



	Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy
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PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to outline Fitzroy Learning Network’s policy to promoting and enhancing the safety and wellbeing of children who attend the Fitzroy Learning Network (FLN). It outlines FLN’s beliefs and principles and the responsibilities which employees and volunteers have towards children attending FLN. Also included in this document are procedures outlining:

1. Obtaining parental/guardian consent for their children attending FLN.
2. Working With Children Checks.
3. The risk management, reporting, investigation and resolution of child abuse complaints.

All new employees, volunteers and clients will be provided with a copy of this policy as part of their induction.

Record of policy development		
Version	Date approved	Date for review
V1. 19/10/2019		

Responsibilities and delegations	
This policy applies to	Board, Staff, Volunteers, Contractors
Specific responsibilities	
Policy approval	[Board/Q&C committee]

Policy context – this policy relates to:	
Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children Legislation Amendment (Reportable Conduct) Act 2017 • Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Act 2015



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children Youth and Families Act 2005 section 182 (1) and 184 • Crimes Act 1958 (Vic) • Education and Training Reform Amendment (Child Safe Schools) Act 2015 • Working with Children Amendment Act 2016 (Vic) • Wrongs Amendment (Organisational Child Abuse) Act 2016 (Vic)
Related policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of Conduct and Ethics • Recruitment Policy • Staff Induction Policy • Volunteer Management Policy • Anti-Discrimination, Harassment & Bullying Policy • Privacy and Confidentiality Policy • Disputes and Grievances Policy • Performance Review Policy • Hr Handbook (Performance management and Improvement Policy) • Volunteer Management Policy (volunteer induction and performance management)
Forms, record keeping, other documents	See Appendices

Policy

Statement of Commitment

Fitzroy Learning Network (FLN) is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children. FLN recognises the importance and responsibility of providing a safe, supporting and welcoming environment which respects and fosters the dignity and self-esteem of children and young people. Everyone working at FLN is responsible for the care and protection of the children within our care and reporting information about suspected child abuse.

FLN's policy relates to all children aged 18 years or under and it is intended to empower the children and young people who attend FLN. We seek to involve children when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them, listen to their views and respect what they have to say.

We promote diversity and tolerance in our community and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome. In particular, we promote:

- The cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds;
- The cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children;
- The cultural safety, participation and empowerment of LGBTI children; and

- The safety of children with a disability, ensuring they can participate equally.

We practice zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns are treated seriously and consistently in accordance with this policy. We facilitate the prevention of child abuse occurring within FLN.

If any person believes a child is in immediate risk of abuse, telephone 000.

Code of Conduct

Consistent with our commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people FLN has a Child Safety Code of Conduct (see Appendix 1). This Code of Conduct aims to protect children and reduce any opportunities for child abuse or harm to occur. It also facilitates ways to avoid or better manage risky situations and behaviours. It complements child protection legislation, other relevant FLN policies and procedures (see Section 3), professional standards, codes or ethics as these apply to board members, employees, volunteers and other personnel.

The Board and management of FLN support implementation and monitoring of the Code of Conduct and will plan, implement and monitor arrangements to provide inclusive, safe and orderly environments for children and young people. They will also ensure the Code of Conduct operates effectively.

All board members, employees, volunteers and any other members of the FLN community involved in child-related work are required to sign and comply with the Code of Conduct.

Consistent with our commitment to empowering children and young people, FLN also has a Code of Conduct for children attending FLN programs. This Code of Conduct for Children seeks to reinforce:

- mutual respect for other children and young people;
- behaviours which help children and young people protect themselves from abuse.

A copy of this Code of Conduct for Children is attached as an Appendix 2.

Human Resources Management

FLN acknowledges that our human resources practices and management are an important way of reducing risks to the safety of children and young people. Human resources practices include the recruitment, training and supervision of all personnel who deal with children and young people.

