



ABCA

Australian Books for
Children of Africa Ltd

Australian Books for Children of Africa (ABCA) **Child Protection Policy**

1 Policy Statement

Australian Books for Children of Africa (ABCA) is committed to child safety and believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard all children and young people and promote their welfare by a commitment to practice which protects them.

We recognise that:

- The welfare of the child / young person is paramount
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, belief, sexual orientation identity, have the right to equal protection for all types of harm or abuse
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

The purpose of the policy:

- To provide protection for the children and young people who receive ABCA's services, including the children of adult members or users
- To provide volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing, or be at risk of harm.

This policy applies to all Board members and volunteers, and anyone working on behalf of ABCA.

We will seek to safeguard children and young people by:

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- Adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- Undertaking safety checks when engaging volunteers who will be working or associating with children and young people
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents and volunteers
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know and involving parents and children appropriately
- Providing effective management for volunteers through supervision and support
- We are also committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

2 Procedures for Referral

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all of ABCA's operations within and outside of Australia are undertaken in a way that minimises the risk of harm, exploitation or abuse of a vulnerable person.
- 2.2 Any volunteer who receives a disclosure of abuse or suspects that abuse may have occurred **must** report it immediately to the most senior member of staff at the premises and make a report to the Board of ABCA.
- 2.3 Confidentiality must be maintained and information relating to individual children and young people/families shared with staff on a strictly need to know basis.

3 Alleged Abuse by Managers or Volunteers

- 3.1 When an allegation of alleged child abuse is directed against a manager, employee or volunteer of ABCA whether or not such abuse is alleged to have taken place during the course of their work for ABCA, then the allegation must be passed to Elise Margow or Ben Margow and if either of them are unavailable or no longer acting as directors for ABCA then to any other director of the ABCA Board. If the allegation concern Elise or Ben Margow then the allegation must be passed to other members of the Board. The Board must refer any allegation of child abuse to the police for investigation.

4 Record Keeping

- 4.1 Any volunteer receiving a disclosure of abuse, or noticing possible abuse, must make an accurate record as soon as possible noting what was said or seen, putting the event into context, and giving the date, time and location. All records must be dated and signed.
- 4.2 All hand-written records will be retained, even if they are subsequently typed up in a more formal report.
- 4.3 Written records of concerns about children should be kept, even where there is no need to make a referral immediately.
- 4.4 All records relating to child protection concerns will be kept in a secure place and will remain confidential.

5 Training

- 5.1 All staff and volunteers shall have access to this policy on commencing and appropriate refresher training on a regular basis.

6 The Role of the Board

- 6.1 The designated person for child protection will provide an annual report to the Board on changes to this child protection policy and procedures; training undertaken; the number of any child protection incidents/cases (without detail or name); and the place of any child protection issues.

7 Review

- 7.1 This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, and up-dated where appropriate.

Appendix 1

ABCA Code of behaviour

You must:

- Treat all children and young people with respect
- Provide an example of good conduct you wish others to follow
- Ensure that, whenever possible, there is more than one adult present during activities which children and young people or at least that you are within sight or hearing of others
- Respect a young person's right to personal privacy
- Encourage young people and adults to be comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like
- Remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well-intentioned
- Recognise that special caution is required when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people
- Operate within the organisation's principles and guidance and any specific procedures
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations/suspensions of abuse.

You must not:

- Have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children or young people
- Allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour/ make suggestive or derogatory remarks or gestures in front of children or young people
- Jump to conclusions about others without checking facts
- Either exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues
- Show favouritism to any individual
- Rely on your good name or that of ABCA to protect you
- Believe "it could never happen to me"
- Take a chance when common sense, policy or practice suggests another more prudent approach

Dated 22 September 2021