

REGIONAL ARTS VICTORIA CHILD SAFETY POLICY

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Drafted by	Victoria Crane	Approved by Board on	18 November 2020
Responsible Person	Pippin Davies	Scheduled review date	18 November 2022

1. Introduction and Scope

1.1 Regional Arts Victoria (**RAV**) is committed to the safety of children and young people who participate in our programs as audience members, participants, and creators.

1.2 Child safety is a shared responsibility between all adults in the RAV community and this policy therefore applies to all those associated with programs run by RAV which involve children, including board members, staff members, contractors, volunteers and grant recipients and any other individual involved in a RAV supported production.

2. Values

2.1 All children and young people, regardless of their gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religious beliefs, age, disability, sexual orientation or family or social background, have equal rights to protection from abuse.

2.2 RAV:

- a) has zero tolerance for child abuse;
- b) is committed to promoting and protecting, at all times, the best interests of children and young people involved in its programs, including (without limitation):
 - o promoting the cultural safety of First Nations children;
 - o promoting the cultural safety of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds; and
 - o promoting the safety of children with a disability;
- c) will encourage and listen to the opinions of children and use such opinions to develop all programs for children.

3. Purpose

3.1 The purpose of this policy is to:

- a) promote an organisational culture of child safety;
- b) identify, reduce and remove risks associated with child abuse so as to prevent harm from occurring within RAV or by a RAV representative;
- c) ensure that all parties are aware of their responsibilities for identifying and reporting child abuse and for establishing guidelines, controls and procedures for preventing, detecting and/or reporting such abuse within or outside the organisation;
- d) provide a clear statement that RAV is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children and has zero tolerance for child abuse of any sort or by any person;
- e) assist staff, contractors, volunteers and grant recipients to manage, prepare and deliver programs which might involve children or young people; and

- f) strive to ensure children are involved in their own safety, including listening to children and incorporating their views about how to provide a safe environment.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 The Board of RAV has ultimate responsibility for the detection and prevention of, and response to child abuse by virtue of it being responsible for:

- a) providing leadership for an organisational culture of accountability for child safety and wellbeing which is open to scrutiny and is continuously reviewed and improved;
- b) ensuring that appropriate policies and procedures and a Code of Conduct are in place and regularly reviewed;
- c) ensuring that appropriate and effective internal control systems are in place; and
- d) ensuring a Child Safety Officer is appointed within RAV.

4.2 The Chief Executive Officer and the Child Safety Officer of RAV are each responsible for:

- a) keeping up to date and complying with relevant changes in legislation and practices in relation to this policy and informing all RAV Personnel (see definition in Attachment 1) of any changes impacting their responsibilities under this policy;
- b) ensuring that all RAV Personnel are aware of relevant laws, policies and procedures and of their obligation to observe the Code of Conduct (particularly as it relates to child safety and wellbeing);
- c) ensuring that all RAV Personnel are aware of their obligation to report suspected abuse of a child in accordance with this policy and the procedures outlined in Attachment 3;
- d) providing support for all RAV personnel in undertaking their child safety responsibilities, including providing adequate resources and training to assist all RAV Personnel to undertake their child safety responsibilities;
- e) ensuring recruitment and induction processes for all RAV Personnel are in line with this policy;
- f) receiving and ensuring RAV responds to reports of child abuse in accordance with this policy and applicable legislation and regulations;
- g) ensuring the Child Safe Risk Register is reviewed annually and any changes raised with or recommended to the Board for approval; and
- h) advising the board of any child safety notifications that have been made in relation to a RAV person (whilst respecting the confidentiality of the child involved) and any associated reports made to external parties (such as the police or a Government agency).

4.3 All board members, staff, contractors and volunteers must:

- a) ensure that they promote child safety at all times and contribute to an organisational culture of child safety;
- b) read, comply with and acknowledge the RAV Code of Conduct;
- c) read and comply with this Policy;
- d) facilitate the reporting of any inappropriate behaviour or suspected abusive activities; and
- e) support an environment that promotes and values the emotional and physical safety of children.

