

1. Purpose

Doxa is committed to ensuring that all children and young people (Young Participants) have the right to develop and reach their potential in environments that are caring, nurturing and safe. This includes the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, Young Participants from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse background, as well as to provide a safe environment for Young Participants with a disability to equally participate. Doxa considers any form of Young Participants abuse, inclusive of emotional, physical, sexual abuse or neglect, as intolerable. Doxa supports and respects all Young Participants, as well as our staff and volunteers by promoting diversity and tolerance.

This document is to be read in conjunction with associated safeguarding child-related procedures including Doxa's Code of Conduct which outlines behaviour expectations of all Doxa staff members.

2. Scope

This policy applies to Doxa's staff members, program participants, visitors, including school staff. For the purposes of this policy, "staff members" will include:

- Doxa employees
- Doxa's Board of Directors;
- Doxa cadets and volunteers;
- Contractors/ sub-contractors/ consultants and their employees whilst engaged on Doxa work.

3. Legislative Responsibilities

Doxa is committed to the recommendations derived from the Betrayal of Trust Inquiry and the Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safety Standards) Act 2015. For more detail refer to Safeguarding Children and Young People Procedure Appendix 1: Legislative changes

4. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all staff members to promote best practice in safe guarding Young Participants as well to immediately report any suspected child abuse. Roles and responsibilities are outlined in detail in the Safeguarding Children and Young People Procedure. The following outlines responsibilities at Board and at Senior Management Level.

4.1 The Directors

- are legally responsible for ensuring appropriate policies and practices are in place to minimise the risk of child abuse, and appropriately respond to suspected allegations,
- are required to report any suspected child abuse (whether the suspected perpetrator is within or outside of Doxa) to the Doxa Child Protection Officer,
- must promptly respond to any advice received from any state/territory child protection authority, and
- in conjunction with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) be responsible for ensuring safe guarding children and young people-related policies and practices are reviewed annually.

4.2 CEO /Executive Team:

- are accountable to the Board of Directors for ensuring that appropriate policies and practices are implemented, monitored, reported on and evaluated in a timely and diligent manner. This includes promptly responding to any changes to legislation or advice received from any state/territory child protection authority and any changes are promptly brought to the attention of the Board.
- Fully cooperate with all relevant state/territory child protection authorities or other recognised bodies in their investigations of suspected child abuse.
- In consultation with General Manager, Partnership and Corporate Affairs, manage inquiries, including media, relating to suspected child abuse.
- Appoint Doxa Child Protection Officers and delegates in their absence, and
- Ensure that all staff have read and understood their roles and responsibilities as outlined in the Safeguarding Children and Young People Procedure and Code of Conduct.

5 Policy Statement

This policy is intended to empower and safeguard Young Participants who are vital and active participants in our organisation. Doxa is committed to involve them when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect or relate to them as well as actively promoting and encouraging them to voice opinions and concerns.

In support of the Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safety Standards) Act 2015, this policy is based on the following principles:

- a) Doxa has a zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with Doxa's Code of Conduct, Protected Disclosure Policy, Incident Reporting Procedure and Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.
- b) Doxa has a legal and moral responsibility to protect Young Participants from harm and to ensure that any incidents of suspected child abuse are promptly and appropriately dealt with.
- c) Doxa has a legal and moral obligation to contact authorities when we have any concerns regarding the safety or wellbeing of Young Participants.
- d) A risk management approach applied in the prevention of child abuse, identifying risk early, and removing and reducing risks based on Doxa's Risk Management Framework and reporting delegations.
- e) Recognise and respect cultural and religious differences. Language barriers and value differences from children from cultural and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds as well as common barriers faced by children with a disability may create challenges.
- f) Recruitment and selection processes for all Doxa staff members are to be undertaken in accordance with the Recruitment and Selection Procedure and/or other relevant documentation as well as the Child Safety Standards and Equal Employment legislation.
- g) Appointment of appropriate Doxa Child Protection Officers (Program Managers) that are accessible to Young Participants and staff.
- h) Doxa is committed to regular, induction, training and educating staff and volunteers on child abuse risks.
- i) The commitment to protecting children is embedded in the organisation's culture and responsibility for taking action is understood and accepted at all levels of Doxa.

- j) Provision and communication of Doxa’s Code of Conduct, Safe Guarding Children and Young People related documentation including Social Media, as well as other guideline development that support all staff and active participates to achieve these commitments.

Breaches of this policy will be treated seriously and investigated. Proven instances may result in disciplinary action including, but not limited to, counselling, a formal warning, demotion, and termination of employment or contracted / consulting services.

Where necessary, external consultants will be engaged to ensure that allegations and safety concerns are appropriately managed.

6 Related documents

PRO SSO 013 Safeguarding Children and Young People Procedure
 GOV SSO 001 Code of Conduct

8. References

Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safety Standards) Act 2015
 Crimes Act (1958)
 Children, Youth and Families Act 2005
 Crimes Amendment (Protection of Children) Act 2014
 Crimes Amendment (Grooming) Act 2014
 Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into the Handling of Child Sexual Abuse by Religious and Other Non-Government Organisations, Final Report, Betrayal of Trust, November 2013.

9. Definitions

Term	Definition
Child	Any person below the age of sixteen years. A young person is any person who comes under or may come under the care, supervision or authority of Doxa.
Young Person	Any person who is aged 16 years or above but who is under the age of 18 years.
Young Participants	For this document Young Participant = Child and Young Person as above.
Child abuse	Child abuse and neglect refers to any non-accidental behaviour by parents, caregivers, other adults or older adolescents that is outside the norms of conduct and entails a substantial risk of causing physical or emotional harm to a child or young person. Such behaviours may be intentional or unintentional and can include acts of omission (i.e. neglect) and commission (i.e. abuse). Child abuse can be categorised as physical, sexual, emotional, neglect and exposure to family violence (Child Family Community Australia). Please refer to the procedure for a full definition of each categorization of child abuse.

10. Agreement

All new staff, including agency staff and volunteers, will be issued with a copy of this code of conduct on commencement of their role and as part of the Orientation and Induction Process.

All 'staff members' are to sign the declaration form that they have read and understood this policy. The form also includes the Safeguarding Children and Young People Procedure and the Code of Conduct.