

**Embraced Child or Vulnerable
Persons Safety & Wellbeing Policy**

Policy Title	Embraced Child Safety or Vulnerable Persons Policy
Date	December 2023
Purpose	<p>The Australian Commonwealth legislation offers guidance on child protection, including, but not limited to setting out the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. Each Australian state and territory governments have responsibility for the administration and operation of child protection services. Each state and territory have their own Act of Parliament (often referred to as laws) that governs how child protection interventions work.</p> <p>This policy outlines Embraced (Victorian based)’ purpose, responsibility and commitment to being a child or vulnerable persons safe organisation in Victoria or when delivering, hosting and/or temporarily situated in another Australian state and territory. Embraced is committed to upholding and following each state and territory governing laws, it is temporarily based in. Relevant legislation and laws for each Australian state and territory regarding child protection can be found at https://aifs.gov.au/resources/resource-sheets/australian-child-protection-legislation . Relevant legislation for safeguarding vulnerable people can be found at https://www.legislation.act.gov.au/DownloadFile/a/2011-44/current/PDF/2011-44.PDF</p> <p>Victorian Child Safe Standards set out the compulsory minimum standards for organisations that provide services for children and young people (or are used by children and young people), to help protect them from harm. This document outlines Embraced’ approach to each standard, these approaches are transferrable to each Australian state and territory and are the recognised approach to Embraced’ conduct of any activities involving children. As well as complying with safeguarding Vulnerable People as outlined in Australian Charities and Not for Profit Commission Governance Standard 3: Compliance with Australian Law and Governance Standard 5: Duties of Responsible People (https://www.acnc.gov.au/for-charities/manage-your-charity/governance-hub/governance-toolkit/governance-toolkit-safeguarding-vulnerable-people)</p>

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	<p>The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Embraced Board, staff, public-facing contractors, volunteers are aware of Embraced’ commitment and obligation to safeguard children or vulnerable people and provide a child or vulnerable persons safe environment.</p> <p>It is the purpose of this policy to ensure that all practices to safeguard vulnerable people and all child safety standards outlined are clearly communicated, adopted and delivered by the whole organisation, and to the broad range of situations where interaction with vulnerable people, children and young people may occur in the delivery, participation and attendance of Embraced projects, activities and events.</p> <p>This policy wholly commits Embraced and informs its Board, committee members, staff, public facing contractors, volunteers to provide and be responsible for ensuring a vulnerable persons/child safe environment, including a vulnerable persons/child's cultural safety, in the delivery of Embraced programs, activities and events.</p>
<p>Scope</p>	<p>This policy applies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embraced Board • Embraced staff • Public-facing contractors (such as guest facilitators, speakers, artists). • Volunteers + interns. <p>This policy applies to all contact with vulnerable people, children and young people that may occur. For example, the Embraced Child or Vulnerable Persons Safety + Wellbeing Policy will apply when in contact with vulnerable people, children and young people at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops, Meetings, Briefings, Performances, Exhibitions, etc. • At the Embraced headquarters, at hired spaces for Embraced programs and at the premises of partner organisations.

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	<p>It is important that all engaged Embraced paid and non-paid persons are aware of their obligations under Embraced Child or Vulnerable Persons Safety Code of Conduct Policy, whereby allegations of misconduct involving vulnerable people, children and young people can be made against Embraced team members, even if the conduct occurred outside of their work. It is the responsibility of all Embraced team members to report any witnessed or alleged misconduct directed to a vulnerable person, child or young person.</p>
<p>Responsibilities</p>	<p>Embraced Board and Committee Members will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure a strong safeguarding vulnerable people and child safe culture is created and maintained, and that policies and practices are effectively developed and implemented. • ensure effective vulnerable persons, child and cultural safety, wellbeing governance, policies, procedures, codes and practices are in place and followed. • model a safeguarding vulnerable persons and child safe culture that facilitates the active participation from all Embraced team members to promote and improve vulnerable persons and child safety, cultural safety and wellbeing. • enable inclusive practices where the diverse needs of all vulnerable people, children and young people are considered. • reinforce high standards of respectful behaviour between vulnerable people, children, young people and adults. • promote regular open discussions on vulnerable persons and child safety issues within committee meetings. <p>Creative Director will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • when hiring employees, ensure that selection, supervision, and management practices follow vulnerable persons and child safe protocols and are vulnerable persons and child safe. • identify and offer professional learning opportunities for staff and volunteers (where appropriate) to build deeper understandings of safeguarding vulnerable persons, child safety, cultural safety, child and young person wellbeing and prevention of, and responding to abuse. • create an environment where vulnerable persons and child safety complaints and concerns are readily raised, welcomed and no one is discouraged from reporting an allegation of child abuse to relevant authorities.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • model a safeguarding vulnerable persons and child safe culture that facilitates the active participation of staff and formally engaged members of Embraced in promoting and improving vulnerable persons and child safety, cultural safety and wellbeing. • enable inclusive practices where the diverse needs of all children and young people are considered. • reinforce high standards of respectful behaviour between children, young people and adults. • promote regular open discussion on safeguarding vulnerable persons and child safety issues with partner organisations, facilitators, stakeholders and public-facing contractors. <p>Embraced staff, public-facing contractors, volunteers/interns will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participate in safeguarding vulnerable persons and child safety induction and training provided by the Embraced, and always follow the Embraced Safeguarding Vulnerable People and Child Safety policies and procedures. • act in accordance with Embraced Child or Vulnerable Persons Safety & Wellbeing Policy. • identify and raise concerns about any child or vulnerable persons safety issues in accordance with our Reporting Procedure • ensure vulnerable people, children and young people's views are taken seriously and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. • implement inclusive practices that respond to the diverse needs of children and young people. <p>Embraced formally engaged participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participate in a vulnerable persons, child safety and wellbeing induction and training provided by the Embraced, and always follow the Embraced' child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures. • act in accordance with Embraced Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons and Child Safety Code of Conduct • identify and raise concerns about child safety issues in accordance with our Reporting Procedure
<p>Definitions</p>	<p>Vulnerable Persons/People</p> <p>Vulnerable persons/people are defined as persons who are disadvantaged and either a child or people above the age of 18yrs of age who may not be able to protect themselves against harm due to any; physical harm, age, illness, trauma, disability or other reasons. Vulnerable persons/people may include, children and seniors, people with impaired intellectual</p>

