support need should not prohibit a child from participating in a program or activity unless the child's needs exceed what Kids Hope can offer and provide. This means planning for health support must occur early, so any special measures can be put in place.

Where Mentors engage in cooking/food activities with children, Mentors must first confirm with the school:

- **the school's policy regarding food;**
- **whether the child has a known first aid need, such as a history of asthma, diabetes, allergies, anaphylaxis or epilepsy, or a routine health support need, such as medication administration, personal care support or help with a mental health issue; and**
- **where the first aid kit and trained first aid provider are located.**

Mentors must not share food with children and food is not to be shared in the classroom unless distributed by the classroom teacher, in accordance with the school's food policy.

8. Reporting

Our policy for responding to child abuse, the *Reporting and Responding Policy*, is approved and endorsed by the Kids Hope Board, and applies to all Kids Hope Team Members. The policy states:

- Kids Hope Team Members must, as soon as possible, report any disclosed, alleged or suspected abuse or neglect of a child, and any concerns with the behaviour of colleagues or breaches of Kids Hope policies (by either themselves or others);
- Kids Hope Team Members must meet any legislated mandatory reporting requirements;
- Kids Hope Team Members must follow a specified process when reporting abuse or neglect;
- Kids Hope Team Members must immediately report to the Coordinator, Kids Hope and the School Principal any concerns they have about a child's welfare, or any belief that a child is in danger from themselves or others; and
- a failure to make a report where required is a breach of the *Child Protection Policy*, the *Reporting and Responding Policy* and the *Code of Conduct*.

Refer to the *Reporting and Responding Policy* for further information in relation to mandatory reporting requirements in each State and Territory.

Kids Hope Team Members must review and understand Kids Hope's approach to reporting prior to commencing work with children.

9. Disciplinary Action

Failure to follow the Kids Hope's *Child Protection Policy* (including the *Child Protection Manual* and *Child Protection Statement*), the *Reporting and Responding Policy*, and the *Code of Conduct*, in particular any inappropriate behaviour toward children or failure to report a known or suspected safeguarding incident committed by a Kids Hope Team Member, is grounds for disciplinary action, which may include termination of the person's employment or other affiliation with Kids Hope.

Where a Kids Hope Team Member does not hold a current and valid working with children check, they may face disciplinary action which could include termination of their employment or other affiliation with Kids Hope. Kids Hope Team Members must be aware that failure to hold a current and valid working with children check when engaged in a child-related role is an offence in all States and Territories.

10. Review

Kids Hope is committed to maintaining and improving our policies, procedures and practices to safeguard children from neglect and abuse. The Kids Hope Board has assigned responsibility for maintaining and improving our policies and procedures to the Kids Hope CEO.

Kids Hope will undertake annual internal reviews and periodic independent (external) reviews of the *Child Protection Policy* (including the *Child Protection Manual* and the *Child Protection Statement*), the *Reporting and Responding Policy* and the *Code of Conduct*. The intention of review is to ensure that Kids Hope's policies and guidelines are legally compliant, reflective of community expectation and are implemented consistently throughout the organisation. The results of these reviews are to be tabled at the appropriate senior executive and Board meetings and any amendments to policies are to be made available to families for comment.

The *Child Protection Policy* (including the *Child Protection Manual* and the *Child Protection Statement*), the *Reporting and Responding Policy* and the *Code of Conduct* are available on our website. Kids Hope introduces families to the above policies when we begin working with them and encourage them to refer to our Information for Families about Child Safety and Protection for updates.

In order to ensure that its policies and guidelines foster the best child safe environment possible, Kids Hope provides an annual child protection report to the Kids Hope Board. That report includes a summary of the child protection reports, incidents and action by Kids Hope for each reporting year.

REPORTING AND RESPONDING POLICY

1. Purpose

All Kids Hope Team Members must report any suspected, alleged, known or disclosed instances of child abuse (being physical, sexual, psychological or any other form of abuse or neglect) of Kids Hope participants in line with the procedures set out in this Policy. This includes where a child discloses or is at risk of abuse in situations outside Kids Hope's programs (e.g., at home). A failure to report is a breach of this Policy, the *Child Protection Policy* and the *Code of Conduct*.

