

## PARENTS OF DEAF CHILDREN: CHILD SAFE POLICY

Applies to: All employees, committee members, members, advocates, support workers and volunteers
Specific responsibility: Committee Chairperson

<b>Policy context:</b> This policy relates to behaviours when interacting with children	
Standards or other external requirements	Nil
Legislation or other requirements	NSW Child Protection (Working With Children) Act 2012 NSW Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 NSW Children’s Guardian Act 2019 NSW Community Services (Complaints, Reviews and Monitoring) Act 1993 No.2 NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014

### INTRODUCTION

1. Parents of Deaf Children Inc (PODC) is a community committed to safeguarding vulnerable people, especially deaf and hard of hearing children.
2. PODC has adopted the model constitution as outlined by NSW Fair Trading. All policies come under this constitution.
3. We want children who are assisted by our information and activities, to have an awareness of their rights, and through our campaigning to have a safe and happy experience. We support and respect our children, their families, our employees, leaders, members, advocates, support workers and volunteers.
4. Our policy guides all people engaged through PODC on how to behave when interacting and participating with children in our activities. The policy focuses on how we can build and maintain a child safe environment which is inclusive, transparent and promotes children’s participation.

### CHILDREN’S PARTICIPATION

5. PODC supports the active participation of children in the programs, activities, advocacy and services we offer.



6. We provide opportunities for children to give consent, feedback or raise concerns. We listen to their views, respect what they say and how they communicate, and involve them when we make decisions, especially about matters that will directly affect them.

## RECRUITMENT

7. PODC will maintain a rigorous and consistent recruitment, screening and selection process.
8. PODC will achieve this standard by using interviews, checking references, completing relevant eLearning training, as well as carrying out the Working with Children Check and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Workers Check for all our employees, Event Leaders and Committee members. To assist us, we use the PODC Engagement Standards form and a suggested list of Questions to Referees.
9. Continuous learning and professional development is encouraged and supported.

## COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

10. PODC procedures for children, employees, leaders, members, advocates, support workers and volunteers to raise concerns or complaints is in the Managing Complaints Policy.
11. The reporting requirements under the NSW *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012* is primarily the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG). Other authorities may include:
  - Department of Communities and Justice
  - NSW Police
  - NSW Ombudsman
12. The Committee Chairperson is the primary Child Safety Contact Person to manage all complaints or issues, raised by a young person or about a young person engaged in PODC-organised activities.
13. The step-by-step process for the PODC person initially receiving the complaint from the young person is as follows:
  - LISTEN: Allow the young person to be heard
  - REASSURE: Reassure the young person they are not at fault, it is ok they have told you what has been happening. Address any concerns about their safety
  - RESPECT: Acknowledge the young person's bravery and strength, explain that in order for them to be safe you will need to report their experience to someone else
  - Record the information, using the PODC Complaint Form
  - Imminent danger contact NSW Police 000 (TTY 106) otherwise:
  - Immediately notify and brief the primary Child Safety Contact Person (Committee Chairperson)
14. The Child Safety Contact Person will:
  - Notify relevant Government authorities and agencies
  - Imminent danger: NSW Police 000 (TTY 106) otherwise:
    - Child Protection Hotline 132 111 (TTY 1800 212 936)

- NSW Police Assistance Line 131 444 (TTY (02) 9211 3776)
- Take further action on advice from the notified authorities
- Liaise with the NSW Reportable Conduct Scheme, administered through the NSW OCG, as required
- Ensure records are complete, that privacy of the content is maintained, and archived. Refer to the PODC Privacy Policy and PODC Archiving Policy for further guidance.

## TRAINING, SUPPORT AND SUPERVISION OF WORKERS

15. We promote respect, fairness and consideration for all employees, leaders, members, advocates, support workers and volunteers.
16. All new Committee members will receive a copy of all child safe policies and procedures and a more senior Committee member will set up a meeting to discuss the policies and allow the new members to ask questions and clarify their understanding.
17. Child Safe is a standing agenda item at meetings and Committee members are encouraged to ask questions and contribute to the continuous improvement of child safe policies, procedures and practices in our workplaces, advocacy and organised events.
18. All employees, Committee members and Event Leaders are expected to complete online training such as the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian courses:
  - Child Safe eLearning - Keeping children safe in organisations
  - SAFESpace eLearning - Keeping children safe in organisations in the disability sector
  - Responding to Reportable Allegations modules 1 to 4 (Committee members to also complete modules 5 to 7)
19. In addition, individuals may be required to complete the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission eLearning including:
  - New worker NDIS induction
  - Worker orientation
  - Supporting effective communication
  - Supporting safe and enjoyable meals
20. Support organisations engaged by PODC are responsible for the training of support workers and providing confirmation of completion to PODC.
21. For PODC-organised events and campaigns, all volunteers will have a leader assigned to support and supervise their work.
22. As a general rule, minimum two adults interacting with a minimum two children at any time.

## OTHER LEGISLATION, INDUSTRY STANDARDS OR INTERNAL POLICIES

- NSW Children’s Guardian Act 2019
- NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014
- NSW Child Protection (Working With Children) Act 2012
- NSW Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998
- NSW Community Services (Complaints, Reviews and Monitoring) Act 1993 No 2
- PODC Constitution
- PODC Code of Conduct (refer to the section in the PODC Human Resources Policy)
- PODC Complaints Policy
- PODC Privacy Policy

## COMMUNICATION

23. We will hold regular information sessions for employees, Committee members , leaders, members, advocates, support workers and volunteers.
24. Our policy will be discussed during induction sessions for all new employees, Committee members, leaders, advocates, support workers and volunteers where completion of the Engagement Standards form is required.
25. Children and parents joining our activities and events will receive a copy of the PODC Parent’s Guide to Child Protection Issues.
26. Where an external organisation provides staff to PODC, the External Organisation Staff Check form is given to the organisation to outline the expectations of PODC for the staff member.
27. Our standards for communication are outlined in the PODC Communications Policy.

## REVIEW

28. The policy and guidelines will be reviewed every two years and incorporate comments and suggestions from our range of stakeholders including employees, Committee members, leaders, members, advocates, support workers, volunteers, children and families.

## DOCUMENTATION

<b>Documents related to this policy</b>	
Related policies	PODC Archiving Policy PODC Communications Policy PODC Complaints Policy PODC Human Resources Policy PODC Privacy Policy
Forms, record keeping or other organisational documents	Engagement Standards Form Questions for Referees Parents Guide to Child Protection Complaint Form External Organisation Staff Check Form

## AUTHORISATION

### Version History

<b>Version Number</b>	<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>Reviewed/Edited</b>	<b>Approval details</b>	<b>Next Review Date</b>
1	November 2022	Initial Issue	Approved by Committee	November 2023