

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY



NOTE FOR THE READER

References are made below to I CAN Network's Child Protection Officer (CPO): an individual who sits on I CAN Ltd's senior management team.

Effective from 1 July 2018, this post is held by I CAN Network's Deputy Chief Enabling Officer, Tiffany Mumford.

The following policy informs a Child Protection Training Module that all staff, contractors and volunteers must complete annually. Records of completion will be captured through the online compliance quizzes within the module.

POLICY AND COMMITMENT

The purpose of this Policy is to provide clear guidelines to employees, contractors and other volunteers ('individuals') regarding expectations when interacting with children. We are committed to creating an inclusive environment where people feel safe, welcome, competent and valued. We are committed to promoting and protecting at all times the best interests of children involved in our programs. We have a zero tolerance of child abuse.

All children regardless of any basis (gender, race, religious beliefs, age, disability, sexual orientation or family or social background) have equal rights to protection from abuse. I CAN Network Ltd. recognises that children have a right to be treated with dignity and respect, free from emotional and physical danger, abuse (including sexual abuse) and neglect.

Everyone who works or volunteers with us is responsible for the protection of children in our care and for reporting information about actual or suspected child abuse. If you are unsure what 'child abuse' means, we have included definitions and examples at the end of the Child Protection Procedures document. You are not expected to be a lawyer. If you have a concern make sure you tell a responsible person in I CAN Network (e.g., the CEO, one of the Core Enablers, a Network Leader).

Child protection is a shared responsibility between I CAN Network Ltd., all staff, volunteers, contractors, and members of the I CAN community.

Various parts of the policy require managers and staff to exercise discretion and the policies are not intended to be applied in a legalistic or prescriptive manner

We support and respect all children, staff, volunteers and contractors. We are committed to the cultural safety of Indigenous children and those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and to providing a safe environment to children with a disability.

In addition, the Policy is intended to protect the reputation and wellbeing of supervising adults from allegations or misunderstandings. It applies to both appropriate workplace behaviour and behaviour

expected when outside the workplace while in the employment of the I CAN Network.

If further explanation of any of the instructions provided here is required, it should be sought from the CEO or the Child Protection Officer.

If any person believes a child is in immediate risk of abuse, they should call 000.

AUTHORISATION

Mr Christopher Rex Varney - Founder & CEO I CAN Network Ltd.

Date: February 22nd 2020



CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic Enablers (the Board of Directors) are ultimately responsible for ensuring that appropriate policies and procedures and effective controls are in place.



The **Chief Enabling Officer (CEO)** is responsible for:

- The detection and prevention of child abuse;
- Responding to a reportable allegation made against a worker or volunteer from the I CAN Network by ensuring that allegations are appropriately investigated;
- Reporting allegations which may involve criminal conduct to the police;
- As part of the Reportable Conduct Scheme, notify Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP) of allegations within three business days after becoming aware of the allegation;
- Provide certain detailed information to CCYP about the allegation within 30 days after becoming aware of the allegation;
- After the investigation has concluded, provide CCYP with certain information including a copy of the findings of the investigation;
- Ensuring that all employees, volunteers or contractors are aware of relevant laws, our policies and procedures and our I CAN Code of Conduct (which incorporates Child Safety Standards);
- Ensuring all adults within the I CAN community are aware of their obligation to report suspected abuse according with our policies and procedures;
- Ensuring all employees, volunteers and contractors are aware of their obligation to observe the I CAN Code of Conduct (which incorporates Child Safety Standards);
- Ensure that all staff members and volunteers are aware of the Child Safe Standards and the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic) and have access to a copy of this Policy;
- Providing support for employees, volunteers or contractors in undertaking their child protection responsibilities;
- Appoint a Child Protection Officer who will investigate cases of child abuse, if required; and
- Ensure I CAN Network has systems in place to:
 - prevent reportable conduct from being committed by a worker or volunteer within the course of their employment
 - enable any person to notify the CEO of a reportable allegation
 - enable any person to notify CCYP of a reportable allegation involving the CEO
 - investigate and respond to a reportable allegation against a worker or volunteer from the I CAN Network

Core Enablers (Management), Network Managers and Network Leaders are responsible for:

- Promoting child safety at all times;
- Assessing the risk of child abuse within their area of control and minimising any risk to the extent possible;
- Educating employees, volunteers and contractors about the prevention and detection of child abuse;
- Ensuring that all individuals working with students are aware of, understand and comply with the principals of the Child Safe Standards
- Reporting any inappropriate behaviour or suspected abusive activities; and
- Supporting the CEO’s task of appointing a Child Protection Officer.