Accordingly:

- a) Each position or category of positions for employees or volunteers which involve work connected with children and young people must have a clear statement that sets out:
 - The position's requirements, duties and responsibilities regarding child safety; and
 - The position occupant's essential or relevant qualifications, experience and attributes in relation to child safety.
- b) All applicants for positions that involve child connected work for FLN must be informed about our child safety practices and sign the Child Safety Code of Conduct (Appendix 1).



- c) In accordance with any applicable legal requirements or policy, FLN will gather, verify and record the following information about a person whom it proposes to engage to perform child connected work:
- Working with Children Check Status (see Section 1.4 below for further information);
 - Proof of personal identify and any other relevant qualifications;
 - The person's history of work involving children; and wherever possible
 - References that address the person's suitability for the position and working with children.
- d) FLN will not need to make the checks outlined above about a particular individual if it has already done so within the previous 12 months and can provide suitable evidence of such.
- e) All child safety and well being responsibilities must be referenced in employee or volunteer letters of offer and a copy of this policy must be provided.
- f) When a new board member, staff member or volunteer starts at FLN, they must provide written acknowledgment of having read, understood and agreed to abide by FLN's Child Protection Policy and sign the Child Safety Code of Conduct (Appendix 1).
- g) All employees and volunteers involved in work connected with children must participate in a structured induction process that includes an introduction to child safety and wellbeing issues. They must be made aware of:
- The definitions of abuse and neglect as contained in the current children's protection legislation (see Appendix 3);
 - The requirement to exercise a duty of care to protect children and keep them safe while they are engaged in any FLN activity; and
 - The requirement and process for reporting suspicion of child abuse and neglect as required by the current children's protection legislation.
- h) All relevant employees and volunteers must participate in further education and training programs to improve their knowledge of child protection, including issues of child abuse and appropriate responses to them, and also knowledge of behaviours which empower children and help them to protect themselves.
- i) Employee and volunteer supervision and performance appraisal must include compliance with the Child Protection Policy.

Working With Children Check

It is the responsibility of the CEO to:

- Determine who requires a WWCC;
- Ensure those who require a WWCC have a valid WWCC;
- Ensure new board members, employees and volunteers apply for a WWCC before commencing child-related work.

Parental/Guardian Participation Consent

Parents/Guardians are provided with information which ensures they:

- Understand the programs which their children attend at FLN; and
- Consent to their children attending programs at FLN.

In addition, FLN requires the written consent of the Parents/Guardians of children who wish to attend FLN. The procedure relevant to this approval is detailed in Section 2.1 below.

Child Abuse

Board Responsibilities

The Board of FLN has ultimate responsibility for the detection and prevention of child abuse and is responsible for ensuring that appropriate and effective internal control systems are in place. The Board is also responsible for ensuring that appropriate policies and procedures and the Child Safety Code of Conduct is in effect.

CEO Responsibilities

The CEO is responsible for dealing with and investigating reports of child abuse; ensuring that all staff, contractors, and volunteers are aware of relevant laws, organisational policies and procedures, and the organisation's Child Safety Code of Conduct.

The CEO must ensure that all adults within the FLN community are aware of their obligation to report suspected sexual abuse of a child in accordance with these policies and procedures, and that all board members, staff, and volunteers are aware of their obligation to observe the Child Safety Code of Conduct.

The CEO should:

- Promote child safety at all times;
- Assess the risk of child abuse within their area of control and eradicate/minimise any risk to the extent possible;
- Educate employees about the prevention and detection of child abuse;
- Facilitate the reporting of any inappropriate behaviour or suspected abusive activities;
- Be familiar with the types of abuse that might occur within their area of responsibility and be alert for any indications of such conduct (recognised definitions of child abuse can be found at Appendix 2).