This Policy presents the minimum standard required in terms of reporting. These reporting principles are to be reinforced during induction and training of Mentors, Coordinators, and all other Kids Hope Team Members.

Where a Kids Hope Team Member makes a report pursuant to this Policy, Kids Hope is to ensure that the reporter is provided with support. Kids Hope will maintain an open and cooperative relationship with all child protection authorities and will provide all relevant information in its possession to those authorities to assist in their investigations, subject to relevant privacy laws.

Kids Hope Team Members who are required by law to report child abuse (Mandatory Reporters) are to follow the mandatory reporting requirements prescribed under their State or Territory legislation (see part 4 below). Where this occurs, Team Members are required to also make the report to the relevant officer at Kids Hope so that Kids Hope may take appropriate action in accordance with this Policy.

Participants in Kids Hope's programs (and their families) are encouraged to report any instance in which they feel unsafe or in danger. It must be regularly communicated to children that they have the right to feel and be safe.

2. Understanding child abuse

Forms of abuse

Forms of child abuse may include psychological or emotional abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, as well as exposure to violence experienced by a child and perpetrated by another child or adult. Where a mentor becomes aware of bullying, the mentor is to report this to the classroom teacher. For further information about child abuse and neglect, please refer to the *"What is child abuse and neglect?"* resource sheet which can be found at the AIFS website:

<https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/what-child-abuse-and-neglect>.

Grooming

Child grooming is premeditated conduct designed to secure the trust and cooperation of children and facilitate later sexual activity. Grooming can be conducted in person or online, for example via interaction through social media, web forums and emails.

Grooming offenders are likely to choose a location or target group that children frequent or that is attractive to children (which could include a school or mentoring environment). Offenders often take a particular interest in their child victim to make them feel special with the intention of gaining their trust.

Fighting grooming requires effective coordination and collaboration on the part of all Kids Hope Team Members, who must have an understanding of specific grooming behaviours and their impacts.

There is no one set of actions or behaviours that are used to groom a child, and sometimes it is hard to identify grooming behaviour because it can look like "normal" caring behaviour. However, Kids Hope Team Members must be vigilant to the following possible grooming behaviours:

- Giving gifts or special attention to the child or their parent or carer (this can make a child feel special or indebted to an adult), particularly where the person is spending time with the child or their parent/carer outside of Kids Hope's programs;
- Close physical contact with the child. This could include obviously inappropriate contact, such as kissing or hugging, but could also include less obvious forms of contact such as inappropriate tickling or wrestling;
- Openly or pretending to accidentally expose the child to nudity, sexual material and/or sexual acts;
- Controlling the child through threats, force or use of authority;
- Being in contact with the child on social media, contrary to the *Code of Conduct*.

If a Kids Hope Team Member suspects that a child is being groomed, they must take action in accordance with sections 4 and 5 of this Policy.

3. Working with Children Checks

It is the responsibility of the Kids Hope Coordinator and church leadership to ensure that all Mentors have satisfied the State or Territory requirements for working with children before Mentors are permitted to volunteer. It is also the responsibility of the Kids Hope Coordinator to ensure that Mentors continue to maintain up-to-date working with children checks as required by the state or territory.

Mentor's working with children checks are verified by Coordinators, who in turn self-verify. A Kids Hope volunteer will also verify Mentors' and Coordinators' working with children checks. Coordinators are to maintain detailed and accurate records in relation to the date and outcome of each check.

Please check the following websites to track any changes in your state or territory requirements for working with children:

- ACT - https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/app/answers/detail/a_id/1804/kw/working%20with%20vulnerable%20people
- NSW - <https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/working-with-children-check>
- NT - <https://nt.gov.au/emergency/community-safety/apply-for-a-working-with-children-clearance>
- QLD - www.bluecard.qld.gov.au/
- SA - <http://screening.dcsi.sa.gov.au/>
- TAS - www.justice.tas.gov.au/working_with_children
- VIC - www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/
- WA - <https://workingwithchildren.wa.gov.au/>
- National overview - <http://www.aifs.gov.au/nch/pubs/sheets/rs13/rs13.html>

4. Mandatory reporting

Mandatory reporting laws require specified people to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate child protection authority. Mandatory reporting laws differ across States and Territories, so it is important for Kids Hope Team Members to be familiar with the laws in the State or Territory in which they are operating.

