

Swinburne child safety training: Staff roles & responsibilities

Author: Governance, Legal and Integrity Unit
October 2019

What this training covers:

1. What are the Victorian Child Safe Standards?
2. Swinburne's stance on child abuse and harm to children
3. Code of Conduct with children
4. How to report and reporting obligations
5. Protecting vulnerable children
6. How to recognise harm to children and child abuse

Why staff need this training:

1. It is a shared and collective responsibility of all **staff**, students, volunteers, and contractors to prevent harm to children.
2. All Swinburne staff must be aware of and uphold Swinburne's zero tolerance to child abuse.

Embracing The **Child Safe Standards**

Seven Victorian Child Safe Standards:

To create and maintain a child safe organisation, Swinburne upholds these standards:

Standard 1:	Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements.
Standard 2:	A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety.
Standard 3:	A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children.
Standard 4:	Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel
Standard 5:	Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse.
Standard 6:	Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse.
Standard 7:	Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children.

Swinburne's **Zero Tolerance** of child abuse and harm

We are committed to facilitating a child-safe environment

Who is a child?

The word *child* refers to children and young people up to 18 years.

Protecting **children** is

EVERYBODY'S

BUSINESS

Is there a policy and procedural documents?

- Harm to children is an unacceptable behaviour under the People, Culture and Integrity Policy
- Swinburne's Statement of Commitment and Practice includes a code of conduct and responsibilities.

Do I need a Working With Children Check (WWCC)?

Yes, it is likely. Many staff at Swinburne require a WWCC. Check [here](#).

A WWCC is one of the ways Swinburne checks the suitability of people to work at our educational institution.

Code of Conduct – all staff need to know

Interacting with Children – the **Do's**

- ✓ Make sure your actions always reflect Swinburne's zero tolerance for child abuse.
- ✓ Be aware that children cannot always be easily identified when integrated into a tertiary education environment, both on campus and on-line.
- ✓ Encourage children to have a say, participate, and respond to their views or concerns.
- ✓ Treat everyone with respect, valuing their ideas and opinions
- ✓ Welcome all children and their families and carer, and be inclusive
- ✓ Model appropriate adult behaviour
- ✓ Work with children in an open and transparent way – other adults should always know about any work you are doing with children
- ✓ Promote the safety, cultural safety, participation and empowerment of vulnerable cohorts (more on this in a future slide)

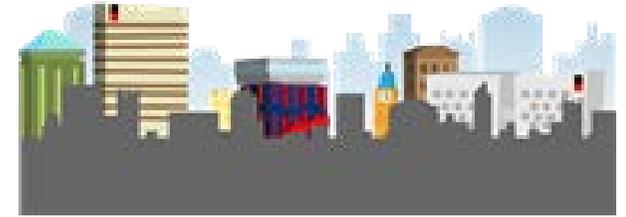
Code of Conduct – all staff need to know

Interacting with Children – the **Don'ts**

- × Never ignore or disregard concerns or allegations of child abuse.
- × Never discriminate on the basis of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability or sexuality
- × Never use prejudice or oppressive behaviour with children
- × Be mindful of the content of discussions in the presence of a child and use appropriate language
- × Refrain from developing any 'special' relationship with a child
- × Do not exchange personal contact details such as phone numbers, social networking sites or email addresses with children
- × Refrain from initiating unnecessary physical contact with children
- × Do not have unauthorised contact with children online or by phone
- × Ensure as far as practicable that an adult is not alone with a child

Reporting Concerns or allegations

SAFERCOMMUNITY
@Swinburne



All Swinburne community members have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when concerned about a child's safety. NEVER ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed harm to a child.

Report concerns or allegations to **Swinburne Safer Community**

- Report all details to Swinburne Safer Community as soon as possible: safercommunity@swin.edu.au or [online incident report form](#)
- If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone the **police on 000**, and/or **Swinburne Security on 9214 3333**, followed by a report to Safer Community.

Further information: review the Child Safety [reporting flowchart](#)

We must abide by legal reporting requirements

Failure to disclose

Reporting child sexual abuse is a community-wide responsibility. All adults in Victoria who have a reasonable belief that an adult has committed a sexual offence against a child under 16 have an obligation to report that information to the police.

Failure to protect

Failure to protect: where there is a substantial risk that a child under the age of 16 under the care, supervision or authority of the University will become a victim of a sexual offence committed by an adult associated with the University, any person of authority in the University will commit an offence if they know of the risk of abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so.

Any person who is a **mandatory reporter** under *the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* must comply with their mandatory duties to report.