Employee and Volunteer Responsibilities

All **employees and volunteers** share in the responsibility for the prevention and detection of child abuse, and must:

- Familiarise themselves with the relevant laws, the Child Safety Code of Conduct, and FLN's policy and procedures in relation to child protection, and comply with all requirements;
- Report any reasonable belief that a child's safety is at risk to the relevant authorities (see reporting procedure in section 2.5) and fulfil their obligations as mandatory reporters (where applicable);
- Report any suspicion that a child's safety may be at risk to the CEO (or, if the CEO is involved in the suspicion, to the Board Chair); and
- Provide an environment that is supportive of all children's emotional and physical safety.

Mandatory Reporting

Mandatory reporting is a term used to describe the legislative requirement imposed on selected classes of people to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect to government authorities. In Victoria, the Children Youth and Families Act 2005 section 182 (1) and 184 identifies the following as mandated reporters:

- Teachers
- Principals
- Doctors (including midwives)
- Police
- Childcare Workers
- Social workers and psychologists
- Youth justice and Youth parole officers
- School counsellors

In Victoria, mandatory reporting is activated by a belief on reasonable grounds that a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of physical injury or sexual abuse, and the child's parents have not protected, or are unlikely to protect, the child from harm of that type.

The Children Legislation Amendment (Reportable Conduct) Act 2017 defines reportable conduct as:

- a sexual offence committed against, with or in the presence of, a child, whether or not a criminal proceeding in relation to the offence has been commenced or concluded; or
- sexual misconduct, committed against, with or in the presence of, a child; or
- physical violence committed against, with or in the presence of, a child; or
- any behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child; or
- significant neglect of a child.

The legislation protects the reporter's identity from disclosure. In addition, the legislation provides that as long as the report is made in good faith, the reporter cannot be liable in any civil, criminal or administrative proceeding.

Risk Management

FLN will ensure that child safety is part of its overall risk management approach.

One of FLN's sub-committee's will be committed to identifying and managing risks at FLN. Members of this sub-committee will take responsibility for ensuring they are up-to-date with child safety requirements.

Procedures

Parental/Guardian Participation Consent Procedure

The Deed of Consent and Release (see Appendix 5) requires the Parent/Guardian to agree to their child participating in FLN's programs.

This form will be given to children and young people participating in FLN's programs on the first occasion that they attend a program, and is required to be returned before the young person can participate again.

This form will be considered valid for all programs delivered by FLN at FLN's premises for one year.

Once-off activities held on FLN's premises will follow the same procedure, meaning children and young people who have not previously attended a program may participate without a signed form, however they will still be required to complete the details section of the form before participating.

FLN will not provide access to its programs for children under 12 years of age at its premises.

Working with Children Check Procedure

Before any board member, employee, or volunteer engages in child-related activities, the CEO is responsible for ensuring that any person required by law to have a valid WWCC possesses one. If the person does not hold a valid WWCC the CEO will provide a WWCC application form to the person and restrict them to duties that do not involve any child-related activities until the WWCC process is complete.

The responsibilities of the CEO include:

- Sight and keep a record of all existing board members', employees' and volunteers' WWCC.
- Arrange for all new board members, employees and volunteers, and any existing board members, employees and volunteers who do not have a WWCC to obtain one.
- Ensure all WWCC cardholders advise the Department of Justice that they work/volunteer at FLN. This will ensure FLN receives notices about the validity and status of of the person's WWCC.
- Ensure all new board members, employees, and volunteers advise the Department of Justice that they work/volunteer at FLN within 21 days of commencement.
- Record the unique Application Receipt Number that the board member/ employee/volunteer receives from Australia Post upon application.
- Advise board members, employees and volunteers that they are obliged to notify FLN if they are issued an Interim Negative Notice or a Negative Notice to cease engaging in child-related work. If an Interim Negative Notice or a Negative Notice is received from the Department of Justice, the board member, employee or volunteer will not commence employment/volunteering and/or will be suspended until the matter is resolved by the Department of Justice. Any discussions between the Department of Justice, the cardholder and CEO will remain confidential.

- After it is received from the Department of Justice, sight the WWCC card to verify that they have passed the WWCC check.
- File a copy of the new cardholder's card and/or record the card number, expiry date and card type (ie. 'employee' or 'volunteer').
- Advise cardholders to promptly notify the Department of Justice when their personal details change (ie. new address and/or phone numbers).

