

Annexure to Document	5.11 A1	Version	6	Date	16/08/2023
Policy Title	Child Safety and Wellbeing				



**Mountain District**  
LEARNING CENTRE

# CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING CODE OF CONDUCT

I understand and accept that all Mountain District Learning Centre (MDLC) staff, regular contractors and Board members are required to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children and young people (under 18 years).

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this code of conduct is to:

- Promote child safety in the MDLC environment.
- Set standards about the ways in which individuals engaged at MDLC are expected to behave and conduct themselves when interacting with our students.
- Outline the possible consequences should this code of conduct be breached.

## SCOPE

All individuals who are working or volunteering at MDLC are required to comply with this code of conduct.

## STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Staff and volunteers at MDLC are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children.

## I WILL:

- Adhere to all relevant Australian and Victorian legislation, MDLC Child Safety and Wellbeing policy and other organisational policies.
- Comply with guidelines on the physical contact with children and young people.
- Raise concerns with the CEO, Manager or Child Safety and Wellbeing Officer if risks to child safety are identified in any of the activities, facilities, structures and procedures or staffing practices at MDLC.
- Take all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse.
- Take disclosures of harm or abuse by a child seriously.
- Report and act on any behaviour complaints, concerns or observed breaches regarding this Code of Conduct.
- Report any concern, allegations, disclosure or observation of child abuse to the relevant person or authority as outlined in the MDLC reporting procedure and in line with mandatory reporting requirements, including the Reportable Conduct Scheme.
- Participate in all compulsory training and professional development including training on child safety and wellbeing.
- Respect the privacy of children and their families by keeping all information regarding Child Protection concerns confidential, only discussing information with the relevant people to follow reporting procedure.
- Treat all children and young people with respect, regardless of race, colour, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or other opinion, ethnic or social origin, culture, property, disability or other status.
- Consider the different needs of all children at MDLC, support them to participate fully in programs and help them and their families feel included and welcome at MDLC.
- Make Aboriginal children and families feel included and welcome at MDLC and support

Aboriginal children to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights.

- Never be racist towards anyone at MDLC and report any instances or racism.
- Listen to and value children and young people's ideas and opinions.
- Listen to children and young people and respond to them appropriately.
- Actively promote cultural safety and inclusion.
- Promote friendships and encourage children and young people to support their peers.
- Involve children and young people in decisions about their activities at MDLC and welcome the participation of parents and carers in these decisions.
- Conduct myself in a manner consistent with the values of MDLC.
- Work with children and young people in an open and transparent way. Inform other adults about the work being done with children and young people.
- Observe professional boundaries with children and young people at all times, including when seeing a child or young person from MDLC outside the workplace.
- Report any conflicts of interest (such as an outside relationship with a child) that may affect my ability to perform my role.
- Inform the CEO, Manager, Child Safety and Wellbeing Officer, parents and carers if there are situations that need to be managed outside the boundaries of this Code of Conduct (such as driving a child to/ or from class or an activity).

MDLC staff and volunteers must not engage in specific inappropriate behaviour with children that include but are not limited to any of the following and I agree that....

**I WILL NOT:**

- Condone or participate in behavior with children and young people that is illegal, unsafe or abusive.
- Seek to use children in any way to meet the needs of adults.
- Ignore or disregarding any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse.
- Fail to report information to police if I know a child has been abused.
- Exaggerate or trivialize child abuse issues.
- Use hurtful, discriminatory or offensive behavior or language with children or young people.
- Engage in rough physical games.
- Discriminate on the basis of age, sex, gender identity, race, culture or sexual orientation.
- Initiate unnecessary physical contact or helping them with things of a personal nature that children or young people can do for themselves.
- Persistently criticize and/or denigrate a child.
- Deliberately prevent a child from forming friendships.
- Verbally assault a child or create a climate of fear.
- Offer children and young people alcohol, cigarettes or other drugs.
- Show children pornographic images.
- Share details of sexual experiences with a child or young person.
- Use sexual language or gestures in the presence of children or young people.
- Develop "special" relationships with specific children or young people or show favouritism through the provision of gifts or inappropriate attention.
- Exchange personal contact details such as phone numbers, social networking details or email addresses with children or young people.
- Have unauthorised contact with children or young people online, on social media or by phone.
- Use any computer, mobile phone or camera to exploit or harass children or young people.

**TEACHERS (TRAINERS)**

Teachers (Trainers) are specifically required to abide by the principles relating to relationships with students as set out in the *Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct* published by the Victorian Institute of Teaching.

These principles include:

- Knowing their students well, respecting their individual differences and catering for their individual abilities.
- Working to create an environment which promotes mutual respect.
- Modelling and engaging in respectful and impartial language.
- Protecting students from intimidation, embarrassment, humiliation and harm.
- Respecting students' privacy in sensitive matters.
- Interacting with students without displaying bias or preference.
- Not violating or compromising the unique position that a teacher holds of influence and trust in their relationship with students.

### **YOUTH WORKER**

Youth Workers and Student Support Workers should adhere to the ethical code, guidelines of the Code of Ethical Practice for the Victorian Youth Sector.

### **BREACH OF THIS CODE**

Staff members who breach this code of conduct will be liable to disciplinary action in accordance with MDLC's disciplinary policies. Such disciplinary action will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis and will be at the discretion of the CEO or their delegate.

Regular contractors and volunteers of MDLC who breach this code of conduct may face termination of their engagement with MDLC. Where deemed appropriate a breach may be referred to the Victoria Police and/or a regulatory body, such as the Victorian Institute of Teaching.

### **IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW**

The community will be informed about this Code of Conduct. It will be publicly available on the MDLC website.

If I suspect that this Code of Conduct has been breached by another person in the organisation,

#### **I WILL**

- Act to prioritise the best interest of the child or children.
- Promptly take actions to ensure the child or children are safe.
- Report the incident or concerns as soon as possible using the MDLC complaints or reporting process.
- Maintain the privacy of those involved and follow MDLC processes.

### **Signature**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_