If a Kids Hope Team Member is a Mandatory Reporter, they must make a report to the relevant child protection authority as required by the mandatory reporting laws in their State or Territory. They must also make a report to the School Principal and Kids Hope Coordinator in line with this Policy.

As at the date of this Policy, all employees and volunteers of Kids Hope are mandatory reporters in the Northern Territory and South Australia but not in any other State or Territory.¹ The table on the following page outlines the requirements in those States to report suspected cases of abuse. In each case, Mandatory Reporters must make a report as soon as possible after forming the belief that a child is at risk of any of the reportable forms of harm.

¹ In South Australia, employees of, or volunteers in, an organisation formed for religious purposes are considered Mandatory Reporters: *Children and Young People (Safety) Regulations 2017 (SA)*, r 9 and *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017 (SA)*, s 114(7). Although there is some doubt as to whether Kids Hope would be considered an organisation formed for religious purposes as it is not a registered charity for the purposes of advancing religion, Kids Hope Team Members in South Australia must assume they are mandatory reporters. In the Northern Territory, all persons are considered Mandatory Reporters: *Care And Protection Of Children Act 2007 (NT)*, s 26.

State / Territory	When do you make a report?	What do you report?	Who do you report to?
Northern Territory	Where the reporter believes on reasonable grounds that a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, any of the reportable types of harm (set out in the column to the right).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical abuse • Sexual abuse or other exploitation • Emotional / psychological abuse • Neglect • Exposure to physical violence (e.g. a child witnessing violence between parents at home) 	Northern Territory Police Force (131 444) or the Child Abuse Hotline (1800 700 250)
South Australia	Where the reporter suspects on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is, or may be, at risk of any of the reportable types of harm (set out in the column to the right), and that suspicion was formed in the course of the person's employment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical abuse • Sexual abuse • Emotional / psychological abuse • Neglect • Risk that a child will be removed from the State for the purposes of an unlawful medical procedure or marriage • Persistent absence from school without explanation • Homelessness 	Child Abuse Report Line (13 14 78)

Although Kids Hope employees and volunteers in the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, Queensland, Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia are not mandated by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect, they must always report any suspicion or disclosure of abuse or neglect to Kids Hope, the School Principal and to their Coordinator. Visit the following AIFS website links for more state and territory-specific legislation about what must be reported and the contact details for each reporting authority:

- <https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/mandatory-reporting-child-abuse-and-neglect>
- <https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/reporting-abuse-and-neglect>

5. Incident reporting

Regardless of whether they are a Mandatory Reporter, all Kids Hope Team Members must notify their Coordinator and the child's teacher and School Principal if a child reports, or if the Kids Hope Team Member suspects, any kind of abuse, neglect or grooming, and confirm that all allegations or suspicions of abuse are recorded and acted upon.

Who must report concerns?

All Kids Hope Team Members who believe on reasonable grounds that a child is at risk must report their belief and the grounds pursuant to this policy, the *Reporting and Responding Policy*.

What concerns must be reported?

The grounds on which a child may be 'at risk' include:

- any disclosure, suspicion or allegation of child abuse (physical, sexual, emotional or psychological, including any potential or actual grooming) or neglect; or
- any other concern for the child's welfare.

Reports must also be made in the case of:

- any breach of the *Child Protection Policy* or *Code of Conduct*; or
- any other concern about a Mentor or Coordinator, or any other Kids Hope Team Member, working with a child.

When must an incident be reported?

As soon as possible after forming the reasonable belief that the child is at risk.

To whom is a report made?

- a report must be made immediately to the School Principal using the Incident Report Form at **Attachment A** (if the report relates to the safety of a child) or **Attachment B** (if the report relates to the safety of a Mentor).
- at the time the report is made to the Principal or shortly thereafter, the Kids Hope Coordinator, Kids Hope and the Minister is to be informed that a report is being made.
- where the person making the report is a Mandatory Reporter in their State or Territory (refer to part 4 above), they must report the information to the relevant Authority.