Security and confidentiality of WWCC information

To ensure security and confidentiality of all WWCC related information, FLN will follow these procedures:

- All WWCC cardholder information will be stored securely and can only be viewed by the CEO and Volunteer Coordinator.
- The CEO and Volunteer Coordinator must not disclose any information about board member, employee or volunteer except in when the circumstances listed in the Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Act (2015) or the Children Youth and Families Act (2005) permit it.

Employment of New Personnel

FLN undertakes a comprehensive recruitment and screening process for all board members, employees and volunteers which aims to:

- Promote and protect the safety of all children under the care of the organisation;
- Identify the safest and most suitable people who share FLN's values and commitment to protect children; and
- Prevent a person from working at FLN if they pose a risk to children.

FLN requires all board members, employees and volunteers to pass through the relevant organisation's recruitment and/or screening processes prior to commencing their engagement with the organisation.

FLN requires new applicants to provide police checks in accordance with the law and as appropriate, before they commence their engagement with the organisation. All board members, members of staff and employees are required to provide updated police check every three years.

FLN will undertake thorough reference checks as per the approved internal procedure.

After their induction, board members/workers/volunteers must review and acknowledge their understanding of this Policy and sign the Child Safety Code of Conduct (Appendix 1).

Risk Management

FLN will ensure that child safety is a part of its overall risk management approach. FLN is committed to identifying and managing risks at FLN. The CEO, Youth Engagement Coordinator and Volunteer Coordinator will receive regular training in relation to child safety.

Reporting

Any board member, staff member or volunteer who has grounds to suspect abusive activity must immediately notify the Department of Human Services, Victorian Child Protection, the

police, and/or any other relevant organisation. A list of organisations and numbers for reporting child abuse can be found at Appendix 4. They should also advise the CEO about their concern. Child abuse may be reported orally or in writing.

If the concern relates to a suspicion of abuse by a parent, guardian or other person external to FLN, the CEO will decide if the matter is subject to mandatory reporting and take the necessary action.

If the concern relates to a suspicion of abuse by a board member, an employee or volunteer, the CEO will take action to deal with the concern, including reporting it to the Department of Human Services, Victorian Child Protection and/or the police (as appropriate).

A mandated reporter (see page 6) must make a report if:

- They form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from physical injury or sexual abuse;
- The parents cannot or will not protect the child; and
- The belief is formed in the course of practising his/her position of employment.
- Please note that exceptions may apply.

In situations where the CEO 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, the matter should be reported to the Board.

The CEO must report complaints of suspected abusive behaviour or misconduct to the Board and also to any external regulatory body such as the police.

Should an allegation of reportable conduct be made against an employee of FLN, the Children Legislation Amendment (Reportable Conduct) Act 2017 Section 16M requires that the head of the entity notify the Commission in writing of the following:

(a) within 3 business days after becoming aware of the reportable allegation—

- (i) that a reportable allegation has been made against an employee of the entity;
- (ii) the name (including any former name and alias, if known) and date of birth, if known, of the employee concerned; and
- (iii) whether Victoria Police has been contacted about the reportable allegation; and
- (iv) the name, address and telephone number of the entity; and
- (v) the name of the head of the entity; and

(b) as soon as practicable and within 30 days after becoming aware of the reportable allegation—

- (i) detailed information about the reportable allegation; and
- (ii) whether or not the entity proposes to take any disciplinary or other action in relation to the employee and the reasons why it intends to take, or not to take, that action; and
- (iii) any written submissions made to the head of the entity concerning the reportable allegation that the employee wished to have considered in determining what, if any, disciplinary or other action should be taken in relation to the employee.

