

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN/ NORTHERN TERRITORY ROSTRUM INC.

CHILD SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY

COMMITMENT TO THE SAFETY OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

We are committed to providing a safe environment to all children and young people.

Our policy complies with the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017, the Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016 and aligns with the National Principles for Safe Child Organisations.

We value and respect children and young people, welcome them regardless of their abilities, sex, gender, or social economic or cultural background and treat them equitably.

Bullying and harassment will not be tolerated.

SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to all members of South Australian/Northern Territory Rostrum Inc (Rostrum) and any other volunteers (collectively referred to as members).

COMMUNICATION

This child safety policy and related documents are available on our website and on request.

It is also provided to all members when they join the organization either electronically by email or in hard copy form either personally or by post.

We inform children and young people of their right to safety, their right to be listened to and that they can provide feedback or make a complaint if they have any concern to any member or ask their parent, guardian or school to do this on their behalf.

We will listen to and act upon any complaints or concerns that a child or young person raises with us.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Working with children and young people means members are responsible for promoting and protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

Members must:

- Abide by Rostrum's child safe policy at all times and take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and protection of children and young people
- Treat everyone, including those of different race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age social class, physical ability or attributes and religious beliefs with respect, honesty and ensure equity is upheld.
- Be a positive role model to children and young people in all conduct with them
- Set clear boundaries and maintain appropriate behaviours with children and young people
- Listen and respond appropriately to the views and concerns of children and young people
- Be alert to bullying behaviours and respond promptly and appropriately.
- Ensure another adult is always present or in sight in any interactions with children and

young people

- Be alert to children and young people who have been harmed, or may be at risk of harm and report this quickly to the Child Abuse Report Line (13 14 78).
- Respond quickly fairly and transparently to any complaints made by a child, young person, their teacher parent or guardian

Members must not:

- Engage in physical contact with children or young persons unless absolutely necessary e.g to avoid injury to the child or young person or assist them if they are injured or ill and a teacher, parent or guardian is not immediately available to do so.
- Develop any relationships with children and young people who participate in any competition run by Rostrum or are in any other way involved with Rostrum or engage in any form of favouritism.
- Discriminate against any child or young person because of age, gender, cultural background, religion, vulnerability or sexuality

Breaches or suspected breaches of the Code of Conduct should be reported as soon as practicable to the Co-ordinator either in person, by telephone on 0403 972 816 or via email santvoy@rostrum.com.au. Breaches and suspected breaches of the code of conduct will be taken seriously and dealt with quickly, fairly and transparently. Any member who breaches the Code of Conduct will face disciplinary action and depending on severity of the breach, the member may have their membership terminated.

RECRUITMENT

In accordance with the Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016, our organisation is registered with the DHS Screening Unit and we link all Working with Children Checks (WWCC) to our registration.

All persons running the organisation including the executive members and committee members must hold a current, not prohibited WWCC issued by the Screening Unit of the Department of Human Services and renew this every five years. All members over the age of 14 years who will be working with children or young people, unless they are excluded persons under section 9 of the Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016, must meet the same requirements. We will verify the accuracy of all WWCCs in the DHS Screening Unit portal as required by law.

We will immediately contact the Department of Human Services Screening Unit when we become aware of assessable information regarding any person involved with our organisation including any serious criminal offence, child protection information, or disciplinary or misconduct information.

TRAINING

We have strategies in place to ensure members understand our organisation's child safe policy, their mandatory reporting obligations and their responsibilities to ensure a child safe and friendly environment.

Our strategies include:

Providing all committee members and all other members who work with children the Mandatory Reporting Information Booklet available at;

https://dhs.sa.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/103179/CSE-Mandatory-notification-information-booklet.PDF

Providing all members annually who volunteer to work with children written materials in relation to their roles which include information about their obligations, including this policy document.

REPORTING OR RESPONDING TO HARM OR RISK OF HARM

We aim to ensure that children and young people are safe from harm and risk of harm.

Section 17 of the Safety Act defines 'harm' to mean physical or psychological harm (whether caused by an act or omission), including harm caused by sexual, physical, mental or emotional abuse or neglect.

Mandated reporters in our organisation are members who provide services to children and young people and those who hold a management position in the organisation the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of those services to children and young people.

Mandated reporters have a legal obligation to report direct to the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) on 13 14 78 as soon as practicable if they have a suspicion that a child or young person has been harmed or may be at risk of harm. If the child or young person is at immediate risk, report to South Australia Police (SAPOL) on 000 (triple zero).

Even if not a mandated reporter, any person can report harm or risk of harm to a child or young person. The non-mandated reporter who identifies the harm or risk of harm is encouraged to make the report to authorities and can request the support from another member to do so if required.

Information about making appropriate reports of harm or risk of harm is available from the South Australian Department for Child Protection website:

<https://www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/report-suspected-harm>

All members (even if not a mandated reporter) have a legal obligation to report child sexual abuse by another member to the police and to protect a child from sexual abuse by another member. Failure to meet these obligations may be considered a criminal offence.