- 4.4 All staff, contractors and volunteers in the RAV Arts & Education Team must:
- a) familiarise themselves with the relevant laws and keep up to date and comply with relevant changes in legislation and practices in relation to this policy. This includes being aware of the legal obligations relating to the types of abuse outlined in the definitions section below;
 - b) assess the risk of child abuse within their area of control and eradicate / minimise any risk to the extent possible; and,
 - c) maintain a current and valid working with children check.

4.5 Any RAV grant recipients, or person involved in a RAV production, where the project involves, or is aimed at children, must:

- a) read, comply with and acknowledge the RAV Code of Conduct, which includes compliance with the Australia Council working with children protocol; and
- b) read and comply with this Policy.

5. Risk Management

5.1 RAV has an Audit & Risk sub-committee committed to identifying and managing risks at RAV.

5.2 RAV will ensure that child safety and wellbeing is a part of its overall risk management approach and the Audit & Risk sub-committee members will receive training in relation to child safety.

6. Privacy

6.1 All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved unless there is a risk to someone's safety.

6.2 RAV will have safeguards and practices in place to ensure any personal information is protected. Everyone is entitled to know how the personal information is recorded, what will be done with it, and who will be able to access it.

7. Review

7.1 Every two years, and following any occurrence or allegation child abuse by a RAV person, a review shall be conducted to assess whether the organisation's child protection policies or procedures require modification to better protect the children under the organisation's care.

7.2 This policy must be read in conjunction with:

- a) the laws of the Commonwealth or of the relevant state or territory; (refer to Attachment 1 of this policy);
- b) the RAV Code of Conduct; and
- c) the RAV Employment Policy.

8. Attachments

8.1 [Definitions and relevant legislation/regulations](#)

8.2 [Guidelines for incorporation of child safety into the recruitment and management of staff](#)

8.3 [Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse](#)

8.4 [Reporting Flow Chart](#)

ATTACHMENT 1: DEFINITIONS AND RELEVANT LEGISLATION

1. Definitions

- 1.1 **Child** means a person below the age of 18 years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.
- 1.2 **Child Abuse** means all forms of physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and other exploitation, neglect or negligent treatment, commercial (e.g. for financial gain) or other exploitation of a child. Child abuse covers any actions that results in actual or potential harm to a child including where a child witnesses family violence or where a child is subjected to bullying or racial, cultural or religious abuse. Where abuse is repeated and ongoing such that it detrimentally impacts a child's development and well-being it is known as "cumulative" harm. Where multiple abuse types are experienced at the same time (e.g. sexual abuse also involves physical and emotional abuse) it is known as "multi-dimensional harm".
- 1.3 **Child Safety Officer** means the person appointed by the Chief Executive Officer and Board to take primary responsibility for providing all relevant information on child protection and safety to staff, the board and other relevant members of the RAV community. The Child Safety Officer works with the Chief Executive Officer to ensure the implementation of this policy and promotion of an organisational culture of child safety.
- 1.4 **Code of Conduct** means the RAV's Code of Conduct.
- 1.5 **Commission** means the Commission for Children and Young People as established by the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)* and being the independent statutory body responsible for managing and overseeing the Reportable Conduct Scheme.
- 1.6 **Emotional Abuse** occurs when a parent or carer repeatedly rejects or frightens a child, uses threats or subjects them to continual coldness, name-calling or 'put downs'. It can result in damage to the child's physical, social, intellectual or emotional development. Witnessing family violence is a form of emotional abuse.
- 1.7 **Family Violence** means violence between members of a family or extended family or those fulfilling the role of family in a child or young person's life. Witnessing family violence is a specific form of abuse as exposure to family violence places children and young people at increased risk of emotional and physical harm and has a significant impact on their well-being and development.
- 1.8 **Grooming** concerns predatory conduct undertaken to prepare a child for sexual activity at a later time. In Victoria, 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.