If a child discloses an incident of abuse:



- Where possible, separate the child from other children discreetly and listen to them carefully;
- Let the child use their own words to explain what has occurred;
- Reassure the child that you take what they are saying seriously, and it is not their fault and they are doing the right thing;
- Explain to them that this information may need to be shared with others, such as their parents, guardian, specific people at FLN, or the police;
- Do not make promises to the child such as promising not to tell anyone about the incident, except that you will do your best to keep them safe;
- Do not leave the child in a distressed state. If they seem at ease in your company, stay with them;
- Complete an incident report form (Appendix 5);
- As soon as possible, record the information using the child's words and report the disclosure to the CEO, or the Chair of the Board when the CEO is being accused of abusing the child;
- Maintain confidentiality about the disclosure other than the relevant personnel described above or as directed;
- Ensure the disclosure is recorded accurately, and that the record is stored securely.

If a parent/guardian/other person reports child abuse or raises a concern:

- Explain FLN has processes to ensure all abuse allegations are taken very seriously;
- Where possible, include the CEO (or Chair of the Board when the CEO is the accused) in the discussion;
- Ask about the safety and wellbeing of the child;
- Advise the parent/guardian/other person that you will take notes during the discussion to capture all the details;
- Allow the parent/guardian/other person to talk through the incident or their concerns in their own words;
- Explain to them the information may need to be repeated to authorities or others such as the CEO, the police or child protection;
- Do not make promises at this stage, except that you will do your best to keep the child safe;
- Complete an incident report form (Appendix 5). If possible, complete the incident report form with those reporting the incident.
- Ask them what action they would like to take and advise them of what the immediate next steps will be.
- Thank them for making the report.
- Ensure the report is recorded accurately and that the record is stored at school and provided to the CEO.

Investigation

If the appropriate child protection service or the police decide to conduct an investigation of this report, all board members, employees and/or volunteers must co-operate fully with the investigation.

Whether or not the authorities decide to conduct an investigation, the CEO will consult with the authorities to determine whether an internal investigation is appropriate. If it is decided that such an investigation will not conflict with any proceeding of the authorities, the CEO

may decide to conduct such an investigation. All board members, employees and volunteers must co-operate fully with the investigation.

Any such investigation will be conducted according to the rules of natural justice.

The CEO will make every effort to keep any such investigation confidential; however, from time to time board members, volunteers and members of staff may need to be consulted in conjunction with the investigation.

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

Response

If it is alleged that a board member, member of staff, or a volunteer may have committed an offence or have breached the organisation's policies or the Code of Conduct relevant to their position, 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 an offence (or a breach of the organisation's policies or relevant Code of Conduct) has occurred, then disciplinary action may follow. This may include dismissal or cessation of involvement with the organisation. The findings of the investigation will also be reported to any external body as required.

The response must balance the following interests:

- The right of the child to be heard, protected and supported;
- The right of the child and their family to have their concern acted upon and resolved, and for the identity of the child/young person to remain confidential to those persons directly involved in resolving the complaint;
- The right of the alleged perpetrator to a fair process, including confidentiality;
- The legal requirement for FLN to report suspected crimes to the Police for investigation;
- The legal requirement for mandated professionals (including teachers) to notify Department of Human Services Victorian Child Protection Service of protective concerns regarding children under 17 years of age;
- The moral duty of all people (including paid and unpaid persons working at FLN) to notify the Department of Human Services Victorian Child Protection Service of protective concerns regarding children under 17 years of age; and
- The requirement for FLN to provide a report regarding the alleged incident to the Department of Human Services Victorian Child Protection Service.

Privacy

All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved unless there is a risk to someone's safety. FLN will have safeguards and practices in place to ensure any personal information is appropriately protected.

Anyone involved in the process is entitled to know how personal information is recorded, what will be done with it, and who will be able to access it.



Review

Every year, and following every reportable incident, 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.

Appendix 1

Child Safety and Wellbeing Code of Conduct.

Fitzroy Learning Network (FLN) has developed a Code of Conduct relating to ensuring Child Safety and Wellbeing. All board members, employees and volunteers must comply with this Code.

