



# Child Protection at Don Bosco Camp

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Don Bosco Camp is committed to the protection of all staff, volunteers and participants from physical and emotional harm. It is recognised that children especially need to be protected due to their potential vulnerability. This may be due to lack of life experience, trust/distrust of adults, physical size and strength, power imbalance between children and adults. It is the goal of this camp to provide children with a positive, enjoyable group living experience, with access to a wide range of interesting and challenging activities.

The staff and management of Don Bosco Camp regard it as their duty to ensure a child's emotional and physical safety at all times. All campers have the right to a safe and caring environment, which promotes learning, personal role-models, personal growth and positive self-esteem. Through staff training programs, Don Bosco Camp staff and volunteers are briefed to ensure that they understand their obligations to respect the rights and privacy of all campers, and to implement this policy of child protection.

## 2. STAFF SELECTION AND TRAINING

All Don Bosco Camp staff and adult volunteers will have a Working with Children check prior to appointment. Should this check reveal any convictions for child abuse behaviour; the person will not be employed. Any other convictions will be considered according to the position being filled and their relevance to the current situation. The employment agreement refers to the Child Protection Policy and the staff member's signature indicates that he or she has read, understood and agrees to follow the policy.

Child protection issues are discussed at staff meetings as appropriate, and staff are encouraged to be an active part of reviewing the policies, as well as developing and ensuring a safe environment for all participants. Staff and adult volunteers are reminded of this protective behaviours policy at least annually.

## 3. HOW STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS ARE EXPECTED TO RELATE TO CAMPERS

### a) Physical Contact

Don Bosco Camp acknowledges that there are often times when it is clearly appropriate (and desirable) for physical contact between adults and children. This can occur especially during activities where equipment needs to be fitted (e.g. harnesses, helmets, life jackets) or assistance provided (e.g. entering canoes, dismounting from a trampoline). It can also occur in a hug of congratulations or a friendly pat on the back.

Don Bosco Camp staff and volunteers must use the following principles for touching children while respecting their privacy and sense of security:

- Any touching must be with the child's permission, for example, ask, "May I adjust your harness?"
- Touching should be in the open and not secretive, with other people around and not especially focussed on one person
- Touching should only ever be to support or respond to a need of the child and NEVER to meet the needs of an adult
- Any touching must avoid body areas such as breasts, buttocks and the groin

### b) Personal Privacy

Children are entitled to privacy in personal matters and Don Bosco Camp staff and volunteers must respect this. If a Don Bosco Camp staff and volunteers member believes there is evidence of a problem or disclosure of abuse, it is the staff member's responsibility to report this - see 'responsibility' of staff' below

### c) Sleeping, showering and toilet privacy

Boys and girls have separate sleeping, showering and toilet facilities and must stay in these designated areas:

- Adults with supervisory roles in these areas must respect the children's privacy, and knock or call out to let them know that they are entering the facility
- Cleaning of areas such as toilets and showers is scheduled to be done at off-peak times when campers are not using the facilities or less likely to be using the facilities
- When cleaning is being carried out a sign to that effect is displayed at the entrance or if alone the doors are to be locked

#### **d) Avoiding compromising situations**

Don Bosco Camp staff and volunteers must avoid placing themselves or campers in situations where they can be compromised.

- Avoid being alone with a camper; stay in view of others
- Knock and ask permission to enter sleeping or private areas
- Use staff toilet and shower facilities where provided
- Avoid 'favourites' and treat all campers with the same level of friendliness and courtesy
- Seek the camper's permission before touching or adjusting equipment they are wearing
- Avoid situations that cause embarrassment or humiliation to campers
- Avoid sexual talk or behave in a way that promotes promiscuity or the acceptance of sexually explicit material

#### **e) Administering First Aid**

If Don Bosco Camp staff and volunteers are required to render first aid or emergency treatment:

- They will involve another staff member of the same sex as any child requiring attention whenever possible. Otherwise they will endeavour to have another person present
- Unless absolutely necessary, they will leave examination of private areas to health professionals
- They will not force children to remove clothing for an examination
- They will record their actions in accordance with first aid recording procedures
- Refer to Group Leader with issues of campers requiring medication

#### **f) Physical or Intimate Relationships**

Don Bosco Camp staff and volunteer leaders are in a position of responsibility with a duty of care to young people, and must not be allowed to abuse that position of responsibility. Therefore, Don Bosco Camp staff and volunteer leaders can not have any sort of physical or intimate relationship with a camper or volunteer leader under 18 years, either on camp or at any other social meeting outside of camp, even if that relationship would be seen as legal under Australian law.

#### **g) Favouritism and exclusiveness**

There is no place for 'favourites' at camp. In most instances, the showing of favouritism to a child or small group of children fosters the needs of the adult, not the child. It can create emotional dependence on the adult and isolate the child from peers. When a child needs a little extra attention, it must be given openly and carried out in such a way that no secretiveness or exclusivity is perceived by the child or others.

#### **h) Bullying and Harassment**

Bullying is an act of aggression causing embarrassment, pain or discomfort to another. It can take many forms - physical, verbal, gesture, victimisation, extortion, exclusion or offensive notes/graffiti etc. Forms of harassment, such as those of a sexual, religious, or racial nature, are also unwanted behaviour directed towards an individual. This sort of behaviour should not be ignored, and staff should take appropriate action. For example, reporting incidents to the Group Leader, removing occasions for bullying by conducting well-organised activities, or simply by being vigilant. Bullying and harassment must always be treated seriously - it is important to be consistent and assertive in dealing with all forms of bullying.

#### **i) Responsibility of Staff and Volunteers**

Any incident, complaint or concern regarding child safety at Don Bosco Camp must be taken seriously and fully investigated (with outside help if necessary). The Camp Manager will act to comply with State law or implement appropriate action such as reporting to Police, Salesian Provincial, school principal, or other relevant authority.

#### **j) Reporting Child Abuse**

Don Bosco Camp is committed to reporting any evidence or disclosure of child abuse to Human Services Protective Services. The number for The Child Abuse Protection 24-hour is 1800 688 009 (freecall).

#### **k) Social Media**

Don Bosco Camp staff and volunteers are not allowed to 'friend' or interact with any camper or young person they are leading on any form of Social Media. This includes, but not limited to, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter etc. Any staff or volunteers who do not comply with this will no longer be employed by the camp. Exceptions for family members or close family friends will be made on a case by case basis at the discretion of the Camp Manager.