- 1.9 **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.
- 1.10 **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.
- 1.11 **Reasonable grounds for belief** (also known as **Reasonable Belief**) is a belief based on reasonable grounds that child abuse has occurred when all known considerations or facts relevant to the formation of a belief are taken into account and these are objectively assessed. Circumstances or considerations may include the source of the allegation and how it was communicated, the nature of and details of the allegation, and whether there are any other related matters known regarding the alleged perpetrator.
- 1.12 A reasonable belief is formed if a reasonable person in the same position would have formed the same belief on the same grounds or if a reasonable person would believe that:
- a) the child is in need of protection;
 - b) the child has suffered or is likely to suffer "significant harm; and
 - c) the parents/guardians are unable or unwilling to protect the child.
- 1.13 Examples of where a 'reasonable belief' might be formed include where:
- a) a child states that they have been abused;
 - b) a child states that they know someone who has been abused (sometimes the child may be talking about themselves);
 - c) someone who knows the child states that the child has been abused;
 - d) professional observations of the child's behaviour or development leads a professional to form a belief that the child has been abused or is likely to be abused;
 - e) signs of abuse lead to a belief that the child has been abused; and/or
 - f) the child requires medical attention and it is clear that the parents/guardians have/are not obtaining the required medical assistance.
- 1.14 **RAV Personnel** means all RAV board members, staff, contractors and volunteers.
- 1.15 **Sexual Abuse**, with respect to a child, is any act which exposes a child to, or involves a child in, sexual processes beyond his or her understanding or contrary to accepted community standards. Sexually abusive behaviours can include the touching or fondling of genitals, masturbation, oral sex, vaginal or anal penetration by a penis, finger or any other object, fondling of breasts, voyeurism, exhibitionism, and exposing the child to or involving the child in pornography. Sexual abuse includes grooming and sexual exploitation, each of which are specific forms of sexual abuse.
- 1.16 **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.

- 1.17 **Sexually Harmful Behaviour** in Children means harmful behaviour perpetrated by a child against 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.'

The above definitions have been sourced (and in some cases adapted) from a combination of the Our Community Template Child Protection Policy and information provided by Child Wise (independent Child Safety Consultants).

2. RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS

- 2.1 Victorian services that provide services to children are required under the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)* to ensure that they implement compulsory minimum "Child Safe Standards" to protect children from harm.
- 2.2 The standards aim to drive continuous improvement in the way services prevent and report child abuse and response to allegations of child abuse.
- 2.3 The seven principles of the "Child Safe Standards" are listed below, noting alongside RAV's compliance with each principle.
- 2.4 **Standard 1:** Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety
- a) This policy reflects RAV's shared commitment to child safety and the strategies embedded to ensure an organisational culture of child safety. Set out below is further evidence of this commitment in respect of each of the 7 Victorian standards.
 - b) RAV staff and board members will be consulted upon each review of this Policy and provided with the opportunity to ask questions and reflect on how each person can ensure RAV's approaches to working with children and young people are safe. This process will be led by the Child Safety Officer and the Chief Executive Officer to clearly demonstrate the commitment of RAV's leadership to child safety.
- 2.5 **Standard 2:** A child safety policy or a statement of commitment to child safety
- a) This Policy ensures Standard 2 is met and evidences RAV's commitment to child safety.
- 2.6 **Standard 3:** A Code of Conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour
- a) A Code of Conduct has been developed for all RAV Personnel.
- 2.7 **Standard 4:** Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel.

- a) Attachment 2 of this Policy details recruitment procedures aimed at reducing the risk of child abuse by a RAV employees, volunteers and grant recipients.
- 2.8 **Standard 5:** Processes and procedures for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse
- a) Attachments 3 and 4 of this Policy outline processes and procedures for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse.
- 2.9 **Standard 6:** Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse.
- a) The risk of child abuse is considered a potentially health and safety hazard at Regional Arts Victoria. This means that strategies for identifying and reducing risks are the same as those outlined in the company Occupational Health & Safety Policy.
- b) This Policy requires all employees have a shared commitment to safety at Regional Arts Victoria. It also outlines a process for reporting and removing risks.
- 2.10 **Standard 7:** Strategies to promote child participation and empowerment.
- a) Children and young people are critical participants in the work of Regional Arts Victoria. The RAV Arts & Education program is the principle means by which RAV promotes the participation and empowerment of children and young people in our work.
- 2.11 In addition to the Victorian Child Safe Standards, the [National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#) provide guiding principles for protecting children from harm.
- 2.12 Unlike the Victorian Child Safe Standards listed above, these National Principles are not mandatory but have been endorsed by members of the Prime Minister's Office and Council of Australian Governments.
- a) Principle 1: Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisation leadership, governance and culture.
- b) Principle 2: Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously safe.
- c) Principle 3: Families and communities are informed and involved in policy and practice.
- d) Principle 4: Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice
- e) Principle 5: People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice - robust recruitment and screening practices are in place.
- f) Principle 6: Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.
- g) Principle 7: Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.
- h) Principle 8: Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.
- i) Principle 9: Implementation of child safe procedures is regularly reviewed and improved.
- j) Principle 10: Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