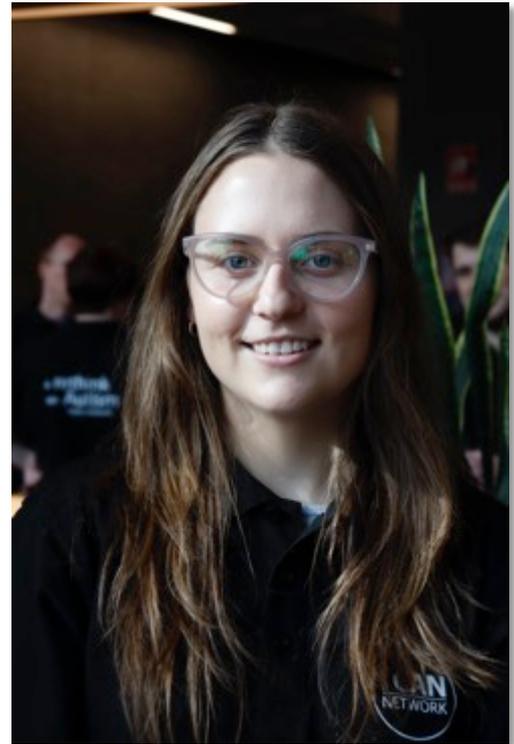
All staff, contractors and volunteers share the responsibility for the detection and deterrence of child abuse. They must:

- Hold a valid child protection check (title will vary depending on the state jurisdiction);
- Be aware of the I CAN Network’s Child Protection Policy (this policy);
- Attend training to familiarise themselves with and comply with the relevant laws, policies and procedures in relation to child protection (including but not limited to child protection procedures and I CAN Code of Conduct);
- Demonstrate a duty of care to take all reasonable steps to prevent incidents which may expose a child to harm;
- Provide a safe environment that is supportive of all children’s emotional, physical and cultural safety;
- Report any reasonable belief that a child’s safety is at risk to the relevant authorities (such as the police and or state based child protection service) via their supervisor (or if their supervisor is involved, to a responsible person in I CAN Network Ltd.); and
- Inform the CEO and Child Protection Officer of any issue relating to potential or actual risk to the protection of students and children (in circumstances where it impacts upon the I CAN Network) and / or reputational risk to the organisation.

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

It is expected that every employee will:

- Take all reasonable steps to avoid placing themselves or children in circumstances which may reasonably be considered a risk to their safety or wellbeing;
- Consider what they do and say in terms of the potential for (in interacting with a child) misunderstanding, allegations, misinterpretation or innuendo;
- Comply fully with preventative supervisory practices;
- Report any conduct or event which poses a risk to the safety and wellbeing of a child or employee without delay;
- Maintain strict confidentiality of information relating to events or individuals in regard to allegations of unwelcome or inappropriate conduct (except to report it as required to managers and external authorities);
- Fully cooperate with any investigation, formal or informal, which occurs as a consequence of allegations or misunderstandings regarding conduct being brought to the I CAN Network's attention; and
- Refrain from activities, conduct or communication involving children that would reasonably be seen to have a negative impact on the reputation of the I CAN Network or employees of the organisation.



EMPLOYMENT OF NEW PERSONNEL

We undertake a comprehensive recruitment and screening process for all prospective staff, contractors and volunteers to:

- Promote and protect the safety of all children under the care of I CAN Network Ltd;
- Identify the safest and most suitable people who share our values and commitment to protect children; and
- Prevent a person from working with us if they pose a risk to children

We require all staff, contractors and volunteers to pass our recruitment and screening processes (including thorough reference checks as per approved internal procedure) prior to commencing their work with us. Specifically we contact the referees supplied by a candidate and enquire with at least two previous employers/ organisations concerning a candidate's suitability for a position.

We require applicants to provide a child protection check (the title will vary depending on the state jurisdiction) in accordance with the law, and as appropriate, before and during the time they work with us.

Once engaged, staff, contractors and volunteers must review and acknowledge their understanding of the:

- Child Protection procedures;
- I CAN Code of Conduct (incorporating Child Safety Standards)

RISK MANAGEMENT

We will ensure that child safety is part of our overall risk management approach.

We have a risk and compliance sub-committee committed to identifying and managing our risks. Risk and compliance sub-committee members will receive regular training in relation to protection and child safety.

It is expected that the following principles (based on the prevention of situations or events which might lead to allegations or misunderstandings between staff and children) will be observed:

- Staff will only work within the scope of their professional expertise and the requirements of their position description;
- Staff will take a balanced and fair approach to managing relationships with children;
- Language and subject matter used in the presence of or in communicating with children will be appropriate;
- Behaviour (either observed or by the individual) that would constitute bullying or manipulation is not to be tolerated, trivialised or ignored;
- Behaviour which would constitute bullying or manipulation of children does not occur (and could not be construed);
- Relationships and interactions are not overly familiar nor intimate; and
- Attempts by children to build relationships which would be inappropriately familiar or intimate are discouraged and must be reported to the CEO.



PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

It is expected that any person interacting with children will comply with the I CAN Network's expectations in terms of professional conduct.

Expected conduct in respect to the protection of children includes:

- Staff, contractors and volunteers condoning and developing only appropriate relationships and conduct toward children;
- Staff, contractors and volunteers complying with the above instruction whether at I CAN Network sessions/ events or not;
- Staff, contractors and volunteers maintaining appropriate relationships and interactions with parents, guardians and caregivers;
- Staff, contractors and volunteers accepting that their behaviour out of work hours may impact on their professional standing, the reputation of the I CAN Network, their ability to fulfil the inherent requirements of their contract and subsequently to be able to work at the I CAN Network;
- Staff, contractor and volunteer compliance with legal requirements in respect of matters such as mandatory reporting, privacy, occupational health and safety, negligence, discrimination, harassment and vilification;
- These expectations also apply outside working hours to the extent that the conduct or consequences of the conduct would have an impact on the staff member, contractor or volunteer's ability to fulfil the inherent requirements of their role.



BREACH

Breach of this Policy shall be considered either misconduct or serious misconduct (depending on the circumstances) and may result in disciplinary action which may lead to termination of employment and / or reporting to relevant Authorities.

If a staff member is charged by Police or under investigation for matters regarding the protection of children, the I CAN Network considers the nature of their normal duties to determine whether it is possible for the individual to fulfil the inherent requirements of their normal role while such matters are dealt with.

If their normal duties would involve interaction with I CAN Network, the organisation reserves the right to suspend or exclude the staff member from the workplace while the matter is resolved.

If this were to occur, the I CAN Network would take all reasonable steps to protect the rights and reputation of the individual and to provide access to external and internal support for the individual's wellbeing.

Any steps of this nature would be at the discretion of the CEO.

REPORTING

Any staff, volunteer or contractor who has grounds to have a 'reasonable suspicion'* of abusive activity must immediately notify:

- The appropriate child protection service
- Police
- I CAN Ltd's insurer; and
- Should also notify their I CAN line manager and I CAN Ltd Child Protection Officer (CPO), provided both job bearers are independent of the alleged incident.

In situations where the line manager is suspected of involvement in the activity, or if the person having the suspicion does not believe that the matter is being appropriately addressed or dealt with by their line manager, the matter should be reported to the next highest level of supervision, provided they are independent of the alleged incident.

All supervisors in I CAN Ltd must report complaints of suspected abusive behaviour or misconduct to the CEO and Child Protection Officer (provide these office bearers are independent of the alleged incident) and any external regulatory and law enforcement bodies such as the State/ Territory's Department of Social Services, CCYP, and Police.



I CAN Ltd assures that the details of the staff member, contractor or volunteer reporting a reasonable suspicion of abusive activity will be kept private and confidential.

Some professions may also have mandatory reporting obligations – for instance if a staff member, contractor or volunteer employed by us is a teacher or a health professional (e.g., doctor, registered nurse, psychologist) and employed by us in that capacity. Nothing in this policy or procedure overrides an individual's mandatory reporting obligations.

Reasonable excuses for failing to comply with the reporting requirement include:

- A reasonable belief that the information has already been reported to police or relevant supervisor disclosing all of the information.
- A reasonable fear that the disclosure will place someone (other than the alleged perpetrator) at risk of harm.



INVESTIGATING

If the appropriate child protection service or police decides to conduct an investigation of a report of actual or suspected child abuse, all staff, contractors and volunteers must cooperate fully with the external investigation.

Regardless of whether the authorities decide to conduct an external investigation, the CEO or a delegated role will consult with the authorities to determine whether an internal investigation is appropriate. If it is decided that an internal investigation will not conflict with external investigation by the authorities, the CEO or a delegated role may decide to conduct an internal investigation. All employees, contractors and volunteers must cooperate fully with an internal investigation.

Any internal or external investigation of actual or suspected child abuse will be conducted according to the rules of natural justice.

The CEO or a delegated role will make every effort to keep any such investigation confidential. However, from time to time, other members of staff may need to be consulted in conjunction with the investigation.

After an initial review and a determination that the actual or suspected child abuse warrants further investigation, the CEO or a delegated role shall coordinate the investigation with the appropriate investigators and/or law enforcement officials. Internal or external legal representatives may be involved in the process as deemed appropriate.