Example: doctors, nurses, midwives, registered teachers, school principals, youth workers, social workers, and psychologists

Protecting Vulnerable Children

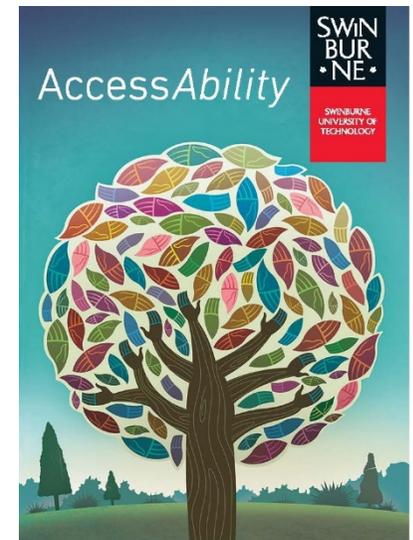
Cohorts identified by the Child Safe Standards

Some children are recognised as being more vulnerable to abuse than others, based on various factors including **age**, **gender**, **ethnicity**, **disability**, and **prior abuse** or **neglect**. It is important to proactively provide cultural safety, and safety for those with additional needs.

Promoting the safety of children with a disability

Children living with a disability can be vulnerable due to reasons such as communication difficulties, personal care requirements, and social isolation.

- ✓ Swinburne has a **zero tolerance of discrimination**, and seeks to create an **accessible** environment, which is **welcoming** and **free from bullying**.
- ✓ AccessAbility Services at Swinburne works with students living with a disability including our youth and children.



Protecting Vulnerable Children

Cultural Safety: an environment that is safe for people where there is no challenge or denial of their identity, of who they are and what they need, an environment free from discrimination.

Cultural safety of Indigenous children

Every Indigenous child needs to feel that their sense of self and their identity is valued by the people that surround them.

- ✓ Swinburne creates an environment that is respectful of Indigenous culture through **symbols**, **images**, **communication**, and by **learning** about and **sharing** Indigenous culture.
- ✓ Swinburne has an Indigenous Student Support team



Cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Our community includes people from many backgrounds, countries and languages, including refugees, migrants, asylum seekers. These families have experienced varied journeys – some have experienced trauma; others have lost their family network of support.

- ✓ Swinburne has a **zero tolerance to discrimination**, and fosters an **inclusive** and **welcoming** environment for all.



How To Recognise Child Abuse And Harm

When someone sees something that “isn’t right” but doesn’t mention it to anyone, this is also a form of **harm**.

Harm and abuse types:

Physical abuse:	Injury may take the form of bruises, cuts, burns or fractures. It could be intentionally causing injury, threatening to cause injury or inadvertently causing injury as a consequence of a physical punishment or aggression.
Possible Indicators:	Unexplained injuries, fear of specific people; wearing certain clothes to hide injuries, showing wariness or distrust of adults, unexplained absences, academic problems.
Sexual abuse:	Sexual exploitation can include children being involved in sexually exploitive relationships and activities, where those exploiting the children have power over them by virtue of age, gender, physical strength, economic or other resources.
Possible Indicators:	Pregnancy, sexually transmitted disease, bleeding, displays of sexual behaviour unusual for child’s age, being withdrawn, fear of specific people, academic problems.
NOTE: Grooming for future sexual abuse:	‘Grooming’ is the befriending of a child, and or/their family with the intent of creating trust that leads to future access and opportunities to sexually abuse a child. Grooming activities can include online communication, treating a child as ‘special’, offering treats, favours, compliments, showing affection or accidental touching.

How To Recognise Child Abuse And Harm

Emotional and psychological abuse:

a kind of abuse that is often hidden and underestimated, if can occur when a person engages in inappropriate behaviours, such as rejecting, ignoring, humiliating, isolating, threatening or verbally abusing a child, or allowing others to do so.

Possible Indicators:

Delays in development, signs of self-harm, exhibiting low self-esteem and/or high anxiety, aggression, being withdrawn, passive or tearful, academic problems.

Neglect:

failing to meet a child's basic needs, such as providing adequate food, drink, shelter, clothing, supervision, hygiene and medical attention.

Possible Indicators:

frequent hunger, poor hygiene, inappropriate clothing, stealing food, staying on-campus outside teaching hours, misusing alcohol and drugs, academic problems.

Racial, cultural, religious abuse:

contempt, ridicule, hatred or negativity towards a child because of race, culture, or religion.

More information:

For more information on racial, cultural, and religious abuse, go to www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au

Spread Swinburne's message of zero tolerance to child abuse and harm to children

Cultural Organisational Change

We can have an impact as individuals to make a positive change to our community, and protect children.