If the report involves an allegation against a Mentor, the following additional procedures apply:

- the Kids Hope Coordinator must notify the Minister of the Church that an allegation has been made against a Mentor from the church. Where an allegation has been made against a Coordinator, it is the responsibility of the Kids Hope Team Member to whom the allegation was first disclosed to notify the Minister;
- the Kids Hope Coordinator (or, where the Coordinator is the subject of the allegation, the Kids Hope Team Member to whom the allegation was first disclosed) must inform the Kids Hope CEO;
- the Kids Hope Mentor or Coordinator, the subject of the report, must immediately cease contact with the child, be suspended from volunteering with Kids Hope, and referred to child protection authorities or to the police; and
- the Kids Hope CEO must notify the family of the child of the allegation and action proposed by the School. The School contact must also inform Kids Hope of its proposed actions;
- where Kids Hope considers the School has not taken appropriate action, it must contact the relevant child protection authority.

If the report involves an allegation of domestic violence or other forms of abuse (including neglect) at home, the following additional considerations apply:

- If a concern or complaint relates to a member of the child's family, the family must not be informed. Decisions about any action will need to be made on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the Kids Hope CEO and, if a report is made, as advised by the child protection authority.
- If the concern or complaint relates to a Kids Hope Team Member, the Kids Hope CEO will contact the family and advise them of the situation, what action has been taken and any proposed further action.

The following table sets out the persons responsible where a report is made (either against a Mentor or not involving a Mentor).

	A report not involving a Mentor	A report against a Mentor
Responsible The person assigned to investigate the report	School	Kids Hope National Office -by commissioning of Independent Investigation
Accountable The person who has the final decision and ultimate ownership	School Principal	Kids Hope CEO
Consulted The person who must be consulted before a decision or an action is taken	Child Protection Authority School's internal process	Child Protection Authority Senior Minister of the Church
Informed The person who must be informed that a decision or action has been taken	Child's family (unless the report relates to a child's family member, in which case the family is not to be informed)	Kids Hope National Office Child's family Senior Minister of the Church

What happens next?

The Mentor will complete a confidential Incident Report Form (see **Attachment A**) and give it to the Principal. The report will be forwarded to the police or relevant child protection authority.

When an alleged perpetrator is a Kids Hope Team Member, Kids Hope will make direct contact with that person immediately to inform them that an allegation of abuse has been made (without identifying the alleged victim) and that the Kids Hope Team Member is suspended. A formal letter and email confirming this suspension from all Kids Hope activities will be sent to the person immediately.

All verbal information and documents related to allegations of child abuse are to be kept confidential. Reports will be stored in accordance with the requirements of the school.

How is the outcome determined?

If further investigation is required by Kids Hope, the report will be referred to a designated Kids Hope investigator. The investigator is impartial, objective and trained to respond quickly if an investigation is needed. The investigation process must avoid conflict of interest, ensure procedural fairness and preserve confidentiality.

A number of courses of action are possible depending on the nature of the report and the outcome of any investigation:

- the matter may be managed by the school, police or relevant child protection authority;
- the Principal may decide that no further action is required;
- ongoing Mentor monitoring or performance review may be undertaken; or
- a Mentor the subject of a report may, following investigation by Kids Hope, be subject to disciplinary proceedings, suspended or permanently dismissed by Kids Hope.

Follow up

Debriefing should be conducted with the Coordinator/Mentor involved, with the school and if appropriate the child and family. The Kids Hope CEO must be informed of the outcome by the Coordinator if the allegation is against a Mentor or Coordinator.

If an allegation is made against a family member or someone else in contact with the child during a follow-up session, decisions about any action will need to be made on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the Kids Hope CEO and, if a report is made, as advised by the child protection authority.

ATTACHMENT A INCIDENT REPORT FORM

This form must be used to record any suspicion, allegation or disclosure of child abuse or neglect or concern for the wellbeing of a child or young person, breach of the *Code of Conduct* or a concern regarding a Coordinator or Mentor.

1. Name of child/young person involved:

2. Name and position of person making the report:

3. Name of the person against whom the report is made:

4. Nature of the report – include times, date, location and what happened:

5. Details of any injuries and if the child/young person received medical attention:

6. Provide an accurate account of what the child/young person has told you happened:

7. Details of anyone who saw what happened:

8. Does this incident require a report to be made to police or the relevant authority in your state's jurisdiction? (For the contact details for each state and territory, please refer to <https://www3.aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/reporting-abuse-and-neglect>)

9. Does this report involve a breach of the Kids Hope *Code of Conduct*?

10. Provide details of the follow up provided, in particular support and/or referral provided to the child or young person:

Date: _____

Signed: _____

Print name: _____

Date report given to Principal: _____

ATTACHMENT B INCIDENT REPORT FORM FOR SITUATIONS INVOLVING MENTORS

This form must be used to record any incident that involves injury or harm to a Mentor, or their personal belongings, while they are mentoring or on the school property. The Incident Report must be given to the Kids Hope Coordinator and a copy to the appropriate person of authority in the school. Please also send a copy of the Incident Report to the Kids Hope National Office.