FLN is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children using our services. We support the rights of the child and will act without hesitation to ensure a child-safe environment is maintained at all times. We also support the rights and wellbeing of our employees and volunteers and encourage their active participation in building and maintaining a secure environment for all participants.

As board members, employees, volunteers or other members of the FLN community, involved in work with children and young people under the age of 17, we are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children.

The code requires that you:

- Conduct yourself in a manner consistent with your position as a positive role model for children, and as a representative of FLN.
- Follow FLN policy and guidelines around the safety of children as outlined in the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.
- Treat all children and young people and their families with respect and take notice of their reactions to your tone of voice and manner.
- Ensure you are visible to other FLN personnel and/or children when conducting one-to-one coaching or instruction.
- Listen and respond to the views and concerns of children and young people, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety or the safety of another child.
- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of all children and young people with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.
- Promote the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability.
- Raise all concerns, issues and problems with the CEO or Board Chair.
- Report any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concern to the CEO or Board Chair.
- Understand and comply with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse.
- If child abuse is suspected, ensure as quickly as possible that children are safe and protected from harm.

The code requires that you DO NOT:

- Ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosure of child abuse.
- Ignore behaviours of other adults towards children and young people when they appear to be overly familiar or inappropriate.
- Treat a child unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity.



- Develop a relationship with any student that could be seen as favouritism or amount to “grooming” behavior (for example, offering gifts, paying excessive attention).
- Touch children or young people when it is not necessary.
- Hold, kiss, cuddle or touch children in an inappropriate and/or culturally insensitive way.
- Engage in rough physical games, including horseplay.
- Exhibit behaviours or engage in activities with children and young people which may be interpreted as abusive and not justified by the service delivery context.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even as a joke. Discuss content of an intimate nature or use sexual innuendo.
- Do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as going to the toilet or changing clothes.
- Spend time alone with a child. Always ensure you are visible to other FLN personnel and/or children when conducting one-to-one coaching or instruction.
- Take a child to your home, or arrange meetings outside the program activity.
- Communicate directly with a child or young person through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, email, instant messaging, texting etc).
- Photograph or video a child or young person attending FLN, except in accordance with FLN policy or where required for duty of care purposes.
- Work with children or young people while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.

By signing below you are agreeing to abide by the FLN Child Safety and Wellbeing Code of Conduct and act in accordance with the FLN Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

Name of Signatory

Signature

Date

____/____/____

Appendix 2

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR CHILDREN ATTENDING FLN PROGRAMS

To attend programs on FLN premises, you and your parent/guardian must agree to the code of conduct and sign below.

Member's Rights:

- To use computers;
- To speak up for yourself;
- To ask for advice and help;
- To be safe at FLN;
- To be treated equally and respectfully at FLN.

Member's Responsibilities:

- To treat each other politely and with respect;
- To take care of yourself and not put anyone else in danger;
- To clean up after yourself;
- To not to go into the front building unless permission is given;
- To come directly to FLN if that is what your family and other people think you are doing
- To go directly home if that is what your family and other people think you are doing
- To look after the FLN premises and other people's property including computers and cameras;
- To protect your safety online by: never giving out your personal information such as your address, telephone number, or the name of your school; never agreeing to meet anyone you meet online; and telling the adult in charge immediately if you see something online that makes you uncomfortable.

I agree to follow the Code of Conduct while at the Fitzroy Learning Network.

Member's Name

Member's signature

Parent/Guardian's Name

Parent/Guardian's Signature

Date _____ / _____ / _____

Appendix 3 Definitions of Child Abuse

Under the Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Act 2015, child abuse includes the following categories of abuse.¹

Physical Violence

Physical violence occurs when a child suffers or is likely to suffer significant harm from a non-accidental injury or injuries inflicted by another person. Physical violence can be inflicted in many ways, including beating, shaking, burning or use of weapons (such as, belts and paddles).

