

CHILD AND YOUNG PERSON PROTECTION POLICY

OVERVIEW

The government has put in place stringent checks of those seeking to work with children (under 16 years old) and young people (16-17 years old), as well as reporting requirements if abuse is witnessed or allegations of abuse are made. Teen Ranch endorses and insists upon such standards as a child safe organisation. Teen Ranch has therefore developed a Child Protection Policy (CPP), a Code of Conduct (CC), a Risk Management Plan and a Staff Management Policy in accordance with Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 (NSW) (WWC Act) and the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW) (Protection Act). These documents will be reviewed annually and after new legislation concerning Child Protection.

Everyone who attends Teen Ranch needs to be cared for in an appropriate manner so that they feel confident of their own well-being and safety. They are not to be neglected, and are to be protected from physical, emotional and sexual harm.

Teen Ranch staff members need to be aware of acceptable standards of behaviour while interacting with children and young people as a part of their duties. They need to be accountable to each other and Teen Ranch management for their behaviour and actions. They need to be open to modifying their behaviour so that they don't cause any kind of harm to children or young people, or bring Teen Ranch and the Gospel into disrepute.

CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

The 10 Child Safe Standards, instituted by the Office of the Children's Guardian, provide a benchmark against which organisations can assess their child safe capacity and set performance targets. The Standards provide tangible guidance for organisations to drive a child safe culture, adopt strategies and act to put the interests of children first, to keep them safe from harm.

Teen Ranch is committed to implementing these strategies at all levels of the organisation.

The strategies are as follows:

1. Child safety is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture
2. Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
3. Families and communities are informed and involved
4. Equity is upheld and diverse needs are taken into account
5. People working with children are suitable and supported
6. Processes to respond to complaints of child abuse are child-focused
7. Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training
8. Physical and online environments minimise the opportunity for abuse to occur
9. Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is continuously reviewed and improved
10. Policies and procedures document how the organisation is child safe.

COMMITMENT

Teen Ranch's commitment to ensuring a child safe environment is carried out in several ways:

1. The campsite is managed in accordance with the principles and practices of the Christian Venue Association. Teen Ranch has adopted the practices outlined in our Child Safe Venues Framework document.
2. The campsite is managed in accordance with the 10 Child Safe Standards (as above).
3. All activities are conducted in line with the requirements of relevant authorities.
4. Where practicable, Teen Ranch reminds user groups of the unique responsibilities they (user group) have in a camp setting.
5. Teen Ranch staff (employed staff and voluntary over the age of 18) are required to obtain a valid Working With Children Check (WWCC) in accordance with the WWC Act before their employment begins.
6. Full time staff are also required to supply a Police check in their application process.
7. Volunteers under the age of 18 (who are exempt from the WWCC) are required to provide 2 references.
8. Teen Ranch staff (employed staff and voluntary) are briefed and understand their obligations to respect the rights and privacy of campers. A CC (code of conduct) is signed to show this.
9. Ensuring that Teen Ranch and its staff (employed staff and voluntary) complies with the terms of the WWC Act, the Protection Act and any other relevant child protection laws.

PHYSICAL CONTACT

Teen Ranch acknowledges that there are often times when it is clearly appropriate for physical contact between adults and children and young people. This is often the case during activities when equipment must be fitted (e.g. harnesses, helmets, pfd's) or assistance provided (e.g. entering canoes, dismounting from the giant swing, or mounting/dismounting a horse). Teen Ranch staff have been instructed to use the following principles for making contact with children and young people while respecting their rights and privacy:

1. Any contact must be with the child or young person's permission (e.g. "May I adjust your harness?")
2. Contact should only ever be to support or respond to the needs of a child or young person, never to meet the needs of an adult.
3. Contact should be in the open and not in isolation, with other people around and not especially focused on one person.
4. Teen Ranch staff are instructed to only make contact when it is needed to assist with the particular activity that is happening.
5. Teen Ranch staff are not to initiate any hugs but can reciprocate the hug if from a child or young person of the same gender.