- 2.13 The criminal offences in the *Crimes Amendment (Protection of Children) Act 2014 (Vic)* protect children from abuse, noting also offences relating to an individual's failure to disclose, failure of those in positions of authority in an organisation to protect and the grooming offence. More specifically:
- a) **section 327 - Failure to Disclose Offence:** refers to the responsibility of all individuals to disclose to authorities if they have a reasonable belief that a child under the age of 16 years has been sexually abused. Failure to do so is a criminal offence.
 - b) **section 49c - Failure to Protect Offence:** applies where there is a substantial risk that a child under the age of 16 under the care, supervision or authority of a relevant organisation will become a victim of a sexual offence committed by an adult associated with that organisation. A person in a position of authority in the organisation will commit the offence if they know of the risk of abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so.
 - c) **a grooming offence** is committed if an offender intends to commit a sexual offence involving a child under the age of 16 years and communicates by words or conduct with that child or their carer or supervisor.
- 2.14 The [Working with Children Check Act 2005 \(Vic\)](#) outlines the purpose of the Working With Children Check, what constitutes child-related work, the occupations that apply and also explains relevant offences and findings that are relevant to the Working with Children Check. This Act sets out obligations of individuals and organisations and how personal information is stored and disposed of.
- 2.15 [The Commission for Children and Young People](#) administers a [Reportable Conduct Scheme](#) in Victoria, providing oversight of how certain organisations respond to allegations of child abuse and child-related misconduct by workers and volunteers. RAV's current operations do not fall under the Reportable Conduct Scheme.
- 2.16 The [Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 \(Vic\)](#) governs and guides the process of child protection in Victoria and provides the legislative basis for the provision of services to vulnerable children, young people and their families. It places children's best interests at the centre of decision-making and service delivery. While this is less relevant to RAV Personnel given the nature of RAV's programs and services, and none of the roles carried out by RAV Personnel render them a "mandatory report" under this Act, it is important to be aware of this Act in the context of concerns about a child's wellbeing in their own home or family circumstances.
- 2.17 The above legislation is not an exhaustive list of relevant legislation and standards, with other legislation such as the [Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2005 \(Vic\)](#) and the [Wrongs Act 1958 \(Vic\)](#) having relevance, among others. ●

ATTACHMENT 2: PROCEDURE FOR INCORPORATION OF CHILD SAFETY INTO THE RECRUITMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF RAV PERSONNEL

1.1 The following guidelines and processes have been created for the incorporation of child safety into the recruitment and management of RAV personnel and demonstrate RAV's commitment to maximising the safety of children and deterring unsuitable and inappropriate persons from attempting to work at RAV.

2. Preparation for Recruitment

2.1 All role descriptions (whether relating to paid or voluntary roles), and any grant or RAV program application invitation, must include a statement of RAV's commitment to maintaining a child safe environment.

2.2 All role advertisement descriptions in respect of a board role, senior management role or any role within the RAV Arts & Education Team must clearly state RAV's commitment to child safety and refer to the requirement for any applicant to hold a current Working with Children Check that is linked to RAV, and that successful applicants will undergo a Police Check.