	<p>or physical functioning, people from a low socio-economic background, people who are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders, people who are not native speakers of the local language, people with low levels of literacy or education, people subject to modern slavery, which involves human exploitation and control, such as forced labour, debt bondage, human trafficking, and child labour.</p> <p>Child/Children A person who is 17yrs of age and under and is of any cultural ethnicity/background, identifies as any gender and/or physical ability.</p> <p>Young people A person who is between the ages of 18yrs – 25yrs of age and of any cultural ethnicity/background, identifies as any gender and/or physical ability.</p> <p>Safeguarding Safeguarding means protecting the welfare and human rights of people that interact with, or are affected by, [Embraced], particularly those that might be at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation. This refers to any responsibility or measure undertaken to protect a person from harm.</p> <p>Child Safety An active environment committed to upholding the safety and wellbeing of all children with suspected mistreatment of children being formally reported to the relevant authorities, including mistreatment of neglect, family violence and emotional abuse. Protection of children from harm, with mandatory reporting of children who may be suspect of being physically and/or sexually abused.</p> <p>Cultural Safety Cultural safety is about: Shared respect, shared meaning and shared knowledge. Ensuring an environment of no assault, challenge or denial of a child's or young person's identity and experience. Embraced pays particular attention to the safety</p>
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	<p>and cultural safety and inclusion of the following groups of vulnerable people and children, in recognition of their increased vulnerability, and diverse and unique identities and experiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander vulnerable people, children and young people • Vulnerable people and children with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds • Vulnerable people and children living with disability • Vulnerable people and children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, non-binary or gender-diverse • Vulnerable people and children in and out of home care and the Australian federal/state/local justice system <p>Mandatory Reporting Mandatory reporting is the legislative requirement of belief on reasonable grounds, formed in the course of practicing his, her or their profession or carrying out the duties of his, her or their office, position or employment, that safeguarding a vulnerable person or child who is in need of protection if: the vulnerable person/child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of physical injury and the child’s parents or the vulnerable persons’ legal guardian have not protected, or are unlikely to protect, the vulnerable person/child from harm of that type.</p>
<p>Relevant legislation and standards</p>	<p>Embraced Child or Vulnerable Persons Safety & Wellbeing Policy works in conjunction with the overarching Victorian State, Federal and International Policies and guidelines and is guided and recognises the reporting and authority hierarchy of these mandates and laws.</p> <p>These legislative links form part of Embraced’ policy as they are relevant to: Embraced employed practice, the Embraced organisation and the service it provides to vulnerable people/children and young people.</p> <p>NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/</p> <p>Australian Charities and Not for Profits Toolkit for Safeguarding Vulnerable People</p>

	<p>https://www.acnc.gov.au/for-charities/manage-your-charity/governance-hub/governance-toolkit/governance-toolkit-safeguarding-vulnerable-people</p> <p>Australian Legislative Law for Safeguarding Vulnerable People https://www.legislation.act.gov.au/DownloadFile/a/2011-44/current/PDF/2011-44.PDF</p> <p>Commission for Children and Young People Child Safe Standards https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/ Reportable Conduct Scheme - Organisation https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/reportable-conduct-scheme/for-heads-of-organisations/</p> <p>Victoria State Government Working with Children Check www.vic.gov.au/working-with-children-check Department of Families, Fairness and Housing – Mandatory Reporting https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/mandatory-reporting</p> <p>Victoria Police Children and family violence https://www.police.vic.gov.au/children-and-family-violence</p> <p>Australian Government Australian Institute of Family Studies https://aifs.gov.au/resources/resource-sheets/australian-child-protection-legislation</p>
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	<p>SNAICC – National Voice of our Children https://www.familymatters.org.au/aboriginal-torres-strait-islander-child-placement-principle/</p> <p>United Nations Human Rights Convention on the Rights of the Child https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child</p>
<p>Related organisational policies and procedures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Child or Vulnerable Persons Safety Code of Conduct - Reporting Procedure - Risk assessment and management guidelines - Guidelines and process for sharing information - Recruitment Policy and Procedure
<p>Policy Status and review</p>	<p>This Policy is to be formally endorsed by the Embraced Board and reflects current organisational policy and practice. It will be reviewed annually and updated as required with changes communicated to the entire Embraced organisation and community.</p>