Possible physical indicators include:

- Unexplained bruises
- Burns and/or fractured bones

Possible behavioural indicators include:

- Showing wariness or distrust of adults
- Wearing long sleeved clothes on hot days (to hide bruising or other injury)
- Fear of specific people
- Unexplained absences
- Academic problems

Sexual offenses

Sexual offences occur when a person involves the child in sexual activity, or deliberately puts the child in the presence of sexual behaviours that are exploitative or inappropriate to his/her age and development. Child sexual abuse can involve a range of sexual activity including fondling, masturbation, penetration, voyeurism and exhibitionism. It can also include exposure to or exploitation through pornography or prostitution, as well as grooming behaviour. There are two main categories:

Contact	Non Contact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Touched and fondled in genital area • Forced to touch another person's genital areas • Kissed or held in sexual manner • Forced to perform oral sex • Vaginal or anal intercourse • Vaginal or anal penetration with object or finger 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obscene calls/obscene remarks in electronic or written communication • Voyeurism • Exposed to or photographed for pornography • Sexually intrusive questions or comments • Forced to self masturbate or watch others masturbate • Indecent exposure

¹ These definitions are based on the Victorian [Child Protection Practice Manual](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/cpmanual/practice-context/child-protection-program-overview/1008-abuse-and-harm-legal-and-practice-definitions): www.dhs.vic.gov.au/cpmanual/practice-context/child-protection-program-overview/1008-abuse-and-harm-legal-and-practice-definitions



Possible physical indicators include:

- Presence of sexually transmitted diseases
- Pregnancy
- Vaginal or anal bleeding or discharge

Possible behavioural indicators include:

- Displaying sexual behaviour or knowledge that is unusual for the child's age
- Difficulty sleeping
- Being withdrawn
- Complaining of headaches or stomach pains
- Fear of specific people
- Showing wariness or distrust of adults
- Displaying aggressive behaviour

Serious emotional or psychological abuse

Serious emotional or psychological abuse occurs when harm is inflicted on a child through repeated rejection, isolation, or by threats or violence. It can include derogatory name-calling and put-downs, or persistent and deliberate coldness from a person, to the extent where the behaviour of the child is disturbed or their emotional development is at serious risk of being impaired. Serious emotional or psychological abuse could also result from conduct that exploits a child without necessarily being criminal, such as encouraging a child to engage in inappropriate or risky behaviours.

Possible physical indicators include:

- Delays in emotional, mental, or even physical development
- Physical signs of self-harming

Possible behavioural indicators include:

- Exhibiting low self-esteem
- Exhibiting high anxiety
- Displaying aggressive or demanding behaviour
- Being withdrawn, passive and/or tearful
- Self-harming

Serious Neglect

Serious neglect is the continued failure to provide a child with the basic necessities of life, such as food, clothing, shelter, hygiene, medical attention or adequate supervision, to the extent that the child's health, safety and/or development is, or is likely to be, jeopardised. Serious neglect can also occur if an adult fails to adequately ensure the safety of a child where the child is exposed to extremely dangerous or life threatening situations.

Possible physical indicators include:

- Frequent hunger
- Malnutrition
- Poor hygiene
- Inappropriate clothing



Possible behavioural indicators include:

- Stealing food
- Staying at school outside of school hours
- Aggressive behaviour
- Misusing alcohol or drugs
- Academic issues

Bullying

FLN also acknowledges that bullying still occurs in child and youth oriented programs and can cause enormous distress to children. Children who are bullied have run away from home or school, become frightened, withdrawn and miserable, and attempted suicide. The notion that bullying is just one of life's challenges to be faced and conquered can be very disempowering for the victim, adding to their already great sense of isolation and vulnerability. When bullying is not addressed victims may learn to feel worthless, to feel that it is their fault for not coping with the bully, that they can never win, and to live in fear. Equally as destructive are the messages learned by the bully when their behaviour is minimized or ignored.

