

Child Safe Statement of Commitment



Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria (RBGV) is fully committed to safeguarding children and young people in our Gardens by providing a safe, supportive and enriching environment that respects and fosters their dignity and self-esteem as they connect with nature and develop a deeper understanding of biodiversity, conservation and the natural world.

We do not tolerate child abuse. We strive to create a culture of child safety that reduces opportunities for harm and neglect. We aim to provide personnel with a clear process to share child safety concerns and report abuse.

Our **Child Safe Statement of Commitment** applies to all employees, executive team and Board members, volunteers, tenants (onsite partners), Friends' groups, work experience students, visiting researchers and other contractors. All groups must demonstrate appropriate behaviour towards children and young people as detailed in the **Child Safe Code of Conduct**.

Together, we pledge to provide a safe, supportive and enriching environment that respects and fosters the dignity and self-esteem of children and young people. In signing this Statement of Commitment, you agree to the following:

Being inclusive

- I support diversity, equality and inclusion in our workplace, and the participation and empowerment of all children and young people.
- I will take particular care to safeguard Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people, and those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds including offering support for their cultural safety.
- I will take particular care to safeguard children and young people with a disability or other special needs, and children or young people who identify as part of the LGBTIQ+ community or who are vulnerable.

Child safe commitments

- I have read and will behave according to Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria's **Child Safe Policy** and **Child Safe Code of Conduct**.
- I agree to complete all **Child Safe Training** within no more than three months of signing this Child Safe Statement of Commitment.
- I will maintain a current **Working with Children Check** and agree to disclose any relevant criminal convictions or charges that may affect my suitability to work with children and young people.

Actions I will take

- I will wear my **uniform, name badge or my lanyard plus the RBGV Child Safe Pin (received upon completion of Child Safe training)** to identify myself as an RBGV employee, executive, Board member or Gardens Volunteer, and at all times whilst representing the Gardens on-site.
- I will take all reasonable steps to protect children and young people from risk of physical and emotional harm and neglect.
- I will work with children and young people in an open and transparent way, always informing other adults about the work I am doing with children.
- I will, as far as practical, only work with children when in sight of another adult and avoid being alone with a child or young person.
- I will encourage feedback from children and young people and actively and respectfully listen to their views, opinions and concerns and respond to them appropriately.
- I will model appropriate behaviour and language in all interactions.
- I will respect the physical boundaries and independence of children and young people.
- I will treat all children fairly, without favouritism, gift giving or inappropriate attention.
- I will only contact children or young people when authorised and through approved workplace channels of communication.
- I will only photograph or film children or young people with the prior consent of their guardians and appropriate approvals, such as during RBGV events.
- I respect the privacy of children, young people and their families, and only disclose information to people who have a need to know.
- **I will act immediately on all concerns, suspicions or disclosures relating to child safety in line with RBGV's Child Safe Code of Conduct procedures.**
- **I will report any breaches of the Child Safe Code of Conduct to the RBGV Child Safety Officer and ensure as quickly as possible that the child(ren) or young person(s) is(are) safe.**
- I understand that all those making child safety allegations in good faith are protected by the State, and that all allegations are taken seriously and may result in internal or external investigations of the allegations.
- I understand that if an investigation concludes that an offence or a breach of the **Child Safe Code of Conduct** has occurred, disciplinary action will follow. Consequences may include training, demotion, dismissal, or other forms of disciplinary action deemed appropriate and in accordance with the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria Enterprise Agreement 2017.

- If I believe a child is at **immediate risk** of abuse, I will phone Triple Zero (000) and immediately report the incident to the Child Safety Officer (Executive Director, Engagement and Impact).

I have read the Child Safe Policy, Child Safe Code of Conduct and this Child Safe Statement of Commitment and agree to conduct myself according to their requirements at all times:

Name (Block letters): Witness's name:

Cranbourne Friends Membership No.:

Signature: Signature (Witness):

Date: Date:

If you or anyone you know needs support, please contact the National Sexual Assault, Domestic and Family Violence Counselling Service on 1800RESPECT (1800 737 732), Lifeline 131 114, or Beyond Blue 1300 224 636.