Name of School: _____

Name of Church: _____

Kids Hope Coordinator: _____ Date: _____

1. Name of Mentor involved:

2. Name and position of person making the report:

1. Name of the child (if relevant) or additional persons involved:

2. Nature of the incident – include times, date, location and what happened:

3. Details of injuries to the Mentor and any medical attention received:

4. Details of any damage to personal belongings:

5. Details of anyone who saw what happened:

6. What action was taken by the school to address this situation?

7. Does the Mentor require additional support or debriefing? Please give details:

Kids Hope Mentor's name (printed): _____

Kids Hope Mentor's signature: _____

Kids Hope Mentor's contact details: _____

Date signed: _____

Kids Hope Coordinator's name (printed): _____

Kids Hope Coordinator's signature: _____

Date signed: _____

School Principal's name (printed): _____

School Principal's signature: _____

Date signed: _____

Date report given to Principal: _____

Please forward a copy of this report to the Kids Hope National Office:

PO Box 34 Surrey Hills VIC 3128 or

admin@kidshope.org.au

CODE OF CONDUCT

Kids Hope is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all participants in its programs. All Kids Hope Team Members are required to abide by this Code to ensure that children are always safe when participating in Kids Hope programs.

As a Kids Hope Team Member, you must:

- Create and maintain an environment in which children are safe from sexual and other forms of abuse and neglect.
- Conduct yourself in a manner consistent with your position as a positive role model to children and representative of your church and Kids Hope.
- Read, understand and abide by the Kids Hope *Child Protection Policy* and *Reporting and Responding Policy* and complete the relevant *Child Protection Statement* at **Attachment A** annually. **Mentors and Coordinators must not have contact with children until they have completed the *Child Protection Statement* at the start of every calendar year, or at the commencement of their employment or volunteering.** Coordinators are responsible for ensuring that they and all their Mentors have completed their annual *Child Protection Statement*.
- Treat all children with respect. Ensure that children with particular needs are appropriately supported and catered for in the program. This includes:
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children;
 - Linguistically diverse children;
 - Children with a disability; and
 - Culturally diverse children.
- Be careful to show respect for children and their rights through your language and actions. Take notice of a child's reactions to your tone of voice and respond accordingly and appropriately.
- Observe all guidelines about appropriate touching as covered in the Kids Hope Mentor Training Manual.
- Confirm that parents of participating children have signed the Parent Information and Consent Form at **Attachment B**.
- Complete the Progress Report at **Attachment C** at the end of each mentoring session.

- Allow the child to share important information.
- Focus on skill building and relationship building. Where required, use positive, protective methods to manage behaviour.
- Raise all concerns, issues or problems with your Coordinator and teacher as soon as possible.
- Respect the secular nature of Government Education. The mentoring hour must not be used for religious purposes.
- Ensure you adhere to any specific school requirements or guidelines.
- Ensure that mentoring or other activities always take place in an open, observable place.
- Report and respond to any instances of abuse, neglect or grooming of children in line with the *Reporting and Responding Policy*.
- Comply with any investigations relating to the safeguarding of children (both internal and external), including making available any documents or information necessary for the investigation.
- Maintain confidentiality when handling personal information about children and their families, including maintaining and transferring that data only when necessary and in a secure, confidential manner.