3. Selection Process

3.1 Any candidate is to be interviewed by at least two people.

3.2 For any role in the Arts & Education team:

- a) interview questions include questions regarding relationships with children that are values-based and consider issues such as professional boundaries, resilience, motivation, accountability and ethics;
- b) candidates' identity is confirmed by sighting (and taking a copy of) a driver's licence or passport, and a Working with Children Check card;
- c) At least two reference checks are conducted. With respect to a RAV Personnel that is being recruited for a role primarily involving direct contact with children:
 - i. at least one of the referees contacted must have observed the applicant working with children first-hand. Where such an applicant does not have experience working with children first-hand, Regional Arts Victoria will seek this feedback through the probation period of employment with any successful candidate.
 - ii. Referees should be asked about the candidates past behaviour including relationships with children, professional boundaries, motivation, accountability and ethics.

4. Commencement of Employment or Service

4.1 All employment offer letters and service agreements include a statement confirming what is expected of the new staff member in terms of commitment and responsibilities for child safety and wellbeing.

4.2 Orientation and induction of new RAV Personnel includes information about values, expectations and workplace practices in relation to maintaining a child safe environment.

New RAV Personnel are informed about relevant RAV policies, asked to sign the Code of Conduct Acknowledgment and introduced to the Child Safety Officer.

5. Ongoing Management of RAV Personnel

- 5.1 All employees must also comply with all Regional Arts Victoria policies and procedures, including the Employment Policy which outlines processes for hiring and training employees.
- 5.2 Employees are also encouraged to discuss with their Manager opportunities for further training and development in the area of working with young people and minors where relevant.
- 5.3 Training and education with regard to child safety will be provided to staff members who work directly with children.
- 5.4 Performance reviews of any staff member who has direct contact with children should consider each staff member's contribution to creating a child safe environment.
- 5.5 Maintenance of a register of all RAV Personnel which includes:
- a) the details of each RAV Personnel's Working with Children's Check (other than those which are not required to have one);
 - b) confirmation that each RAV Personnel's Working with Children's Check (other than those who are not required to have one) has been checked every six months against the Working with Children Check database by a RAV staff member to ensure it remains current, valid and has not been revoked, suspended or subject to a negative notice;
 - c) confirmation that the Code of Conduct acknowledgment has been signed and returned by each RAV Personnel.
- 5.6 Police Checks are to be carried out every two years on all board members, the CEO and any staff member that has direct contact with children as part of their role.
- 5.7 Processes should be developed to deal with a RAV Personnel who is given a Negative Notice or an item on their Police Check.

6. Volunteers

- 6.1 All board members and all volunteers involved in a RAV program directed at children must have an up to date Working with Children Check at all times (noting these are free for volunteers) unless the volunteer is under the age of 18 years old.
- 6.2 All Volunteers will be required to provide evidence of their Working with Children Check (if applicable), complete a "Volunteer Information Sheet" and sign and return the Code of Conduct acknowledgement.

7. Other

6.3 The RAV website will include an express statement of its commitment to maintaining a child safe environment.

6.4 Employees, artists or volunteers who do not have a Working with Children's check may not have direct, unsupervised contact with children or young people participating in RAV's programs.

ATTACHMENT 3: PROCEDURE FOR RESPONDING TO AND REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

1. Overview

- 1.1 If any adult believes a child is at immediate risk of abuse, they should call 000.
- 1.2 All adults **MUST ACT** if they form a reasonable belief or have a suspicion that a child has been, or is at risk of being, abused.
- 1.3 The appropriate action to be taken in each case is detailed below and outlined in the Reporting Flow Chart set out in Attachment 4.

2. Receiving And Responding To Disclosures Made by a Child

- 2.1 Best practice for receiving and responding to disclosures of abuse made by a child involves the following:
- a) listening carefully to what the child is saying and allowing the child to use their own words;
 - b) telling the child that they did the right thing by telling you and that you are pleased they told you;
 - c) telling the child that it is not their fault and that they are not responsible for the abuse;
 - d) letting the child know what will happen next in practical terms;
 - e) avoid making promises you cannot keep (such as promising that you will not tell anyone);
 - f) do not push the child into giving details of the abuse. Your role is to listen to what the child tells you and make observations, not to conduct an investigation;
 - g) do not discuss the circumstances of the incident with others (other than as required under reporting obligations), even indiscriminately, with those not directly involved with the child.