6. Teen Ranch staff are not to initiate any form of physical contact games in an unstructured setting. Certain wide games that are played as part of the camp programme do involve contact between Teen Ranch staff and children and young people. Only appropriate contact with minimal force is acceptable. All due care is taken by Teen Ranch management to ensure these games remain safe and enjoyable for all involved.

CONCERNS ABOUT CHILD SAFETY AT CAMP

Any complaint about an incident reportedly occurring at Teen Ranch will be taken seriously by Teen Ranch management. It will be fully investigated, with outside help if necessary. If there is evidence of support for the complaint, Teen Ranch management will comply with state law governing such incidents. Any Teen Ranch staff members involved in the incident will be immediately withdrawn from any form of contact with children or young people and removed from the site if deemed necessary by Teen Ranch management. An incident report will be written, and appropriate action taken by Teen Ranch management.

CHILD TO CHILD ABUSE

Teen Ranch recognises that physical, emotional and sexual abuse can occur between children and young people. Any complaint about an incident reportedly occurring at Teen Ranch will be taken seriously by Teen Ranch management. It will be fully investigated, an incident report written, and appropriate disciplinary action taken by Teen Ranch management. This may include the child or young person being removed from the site if deemed necessary by Teen Ranch management. Parents or guardians will be informed, as well as the Police and relevant authorities if deemed necessary by Teen Ranch management.

PERSONAL PRIVACY

Children and young people are entitled to privacy in personal matters and Teen Ranch staff must respect this. Teen Ranch staff members cannot force a child or young person to disclose any information that they do not wish to share. Teen Ranch staff members cannot promise to keep a secret about any situation in which a child or young person may have experienced physical, emotional, or sexual abuse or neglect. If a Teen Ranch staff member believes there is evidence of a problem or disclosure of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, or neglect, it is the staff member's responsibility to report this to Teen Ranch management. Teen Ranch management will then follow the procedure outlined below.

Reporting Child Abuse to Authorities

Upon investigation by Teen Ranch management if it is suspected on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is at risk of significant harm than a notification of any report of abuse or neglect shall be made to the Department of Family and Community Services/ Child Protection Hotline. Mandatory reporters and non-mandatory reporters phone 132 111.

Mandatory Reporting Requirements

Teen Ranch will ensure compliance with the mandatory reporting provisions of section 27 of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW) (Care and Protection Act) by its Version 4 September 202222 staff. In that regard, if:

1. Teen Ranch or its staff have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is at risk of significant harm, and
2. those grounds arise during the course of their employment at Teen Ranch,

that person has a duty to report, as soon as practicable, to the Director-General the name, or a description, of the child and the grounds for suspecting that the child is at risk of significant harm.

It is acknowledged that a child or young person is "at risk of significant harm" under the Protection Act if current concerns exist for the safety, welfare or well-being of the child or young person because of the presence, to a significant extent, of any one or more of the following circumstances:

1. The child's or young person's basic physical or psychological needs are not being met or are at risk of not being met.
2. The parents or other caregivers have not arranged and are unable or unwilling to arrange for the child or young person to receive necessary medical care.
3. The child or young person has been, or is at risk of being, physically or sexually abused or ill-treated.
4. The child or young person is living in a household where there have been incidents of domestic violence and, as a consequence, the child or young person is at risk of serious physical or psychological harm.
5. A parent or other caregiver has behaved in such a way towards the child or young person that the child or young person has suffered or is at risk of suffering serious psychological harm.

AVOIDING COMPROMISING SITUATIONS

Teen Ranch staff must avoid placing themselves or campers in situations where they can be compromised. Teen Ranch staff must therefore:

1. Avoid being alone with a child or young person;
2. Knock and ask permission to enter sleeping or bathroom areas;
3. Use the staff toilet and shower facilities;
4. Avoid situations that cause embarrassment or humiliation to a child or young person; and
5. Avoid sexual talk or behave in a way that promotes promiscuity or the acceptance of sexually explicit material.