As a Kids Hope Team Member, you must not:

- Behave in an inappropriate physical manner, including engaging in rough physical games.
- Touch children in an inappropriate way or culturally insensitive way, including fondling, holding, kissing or hugging.
- Develop a sexual relationship with a child or sexually exploit a child in any way.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child or use suggestive humour.
- Hit or use other violent or corporal punishment against a child.
- Use language that is inappropriate, abusive, belittling or humiliating.
- Spend the mentoring hour in a secluded space that is away from the view of others.
- Spend time alone with a child outside school hours at any time.
- Share the child's academic or personal information with anyone except the teacher.
- Counsel children or probe into their lives, as Mentors and Coordinators are not professional counsellors.
- Contact the child's parents unless your Coordinator informs you that permission has been granted.
- Question the child on subjects they are reluctant to discuss or on topics they have been told not to share at school.
- Discuss the child with others in social settings.
- Misuse or be careless with a child's personal information.
- Give out your personal details to the child, including your address, email or phone number.
- Ask the child for, or accept, their address, phone number or email.
- Engage with the child on Facebook or other social media or digital platform.
- Take photos of the child without the child's and his or her parents' permission.
- Supply a child with alcohol, cigarettes, medication or other drugs.
- Stay silent, cover up, or enable any known or suspected abuse, neglect or grooming of a child or breach of this, or any other, Kids Hope policy.

ATTACHMENT A CHILD PROTECTION STATEMENTS

KIDS HOPE CHILD PROTECTION STATEMENT FOR MENTORS

Please complete the following statement to demonstrate you have read and understood the *Child Protection Policy*, the *Reporting and Responding Policy* and the *Code of Conduct* relating to mentoring children through the Kids Hope program.

First Name: _____

Middle Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Email Address: _____

Mobile Number: _____

Working with Children Check Number: _____

Working with Children Check Expiry Date: _____

Postal Address: _____

Suburb: _____ Postcode: _____

Name of Church: _____

Gender Male Female

Age Category 18-29 30-49

50-69 70+

Date of Birth: _____

My church has an affiliated licence agreement with Kids Hope. This agreement provides me with the training, resources and support I require to implement the mentoring program in our partner school.

The mentoring program is a volunteer outreach ministry of our church, and as with other church volunteer ministries, I am covered by the insurance policy of the church listed above.

Please read, acknowledge and tick the following statements.

- I uphold the right of children to be protected from all forms of physical and mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse.
- I am a Mentor for the Kids Hope program, for the church listed above.
- I have completed the recruitment and screening process including application booklet, interview, referees and the state legislated Working with Children Check to volunteer at my partner school. I will ensure my Working with Children Check is renewed and updated as required.
- I have provided Kids Hope with my Working with Children Check number and date of birth. I consent to Kids Hope using this information to verify my Working with Children status on an ongoing and periodic basis.
- I have completed the prescribed Kids Hope Mentor training program.
- I have read, understand and agree to the Kids Hope *Child Protection Policy*, the *Reporting and Responding Policy* and the *Code of Conduct* and will refer to the Kids Hope website periodically during the course of my affiliation with Kids Hope to review any updates to these policies.
- I understand that I cannot mentor unless I have read the Kids Hope Child Protection Manual and completed the Child Protection Statement for Mentors at the start of each year.
- To receive important information, I will ensure I read all Kids Hope email communications and will not unsubscribe from these communications whilst I am an active Mentor.
- I understand all the guidelines of the Kids Hope program and agree to abide by them.
- I understand that any action inconsistent with the Child Protection Manual and Code of Conduct may result in the termination of my affiliation with Kids Hope.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

KIDS HOPE CHILD PROTECTION STATEMENT FOR COORDINATORS

Please complete the following statement to demonstrate you have read and understood the policies and guidelines relating to volunteering or mentoring children through the Kids Hope program.

First Name: _____

Middle Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Email Address: _____

Mobile Number: _____

Working with Children Check Number: _____

Working with Children Check Expiry Date: _____

Postal Address: _____

Suburb: _____ Postcode: _____

Name of Church: _____

I am also a Mentor: Yes No

Gender: Male Female

Age Category 18-29 30-49

50-69 70+

Date of Birth: _____

My church has an affiliated licence agreement with Kids Hope. This agreement provides me with the training, resources and support I require to implement the mentoring program in our partner school.

The mentoring program is a volunteer outreach ministry of our church, and as with other church volunteer ministries, I am covered by the insurance policy of the church listed above.