RESPONDING

If it is alleged that a member of staff, contractor or volunteer may have committed child abuse or have breached the I CAN Code of Conduct (incorporating Child Safety standards), the person concerned may be stood down (with pay, where applicable) while an investigation is conducted.

If the investigation concludes that on the balance of probabilities child abuse or a breach of the I CAN Code of Conduct has occurred then disciplinary action may follow, up to and including dismissal or termination of employment and all capacities with the organisation. The findings of the investigation will also be reported to any external body as required.

In cases where allegations against a staff member are found to have no merit, the staff member shall be protected from potential victimisation as a consequence of any investigation.

PRIVACY

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

REVIEWING

Every two years, and/or following every reportable incident, a review shall be conducted to assess whether the organisation's child protection policies, procedures or codes of conduct require modification to better protect the children under the care of I CAN Network Ltd.



CYBER SAFETY PROCEDURES

DATE OF ISSUE: 06.02.2020 RESPONSIBLE PERSON: CEO & CPO

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS FOR ACHIEVING ONLINE SAFETY

Online Mentoring Expectations Fact Sheet provided to parents of students in Online Mentoring Programs

Online Mentoring Expectations Fact Sheet provided to students participating in Online Mentoring Programs

Online Mentoring Training Module for completion by Online Mentors/Network Leaders

Adherence to Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct

Signed Code of Conduct on file for all staff



RISK MANAGEMENT

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Acceptable Usage Agreement outlining expectations of behaviour and relationships and detailed implications of not meeting these expectations signed by all Online Mentoring participants.

Cyber Safety strategies document and training provided to all Online and Webinar Mentors/Network Leaders

Cyber Safety Team in place - responsible for reviewing Online Mentoring sessions, Webinars, and social media

Risk Assessments conducted during intake/ registration

Incident Reporting procedure distributed to all Mentors/ Network Leaders/ Social Media employees

REPORTING

Participant Reporting procedure - communicate cyberbullying concern with I CAN team members, prompt follow up by Child Protection Officer

Parent Reporting - communicate cyberbullying concern with I CAN team members, prompt follow up by Child Protection Officer

I CAN Staff Reporting procedure - clear, private, confidential procedure followed accompanied by prompt response from I CAN Cyber Safety Team

Reporting to Authorities - Follow procedure outlined by Office of the eSafety Commissioner

INVESTIGATING

I CAN Network Cyber Safety Team are required to promptly investigate the accusation of cyberbullying with the participant/ participant's family and the person accused, contacting the relevant external authorities if required.

Any internal or external investigation of actual or suspected cyberbullying will be conducted according to the rules of natural justice.



RESPONDING

Cyber bullying response strategies will be tailored to the circumstances of each incident, with the aim to restore a positive learning environment for all participants and avoid escalation of issues or cause more harm.

REVIEWING

Cyberbullying prevention, intervention strategies, and cyber safety procedures are to be reviewed every two years and/or following every reportable incident.

DEFINITIONS

Child means a person below the age of 18 years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

Child protection means any responsibility, measure or activity undertaken to safeguard children from harm.

Child abuse means exploitation of a child that results in actual or potential harm. Child abuse includes but is not limited to:

- Physical violence: non-accidental injury inflicted by another person (e.g., beating, shaking, burning, using weapons)
- Sexual abuse: child is involved in sexual activity or inappropriate sexual behaviour (e.g., pornography, grooming, masturbation, penetration, prostitution)
- Emotional/psychological abuse: child is harmed via repeated rejection, isolation, threat or violence to point where emotional development is impaired (e.g., name calling and put-down, coldness from person, engaging in inappropriate/risky behaviour).
- Serious neglect: child does not receive basic necessities of life which adversely affects child's health, safety or development (e.g., neglect from food, clothing, shelter, hygiene, medical attention, adequate supervision).
- Exposing child to dangerous or life-threatening situations (e.g., doing an activity without safety equipment)
- 'Reasonable suspicion' means fair and practical reason to believe an incident involving abuse has occurred based on either verbal communication, hearsay, rumour or observance of behaviour.
- Cyber bullying: Cyberbullying is bullying conducted through the use of technology, like mobile phones or the internet (Department of Education, Queensland, accessed 2020). It includes but is not limited to sending messages through SMS or social media that threaten or hurt a child, stealing a child's account or password to misrepresent the child, sending videos or photos to others online that be harmful to the child (Australian Human Rights Commission, accessed 2018). Under the definition of Cyberbullying, actions online must be between people who have ongoing contact and be part of a pattern of repeated behaviours.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- This policy must be read in conjunction with:
- I CAN Code of Conduct (including Child Safety standards);

AUTHORISATION



Mr Christopher Rex Varney - Founder & CEO I CAN Network Ltd.
Date: February 22nd 2020