

Child safety and Protection Policy

In this policy we will refer to Mosaic Multicultural Connections as *Mosaic* or *we*.

Introduction

At Mosaic, we are committed to keeping children safe. We work to prevent child abuse in all Mosaic programs and activities, build a strong child safe culture, follow clear child safety procedures, and make it clear that child abuse and any behaviour that could lead to abuse will not be tolerated. We will report and investigate any suspected abuse. We will also make sure our work follows the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and the National Child Safe Standards.

What does this policy cover

This policy applies to everyone at Mosaic, including employees, volunteers, and the Board of Directors.

This policy is written for Mosaic workers to use, including Board members and volunteers. Child abuse is never acceptable at Mosaic

Mosaic and all Mosaic workers have zero tolerance for child abuse.

We understand that parenting practices can be different across cultures.

We will not assume that cultural parenting practices put children at risk.

We also recognise the strengths in many CALD and refugee communities, including collective approaches to caring for children.

Our workers will be culturally sensitive and risk to identify and respond to behaviours that may have risks of serious harm to a child. We treat all allegations and safety concerns seriously.

We will listen, record what is reported, and investigate according to our policies and procedures. If we form a reasonable belief that a child is at risk of significant harm, we will follow the law and contact the appropriate authorities.

What is Mosaic's Commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children

Mosaic is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people.

Whenever children are involved in our services, their safety and wellbeing come first in every decision.

We will provide an environment where children are safe and feel safe, both in our physical spaces and in our culture, and we will make sure children's voices are heard in decisions that affect them.

We will support board members, staff, and volunteers with clear policies and procedures to put these commitments into practice. Mosaic is committed to implementing the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

Everyone in Mosaic is responsible for protecting children

Child protection is a shared responsibility between Mosaic, our workers, and the communities we work with.

Mosaic may need to report inappropriate behaviour or child safety concerns to the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ), the Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG), or NSW Police, depending on how serious and urgent the matter is.

We value and support diversity

Mosaic will have policies and practices that support the cultural safety, participation, and empowerment of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, including First Nations children.

We will also provide a suitable environment for children with disability so they are safe and can participate equally.

All children have the same legal right to be protected from abuse, regardless of gender, race, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, or family or social background.

Children and their families are supported to make decision

Mosaic will support children and their families to take part in our programs and activities.

We will consult children and families on matters that affect them and give them real opportunities to share their views. Mosaic workers will listen and treat their views with respect.

Code of Conduct for Mosaic staff and volunteers

We will guide staff and volunteers on how to behave when working with children.

Staff, volunteers, children, and families will be able to contribute to a Child Safety Code of Conduct. The code will set out the expected standard of behaviour when working with children and families.

Mosaic expects all workers and volunteers to agree to follow the code and to support ongoing improvement in child safe practice.

We will train and supervise our staff and volunteers

Mosaic will provide training and education so everyone understands how child safety is put into practice.

Board members, employees, and volunteers will be trained on the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and the National Child Safe Standards.

Workers and volunteers in child related roles will receive extra training so they can identify risks, assess them, and reduce them.

Mosaic will also support workers to build skills in culturally safe practice for CALD children, the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and safe and inclusive practice for children with disability

We will do check during recruitment

Mosaic will use checks and screening to help make sure we recruit the right people, including Working with Children Checks, police checks (where required), and reference checks.

Job ads and selection criteria will clearly state Mosaic's commitment to child safety.

Anyone doing child related work, including volunteers, must hold a current Working with Children Check and provide evidence of it.

Anyone with a banning notice or other exclusion will not be allowed to work with children. Please also refer to the Mosaic Employment Screening and Probity Policy.

Board directors and other workers who are not in child related roles will still be given training and information so they understand their ethical and legal responsibilities.

We will respect and protect privacy

Mosaic will protect personal and sensitive information and follow privacy laws.

During any child safety investigation, we will protect the privacy of the people involved and keep information confidential. This includes how we record, store, and use that information.

We may share information with government agencies to further support children

Chapter 16A of the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* (NSW) allows information to be shared between government agencies and non government organisations to support vulnerable children and families.

We will meet our legal responsibilities

Mosaic will meet its legal responsibilities to keep children safe. We will report serious concerns, report to Police if we believe a child under 16 has been sexually abused, inform the CEO about any serious allegation involving a staff member or volunteer, notify the Office of the Children's Guardian if needed, and take reasonable steps to prevent harm in all Mosaic activities and programs.

We will identify and manage all relevant risks to children

Mosaic will identify and manage child safety risks across all services and activities, as well as general workplace health and safety risks. We will consider child related risks for every project and review them each year. We will manage risks in both physical settings and online spaces.

Allegations, concerns and complaints will always be taken seriously at Mosaic

We take all child abuse concerns seriously.

We investigate every complaint and may use external experts if needed.

We support workers who report concerns, including debriefing and employee assistance support.

We train board members, staff, and volunteers to recognise concerns, know who to tell, and report correctly.

Workers must report if they reasonably believe abuse may have happened, such as when a child speaks up, warning signs are seen, someone raises a concern, or suspicious behaviour is noticed.