SLEEPING, SHOWERING AND BATHROOM PRIVACY

Boys and Girls have separate sleeping, showering and toilet facilities and must stay in these designated areas. Teen Ranch staff members must always knock or call out to let children and young people know that they are entering cabins or bathrooms. Cleaning of these areas is scheduled to be done at off-peak times when campers are less likely to be using the facilities. When cleaning is carried out, a sign to that effect is displayed at the entrance. If a child or young

person enters to use these facilities, the Teen Ranch staff member must ask them to wait, stop cleaning, and then leave until the child or young person has left the area.

FAVOURITISM AND EXCLUSIVENESS

There is no place for 'favourites' at camp. It can create emotional dependence on the child or young person and isolate the child or young person from their peers. When a child needs additional support, it must be given openly and carried out in such a way that no secretiveness or exclusivity is perceived by the child or young person or others. Any additional support is provided by a team of Teen Ranch staff members, so there is not just one on one interactions for the duration of the camp between a child or young person and the Teen Ranch staff member.

GENERAL FIRST AID PROCEDURES

Teen Ranch staff have been instructed to use the following principles when rendering first aid or emergency treatment:

1. They will involve another Teen Ranch staff member of the same gender as any child or young person requiring attention whenever possible. Otherwise, they will have another person present.
2. They will leave examination of private areas to health professionals.
3. Under no circumstances are they to force a child or young person to remove clothing for an examination.
4. They will record their actions in accordance with first aid recording procedures.
5. The administration of any prescribed medication must be given in accordance with parental or guardian instructions, and witnessed by another Teen Ranch staff member.
6. The administration of any non-prescribed medication (e.g. panadol, antihistamine) can only be given with parental or guardian permission, and witnessed by another Teen Ranch staff member.
7. Teen Ranch management will inform the parents or guardians of any child or young person who has received any major first aid treatment.
8. Teen Ranch management will inform the parents or guardians of any child or young person when it is advised that they seek further medical attention from trained health professionals.
9. Where possible, it is the parents or guardians responsibility to take the child or young person to receive further medical attention.

VISITORS ON THE PROPERTY

Teen Ranch is a residential community as well as a campsite and so wishes to be hospitable whilst ensuring the safety and well-being of the children and young people who are using the campsite. All visitors to the site (e.g. tradespeople, contractors and friends) must report to the office to sign in on arrival, and then sign out on departure. Teen Ranch staff members must inform Teen Ranch management if they are planning to have any overnight guests in their private residence on the property whilst children or young people are also on the property. Teen Ranch management reserves the right to refuse these guests in order to protect the children or young

people who are using the property. Teen Ranch management are to ascertain whether visitors are legally restricted from seeing a child or young person during school holiday camps.

FOLLOW-UP PROCEDURES

Teen Ranch has strict follow-up procedures in place for those children or young people who would like to maintain contact with Teen Ranch staff after camp has finished. This is to ensure children and young people's well-being is maintained and conversations are not secretive. Teen Ranch staff members are not permitted to give out to, or receive from, children or young people, any personal contact details (e.g. phone numbers, e-mail addresses, social media details). Children or young people are encouraged to contact Teen Ranch staff through the Teen Ranch website's blog and official Facebook pages. The Teen Ranch follow-up team can also use a Teen Ranch e-mail address to keep in contact with children and young people. This e-mail address can be monitored by Teen Ranch management. Any arranged meetings with children and young people off-site by the Teen Ranch follow-up team are only allowed with parental or guardian, and Teen Ranch management permission. These meetings are documented and a record kept by Teen Ranch management.

ADMINISTRATION

Teen Ranch recognises the seriousness in maintaining confidential documents regarding children and young people. All confidential documents are securely stored on the property and only accessed by authorised Teen Ranch staff members. Documents are securely archived on the property when appropriate and shredded when they are surplus to requirements.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Please see the Teen Ranch Complaint Procedure Policy for information relating to this area.