Appendix 4 Contact Details for Reporting Child Abuse

Child Abuse should be reported to one or both of the following authorities:

Victorian Child Protection Service

- Phone: 1300 664 977 (Northern & Western Region)
- After Hours Child Protection Crisis Line: 131 278

Life threatening concerns – call Victoria Police 000

Other emergency contacts:

- Statewide CASA Crisis Line after business hours weekdays, weekends and public holidays - Tel: (03) 9344 2210
- Domestic Violence and Incest Resource Centre - Tel: (03) 9486 9866.

Appendix 5: Incident Report Form

All incident reports must be stored securely and confidentially.

Incident details

Date of incident:	
Time of incident:	
Location of incident:	
Name(s) of child/ children involved:	
Name(s) of board member/staff/ volunteer involved:	

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

Does the child identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?

(Mark with an 'X' as applicable)

No

Yes, Aboriginal

Yes, Torres Strait Islander

Please categorise the incident

Physical violence

Sexual offence

Serious emotional or psychological abuse

Serious neglect

Please describe the incident

When did it take place?	
Who was involved?	
What did you see?	
Other information	

Parent/carer/child use

Date of incident:	
Time of incident:	



Location of incident:	
Name(s) of child/children involved:	
Name(s) of board member/staff/volunteer involved:	

Has the incident been reported?

Child protection	
Police	
Another third party (please specify):	

Incident reporter wishes to remain anonymous?

(Mark with an 'X' as applicable)

Yes

No

Additional Information:

Office use:

Date incident report received:	
Staff member managing incident:	
Follow-up date:	
Incident ref. number:	

**Appendix 5
PARTICIPANT REGISTRATION & CONSENT FORM**

**Fitzroy Learning Network
Youth Program Participant Registration & Consent Form**

The purpose of this form is to provide permission from a parent/guardian for the person detailed on this form to attend a program conducted by Fitzroy Learning Network (FLN). This form must be completed in full and signed by the parent/guardian of any child under 16 years of age, or FLN cannot permit the person to attend any FLN programs.

Under no circumstances is FLN able to provide access to its programs for young people aged under 12 years of age.

Program to be attended:

PARTICIPANT DETAILS (Young person's details):

First name: _____ Last name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Address:

Optional: Gender: Male Female Other _____

Language/s spoken at home _____

Country of Birth: _____ Year of arrival if born overseas: _____

Phone number: _____

Email address: _____

Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander status: Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Both
 Neither

MEDICAL INFORMATION/SPECIAL NEEDS - Please provide relevant details of any medical information which may affect your child's participation in FLN activities. Any medical information collected is stored securely and confidentially by FLN.

Asthma

Diabetes

Epilepsy

Allergies



Other

Does the participant have any additional special needs we need to be aware of? If so please provide details:

EMERGENCY CONTACT: (In the event of an emergency this person is the primary contact)

Name: _____

Relationship: _____

Phone number:

Home: _____

Mobile: _____

Email: _____

In the event we cannot contact you who else can we contact in an emergency?

Name: _____

Relationship: _____

Phone number:

Home: _____

Mobile: _____

Email: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT

Participants under 16 require parent/guardian consent to participate in FLN youth programs

I give consent for _____ (*participant's name*) to participate in activities/programs offered by Fitzroy Learning Network.

I have provided the Fitzroy Learning Network all relevant details of my child's medical or physical needs and agree to update this information as required.

I give consent for Fitzroy Learning Network staff and volunteers to seek emergency medical assistance for the participant if needed.

- I give permission for the participant to walk home after the program
- I confirm that the participant listed on the form is 12 years and older



Parent/Guardian Name (Print):

Parent/Guardian Signature:

Date: ____/____/____

PHOTOGRAPHY AND FILM PERMISSION

FLN may take photos/videos of young people for use in promotional materials such as our website, social media and publications.

Participant: Do you consent to FLN using photos/videos of you for these purposes?

Yes No

Parent/guardian if participant under 16: Do you consent to FLN using photos/videos of the participant for these purposes?

Yes No

Are you interested in finding out about other activities provided by FLN? Yes No

If yes, email address: _____