Please read, acknowledge and tick the following statements:

- I uphold the right of children to be protected from all forms of physical and mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse.
- I am the authorised Coordinator for the Kids Hope program for the church listed above.
- I have completed the required state legislated Working with Children Check to volunteer at my partner school. I will ensure my Working with Children Check is renewed and updated as required.
- I have provided Kids Hope with my Working with Children Check number and date of birth. I consent to Kids Hope using this information to verify my Working with Children status on an ongoing and periodic basis.
- I have read, understand and agree to the Kids Hope *Child Protection Policy*, the *Reporting and Responding Policy* and the *Code of Conduct* and will refer to the Kids Hope website periodically during the course of my affiliation with Kids Hope to review any updates to these policies.
- I understand that I cannot coordinate and/or mentor unless I have read the Kids Hope Child Protection Manual and completed the Child Protection Statement for Coordinators at the start of each year.
- I understand that it is my responsibility to ensure all Mentors participating in the Kids Hope program, at the church listed above, have completed the Child Protection Statement for Mentors before commencing mentoring for the first time AND at the start of each year. I understand that Mentors cannot mentor children unless they have completed the Child Protection Statement for Mentors at the start of each year.
- To receive important information, I will ensure I read all Kids Hope email communications and will not unsubscribe from these communications whilst I am an active Coordinator and/or Mentor.
- I will ensure I pass on all emailed information from Kids Hope to Mentors who do not have an email address or who struggle using technology.
- I understand all the guidelines of the Kids Hope program and agree to abide by them.
- I understand that any action inconsistent with the Child Protection Manual and Code of Conduct may result in the termination of my affiliation with Kids Hope.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

ATTACHMENT B PARENT INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

(NOTE: The school must reproduce this form on school letterhead)

Dear Parents/Guardian,

I am pleased to let you know that as a school we are partnering with *(insert church name)* to facilitate the Kids Hope mentoring program at our school.

Mentors are volunteers of our local partner church. They have been screened by the church in accordance with the legal requirements for volunteers working with children. Mentors receive comprehensive child-safe training by an approved Kids Hope Coordinator. They complete a Progress Report after each mentoring session - you can access these in consultation with the school.

Mentors and Teachers will be asked at intervals to provide Kids Hope with an update on your child's progress and the effectiveness of the mentoring partnership. Confidentiality is protected, with information collected used to help further develop the program for all children.

Your child *(insert child's name)* has been recommended to receive one-to-one support from a Kids Hope Mentor. This is designed to strengthen their social and emotional development. A Kids Hope mentor is a screened and trained adult volunteer who can:

- Meet with your child at school for one hour per week
- Be a positive role model and caring adult, and an encouragement to your child
- Help your child with completing or practicing learning tasks

Kids Hope Mentors are trained and required to respect the secular nature of education and do not use the mentoring hour for religious activities.

If you would like your child to be assigned a Kids Hope Mentor, please complete this consent form and return to your child's teacher **as** soon as possible. Please note that you can withdraw your consent throughout your child's mentoring journey, in consultation with the school.

Further information about Kids Hope is attached and can be found at www.kidshope.org.au.

If you have any questions, concerns, or comments, please get in contact with the school.

Yours Sincerely,

(Principal or Teacher)

Kids Hope Parent Consent Form

- I give permission for my child _____ to be assigned a Kids Hope Mentor.
- I give permission for Kids Hope to monitor my child's progress with their Mentor in partnership with relevant school staff and processes.
- I understand that the Kids Hope Mentor is a volunteer of the local partner church, *(insert church name)*.
- I understand that all Kids Hope Mentors are screened and trained in accordance with all relevant child protection legislation and protocols.
- I understand that the Kids Hope Child Protection Policy is available for my review on the Kids Hope website: www.kidshope.org.au/about-us/policy
- I acknowledge that I can ask about my child's progress at any time, and that I am able to withdraw my consent for my child's involvement in the program by informing the school.
- I will do my best to work in partnership with the school to support my child's mentoring relationship.

Child's Name: _____

Parent's Name: _____

Parent's Signature: _____

Date: _____

ATTACHMENT D SCREENING PROCESS FLOWCHART

Steps to Becoming a Kids Hope Mentor

All Kids Hope Mentors must complete a stringent screening process before they are able to commence mentor training.

This includes an application form, interview, reference checks, satisfactory completion of relevant working with children checks, and sign off by church leadership.

This flowchart is a step-by-step summary of the screening process and the journey to becoming a Kids Hope mentor.