Following a report being made to CARL or SAPOL, members must make an internal report to the coordinator. We will be guided by the Department for Child Protection and/or SAPOL after a report has been made as to whether we can conduct an internal investigation.

If a member is reported to CARL or SAPOL for causing harm or risk of harm to a child or young person, they will be removed from any role that involves working with any child or young person until authorities have concluded their investigation.

Following a report to CARL or SAPOL we will support the child or young person by:

- referring the child, young person or their family to other appropriate services
- continuing to provide a service to the child, young person and their family and monitor their circumstances.

We will document all information received regarding the report and store this securely in a separate file.

REPORTING OR RESPONDING TO GENERAL COMPLAINTS OR FEEDBACK

Children, young people and their families are informed that they can provide feedback or make a complaint prior to attending the activity in which they are participating.

Compliments, complaints or feedback can be provided verbally to any member or direct to the coordinator of the Voice of Youth competition (the coordinator) either by telephone on 0403 972 816 or via email at santvoy@rostrum.com.au

We will deal with all complaints and feedback received promptly, sensitively and fairly.

We will:

- listen to the complaint/feedback
- ensure if a member receives a verbal complaint, they make a record of it and forward it to the coordinator as soon as possible
- advise the time expected for an outcome
- ensure if a member receives a written complaint, they forward it to the coordinator as soon as possible
- ensure that the coordinator responds to the complainant with an outcome in a timely manner
- clearly document and securely store decisions and actions taken in response to complaints and feedback
- make sure that procedural fairness is followed at all times.

If the child, young person or their family is not happy with the outcome from the complaints process they can contact :

- Australian Human Rights Commission Online: www.humanrights.gov.au Tel: 1300 656 419
- South Australian Equal Opportunities Commission (for complaints relating to discrimination) Online: www.eoc.sa.gov.au Tel: 08 8207 1977.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The table below sets out the specific risks to children and young people that are relevant to the activities undertaken. The primary activity undertaken is organising and conducting a public speaking competition for secondary school students.

Identified risk	Actions to minimise risk
Physical contact	• Physical contact is not allowed except in the case of an emergency or illness and a parent, guardian or teacher is not available
Online communications	• Communication is made via the schools of the participating children and young people, or their parents or guardians if they are home schooled. • Members must not communicate with children or young people via social media

Transport of children and young people	• Transportation of children is ordinarily not required • Members must have approval to transport a child or young person • parents/guardians or teachers must provide consent before transporting a child or young person • Members must have a valid, unrestricted driver's licence • The vehicle must be registered, insured and in roadworthy condition • Member must not be alone in a vehicle with a child or young person
Supervision	• It is desirable for parents, guardians or teachers to be present during the conduct of the competition • if the child/young person is not collected by a parent, guardian or teacher at end of the competition two adults are to stay with the child/young person until they are collected • one to one consultation with a child or young person will be in line of sight of another adult
Taking images of children and young people	• consent of child or young person and parent/guardian required • disclosure will be made to child, young person and parent/guardian as to how the image is to be used
Physical environment	• Premises at which any competition is held are inspected beforehand to ensure their suitability
Privacy and confidentiality	• documents containing confidential information will be stored securely with restricted access • digital files containing confidential information will be protected electronically with restricted access • members must not disclose information regarding any child or young person without written consent of the child, young person and their parent/guardian or teacher unless legally required to
Overnight and/or off-site activities	• consent of parent or guardian must be given • children and young people must be supervised by a minimum of 2 adults of the same gender as the children attending • privacy when children or young people are bathing, toileting and dressing must be provided • children and young people will not be left under the

	supervision of unauthorised persons • sleeping arrangements will not compromise the safety of children or young people such as unsupervised sleeping arrangements, or children or young people sharing a bed or an adult sleeping in the same bed as a child or young person • children and young people have the right to contact their parents, or another adult, if they feel unsafe, uncomfortable, or distressed during the stay
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RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Rostrum Voice of Youth National Administration Manual

Rostrum Voice of Youth National Final Duty of Care Policy

Rostrum Voice of Youth Privacy Policy

Rostrum Voice of Youth Contestant and Member Code of Conduct Policy

POLICY REVIEW

We will, at a minimum, review this policy and the related procedures once every 5 years as required by the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017. We will also review this policy when:

- new or added risks are identified for children or young people, which may require a change in the policy or procedures
- a critical incident where a child or young person has experienced harm through involvement in the organisation
- concerns are raised by anyone involved in our organisation about child safety or welfare in the organisation
- awareness or compliance to the child safe policy and/or procedures is low
- legislative changes/requirements occur.

We will lodge a new child safe environments compliance statement with the Department of Human Services each time we review and update this policy.

Policy Date: 25/ 03 / 2025

Review Date: 25 / 03 /2030