



## **Indigenous Allied Health Australia Public Statement of Commitment to Child Safety**

Indigenous Allied Health Australia (IAHA) works generationally to create a future where all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are thriving in good health and social and emotional wellbeing, supported by ongoing connections to culture, spirit, and place. IAHA is therefore committed to ensuring the health, wellbeing and safety of every child that has contact with IAHA employees, contractors, consultants, volunteers and providers engaged by IAHA to deliver services to children and young people.

IAHA has zero tolerance for child abuse, neglect and exploitation of children and young people.

IAHA is committed to:

- Embedding the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.
- Creating a culture, adopting strategies and taking action to promote child wellbeing and preventing harm to children and young people.
- Supporting young people to succeed and thrive.

IAHA consciously and systematically:

- Integrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social and Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) and ways of knowing, being and doing in everything we do.
- Creates an environment where the safety and wellbeing, including cultural safety, of children and young people is the centre of values and actions.
- Affirms the self-determination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including through genuine engagement with and value for children and young people, their families and communities.
- Creates the conditions that reduce the likelihood of harm to children and young people, including through promoting confidence in self and identity.
- Creates conditions and trust that increases the likelihood of identifying harm.

- Responds to concerns, disclosures, allegations or suspicions about the safety and wellbeing of children and young people by reporting to the appropriate authorities and providing appropriate support.

IAHA believes all children and young people have a right to feel safe and be safe and respected for their diversity and worldviews.

IAHA has a *Child Safety and Wellbeing* policy in place. This policy outlines IAHA's commitment to, and implementation of, the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

IAHA is committed to:

**1. Driving a child safe culture at all levels of the organisation by:**

- Embedding child safety in the organisation's culture, as reflected in policies and procedures, and understood and practiced at all levels the organisation.
- Expecting that safeguarding children and young people is everyone's responsibility.
- Prioritising the safety and wellbeing of children and young people engaged by IAHA.

**2. Ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people are at the centre of IAHA business by:**

- Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, being and doing in everything we do.
- Committing to provide physical and online environments free from racism, where children and young people are safe and able to actively participate in decisions that affect their lives.
- Creating an environment where children's safety and wellbeing is the centre of thought, values and actions placing emphasis on genuine engagement with and respect for, children and young people.
- Involving and communicating with children and young people in the development of a safe, culturally responsive, inclusive and supportive environment.

**3. Valuing the partnerships with families and communities that work alongside IAHA by:**

- Actively engaging with the families and communities impacted or connected with IAHA's work.
- Keeping families and communities informed about IAHA's work and activities.

- Listening to family and community feedback and ensuring that their views are taken into consideration.
- Linking children and young people with services and supports within the community through warm and supportive referrals.

**4. Promoting equity and respecting diversity by:**

- Actively anticipating and thinking holistically about children and young people's diverse circumstances and responding effectively to those with additional support needs, consistent with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's social and emotional wellbeing practices.
- Giving children and young people access to information, support and complaints processes in ways that make sense to them.
- Considering the needs of all children and young people, particularly those who are: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, people with a disability, LGBTQIASB+, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

**5. Minimising the likelihood of recruiting a person who is unsuitable to work with children by:**

- Meeting the requirements of the relevant Australian child protection legislation across each jurisdiction.
- Requiring IAHA Board members, employees, volunteers, trainees and members to hold and maintain the appropriate working with children checks as required in each jurisdiction.
- Reviewing police checks and working with children checks and ensuring renewal of those checks as required.

**6. Ensuring complaints processes are child focussed by:**

- Making sure children and young people who are engaged with IAHA know how to raise a concern and know who they can talk to if they feel unsafe and require support.
- Ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social and emotional wellbeing practices are embedded in complaints processes.
- Taking all allegations and concerns about abuse seriously and responding to them consistently via a specified process, consistent with IAHA policies and procedures.

- Complying with all legal requirements, including reporting suspicions of abuse to the relevant authority and documenting any allegation, disclosure or concern regarding child abuse and monitoring responses to all allegations, disclosures or concerns.

**7. Educating employees, volunteers, contractors and stakeholders about child safety by:**

- Ensuring that each person, involved in the delivery of services to young people, understands their role and the IAHA policies, practices and requirements (including induction) in place to keep children and young people safe from abuse and neglect.
- Ensuring position descriptions and engagement with children and young people clearly states relevant child safety and wellbeing requirements.
- Having child safe practices and child safe professional behaviours that outline IAHA expectations for behaviour towards children and young people in the IAHA Code of Conduct.
- IAHA Board members, employees and volunteers completing regular child safety training as monitored and managed by IAHA.
- IAHA employees and volunteers complete *Cultural Responsiveness in Action* training.

**8. Ensuring all online and physical environments are safe by:**

- Completing comprehensive child safety risk management plans for engagement with children and young people.
- Having adequate support and at least two IAHA employees present, if possible, whenever IAHA directly engages with children or young people.
- Facilitating *Cultural Responsiveness in Action* and supports to our education and employer partners, to promote safe education, training and workplace environments.

**9. Maintaining and improving IAHA policies and practices by:**

- Monitoring IAHA employees, volunteers and contractors to ensure appropriate practice, behaviour, and policies are followed to keep children and young people safe from abuse and neglect through regular supervision.
- Formally reviewing engagement practices to identify and document potential risks to children and young people, including from the perspectives of children and young people.

- Undertaking formal reviews of policies and procedures, at least annually, to identify potential risks to young people associated with program delivery and responding to any identified risks.
- Ensuring routine review cycles for all children safety requirements.
- Documenting incidents relating to child safety and wellbeing and analysing data and themes as required.

**10. Documenting how IAHA keeps children safe through its Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy:**

- Operating under strict child safe policies and practices.
- IAHA policies and procedures address the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.