3. Reporting

- 3.1 RAV Personnel **must report any suspicion or concern** that a child's safety or wellbeing may be at risk to either:
- a) their supervisor;
 - b) the Child Safety Officer; or
 - c) the Chief Executive Officer.
- 3.2 Any report received by a supervisor or Child Safety Officer must be escalated by to the Chief Executive Officer (or, if the Chief Executive Officer is involved in the Suspicion or not considered to be addressing the concern appropriately, to the Child Safety Officer) as soon as possible and within 24 hours.
- 3.3 The Chief Executive Officer (or, in the event the Chief Executive Officer is involved in the suspicion, the Child Safety Officer) must assess the report (seeking advice or consultation if necessary) and then determine and record the action required in line with the following principles:

- a) where it is determined that there are reasonable grounds for belief of child abuse, the Chief Executive Officer must report the belief to the Victorian Police as soon as possible and within 24 hours. If the suspected abuser is a RAV Personnel, the Chief Executive Officer (or Child Safety Officer) must conduct an internal investigation (once the Victorian Police have given clearance to do so) which include review of internal risk management, supports and any policy or procedural changes that may be required.
- b) where the Chief Executive Officer determines that it is not appropriate to make a report to the Victorian Police, the rationale for this determination must be documented and the reporting RAV Personnel notified. If the suspected abuser is a RAV Personnel, the Chief Executive Officer (or Child Safety Officer) may still commission an internal investigation or ensure closer supervision of the RAV Personnel in question if deemed appropriate (but is under no obligation to do so);
- c) where a RAV Personnel holds a reasonable belief that a child has been or is at risk of being abused, but the Chief Executive Officer does not agree or decides not to report it, that RAV Personnel is still entitled to make a report to Victoria Police (regardless of the advice of any board member, Child Safety Officer or other staff member) and inform the Chief Executive Officer that they have done so. Note that where the belief relates to sexual abuse, the RAV Personnel MUST report it;
- d) RAV Personnel should seek advice from their supervisor, the Child Safety Officer or Chief Executive Officer if they are uncertain about whether they have sufficient grounds to form a reasonable belief or if they are unsure about what is the correct course of action in a given circumstance.

3.4 Records are to be kept about all child safety concerns or complaints and stored in accordance with RAV's privacy and confidentiality policies. Privacy is to be maintained and information is only disclosed on a need-to-know basis.

3.5 Permission is not required from a parent or guardian of a child in order to make a report where child abuse is suspected.

4. Investigating

4.1 If the Victorian Police decide to conduct an investigation of a report, all RAV Personnel must co-operate fully with the investigation.

4.2 Where the Victorian police conduct an investigation and the alleged offender is a RAV Personnel, the Chief Executive Officer (or, if the Chief Executive Officer is the alleged offender, the Child Safety Officer) must request that:

- a) the police advise them outcome of the police investigation; and
- b) seek clearance from the police to conduct an internal investigation, and once granted, lead an internal investigation.

4.3 Any internal investigations will be conducted professionally and fairly and the Chief Executive Officer and Child Safety Officer will make every effort to keep any such investigation confidential. However, from time to time other RAV Personnel may need to be consulted in conjunction with the investigation.

5. Responding

- 5.1 If it is alleged that a RAV Personnel may have committed an offence involving a child or have breached the organisation's policies or its Code of Conduct, the person concerned may be stood down (with pay, where applicable) while an internal and/or external investigation is conducted.
- 5.2 If an investigation concludes that on the balance of probabilities an offence (or a breach of the organisation's policies or Code of Conduct) has occurred then disciplinary action may follow up to and including dismissal or cessation of involvement with the organisation.
- 5.3 Upon completion of any internal investigation, the Chief Executive Officer (or, if the Chief Executive Officer is the alleged offender, the Child Safety Officer) must lead an internal risk assessment review and ensure any necessary policy or procedure changes identified as a result are implemented in a timely manner.
- 5.4 Figure 1 summarises the reporting process.

Figure 1 – Reporting Flow Chart

**ATTACHMENT 4 – Figure 1
CHILD SAFE REPORTING FLOW CHART**

