



Child Well-being & Protection Policy

1. Mission Statement

Building resilience through connection by creating opportunities for children, families and teachers to learn within nature.

2. Vision

Through our programs, **Educated by Nature** (the Company) aims to increase the mental, emotional and physical health of children and in doing so, foster stewardship and a deep love for the natural environment.

- Building the personal resilience of children, families and teachers through interaction within nature and community.
- Safeguarding the health of our natural world, forming strong relationships through natural learning.
- Revitalising community through childhood play, meeting instinctive needs for connection and childhood freedom.

3. Policy Scope

This policy applies to:

- Staff (directors, permanent, temporary or casual employees)
- Volunteers;
- Organisations/individuals who are contracted to facilitate, lead or assist with a program;
- Organisations/individuals who are contracted to produce images and other communications or marketing material for our programs;
- Program participants, including parents and guardians of minors.

4. Policy Statement

Educated by Nature is committed to providing an environment that is supportive for children, families and teachers to learn within nature and where mutual respect underpins all interactions.

This policy enables **Educated by Nature** to make clear statements about its expectations relating to acceptable behaviour with and around children through all areas and programs of the business.

5. Version Control

Version Number	Approval Date	Approved by	Amendment Details
1.0	December 2015	Directors	Created
1.1	November 2017	Directors	Updated



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6. Convention: Mutual Respect

6.1. Mutual Respect

At **Educated by Nature** we believe that children learn best when they are active, alert and relaxed. We expect that staff, volunteers, parents/guardians, participants and other persons involved in Educated by Nature programs will give respect to others and will feel confident they will receive respect. This includes allowing children to have personal space while maintaining group safety.

Our positive and respectful interactions with each other will foster the further development of empathy and create a social environment where learning opportunities are enhanced.

Educated by Nature fully supports and is guided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Freedom of expression (Article 13), Freedom of thought (Article 14), and Articles 29 and 31 which detail a child's right to education and play are particularly fundamental to the ethos of Educated by Nature and the programs it offers.

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7. Convention: Staff and Volunteers

7.1. Recruitment of Staff and Volunteers

Educated by Nature is committed to child safe recruitment, selection and screening practices.

Educated by Nature's child safe practices mandate that:

- All staff and volunteers will be required to read and sign the Child Protection Policy and Staff Code of Conduct at the time of recruitment;
- Where staff and volunteers are working directly with children, they will be required to supply a copy of a current Working with Children Check (WWC);
- Staff will be required to submit a resume that details their background including dates and places of employment, education and other activities;
- Staff will be required to supply proof of qualifications;
- Volunteers will be asked to complete a Volunteer Application Form;
- **Educated by Nature** will conduct reference checks when employing staff; and
- **Educated by Nature** reserves the right to refuse employment or terminate employment where a person may pose a risk to children.

7.2. Supervision

Educated by Nature will provide adequate supervision and high staff to children ratios at drop and leave programs to ensure child safety. Staff are trained in mentoring with a focus on conflict resolution, self-risk assessment and skill development.

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8. Convention: Child Abuse

8.1. Raising Concerns

Should a staff member, volunteer, parent/guardian or child have concerns about how they or another person at an Educated by Nature program has or is being treated and is concerned for their well-being, this should be discussed with the Facilitator.

If the person is in imminent danger, the Facilitator should take immediate and appropriate action.

All concerns should be documented by the Facilitator as outlined in the *Incidents and Injuries Procedure*.

Should the issue be in relation to a Facilitator, the matter should be reported to the Directors of Educated by Nature.

8.2. Child Abuse Reporting

Any report of suspected child abuse is of great concern and reports will be treated seriously.

The Directors of Educated by Nature are registered teachers with the Department of Education and as such are bound by mandatory reporting legislation under the Children and Community Services Act 2004. Therefore, the Directors must report to Child Protection Services if they believe, on reasonable grounds, that a child is in need of protection.

8.3. Definitions of Abuse

8.3.1 Bullying

When an individual or group misuses power to target another individual or group to intentionally threaten or harm them on more than one occasion. This may involve verbal, physical, relational and psychological forms of bullying.

8.3.2 Emotional Abuse[#]

It is the sustained, repetitive, inappropriate ill-treatment of a child or young person through behaviours including threatening, belittling, teasing, humiliating, bullying, confusing, ignoring and inappropriate encouragement.

8.3.3 Neglect[#]

Omission of Care – when a child is not provided with adequate food or shelter, effective medical, therapeutic or remedial treatment, and/or care, nurturance or supervision to a severe and/or persistent extent where the health or development of the child is significantly impaired or placed at serious risk.

Cumulative Harm – refers to the effects of patterns of circumstances and events in a child's life. The unremitting daily impact of these experiences on the child can be profound and exponential, and diminish a child's sense of safety, stability and well-being.

8.3.4 Physical Abuse[#]

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Occurs when a child has experienced severe and/or persistent ill-treatment through behaviours such as beating, shaking, inappropriate administration of alcohol or drugs, attempted suffocation or excessive discipline or excessive physical punishment.

8.3.4 Physiological Abuse[#]

It is the sustained, repetitive, inappropriate ill-treatment of a child or young person through behaviours including threatening, isolating, neglecting, discrediting, misleading, disregarding, ignoring and inappropriate encouragement.

8.3.4 Sexual Abuse[#]

Occurs when a child has been exposed or subjected to sexual behaviours that are exploitive and/or are inappropriate to his/her age and developmental level.

#Denotes definitions that are excerpts from the Government of Western Australia's Department of Child Protection's Descriptions of Abuse and Neglect.

9. Related

9.1. Support Services

Related Documents

- 🌱 Risk Management (OHS) Policy
- 🌱 Staff Code of Conduct
- 🌱 Incidents and Injuries Procedure
- 🌱 Program Procedures
- 🌱 Employment Policy

9.2. Support Services

Authority

- 🌱 *Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004* <http://www.checkwwc.wa.gov.au>

9.3. Resources

- 🌱 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child <http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>
- 🌱 Department for Child Protection <https://www.dcp.wa.gov.au>
- 🌱 Children and Community Services Act 2004 (as amended in 2011)
- 🌱 http://www.slp.wa.gov.au/legislation/statutes.nsf/main_mrtitle_132_homepage.html
- 🌱 Teacher - Student Professional Boundaries – A Resource for WA Teachers <http://www.trb.wa.gov.au/>

9.4. Support Services

- 🌱 Department for Child Protection: 09 9222 2555 or 1800 622 258
- 🌱 National Child Abuse Helpline: 1800 99 10 99
- 🌱 To report an offence that requires immediate police attention:
Western Australia Police: 131 444 or Police Child Abuse Unit: 08 9492 5444.
- 🌱 If you suspect on reasonable grounds that a child is suffering abuse or neglect or you wish to discuss your concerns about a child or young person:
Crisis Care: 1800 199 008 or 08 9223 1111.