



Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

St John has zero tolerance for child abuse

St John Ambulance Victoria (St John) is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people who participate in St John activities, programs, events or services (programs). We want children to be safe, supported, nurtured and empowered while involved in our programs and we will take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety.

We take all allegations and concerns around abuse very seriously. We will always strive to ensure that children do not experience neglect, abuse, harm or exploitation during their involvement with St John. St John is committed to providing a child safe environment where children are safe and feel safe, have a positive experience, and their voices are heard. We will always listen to children and value what they say, support them when their safety or wellbeing is threatened, empower them to participate in decisions which affect their lives and address any concerns that they raise.

St John values the input of parents, guardians and carers. We will listen to and communicate regularly with parents, guardians or carers of children engaged with St John. We will endeavour to support families and communities in promoting the healthy and safe development of children. We will communicate honestly, transparently and openly with parents, guardians or carers about their child and the safety or wellbeing of their child, except where not permitted to do so by law.

St John will pay particular attention to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability.

We will strive to engage only the most suitable people to work in our organisation. We will undertake all legislated screening and ensure that high quality employee and volunteer supervision occurs. All members of St John have a responsibility to understand the important and specific role they play individually and collectively in ensuring that the wellbeing and safety children. We believe that, when engaged in programs in which children participate, all members have a role to play in ensuring that the safety and wellbeing of children is at the forefront of all they do and in every decision they make.

St John fosters a culture of openness where any person can safely disclose risks of harm to children without fear of repercussions, victimisation or retaliation. We have policies and procedures aimed at protecting those people who speak out about abuse.

St John will provide employees and volunteers with education on child safety. We will ensure that education on appropriate and acceptable conduct and behaviour towards children is included in our training.

St John will provide a range of resources targeted at children engaged in our youth program, empowering them to speak out if they are worried or feeling unsafe. We will ensure that these resources are age-appropriate and include people or places children can seek help from if they are feeling worried or unsafe.

St John will cooperate with relevant agencies in working to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children. We have policies, procedures and training in place that support our members to make prompt decisions about child safety, including the reporting of allegations or suspicions of abuse, and share information appropriately and lawfully. We also have legal and moral obligations to contact the authorities when we are worried about the safety or wellbeing of a child.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G.R. Botwight'.

Gordon Botwight
Chief Executive Officer