

LIONS AUSTRALIA

# Child Safe Policy

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## LIONS AUSTRALIA CHILD SAFE POLICY

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## 1 OBJECTIVES.

The aim of this policy is to protect children and young people whilst they participate in a Lions programs. This will be done by providing an explicit structure when working with children and young people.

It will explain:

- a) Procedures for working with children and young people.
- b) Education in child safe conduct for both children, young people and Lions members.
- c) How allegations of abuse will be managed.

## 2 BELIEFS UNDERPINNING THIS POLICY.

Lions Australia members have a wealth of experience and are genuinely altruistic. Lions Australia at all times believe in the principle that the best interest of the child and young person is paramount. We are volunteers who are determined to do the best we can and be the best person we can be.

We run children and young person’s programs in order to help them achieve goals they may not otherwise had available to them. In doing this we need to assure ourselves and others we act appropriately at all time when working with children and young people who due to their age are vulnerable.

We acknowledge child safety is every member’s responsibility. As proud members of Lions Australia we are transparent in our actions and we therefore do not hesitate in upholding the principles as defined in this policy.

## 3 SCOPE OF THIS POLICY.

Although this policy has allowed for the most stringent of state or territory child protection related acts it is unable to account for any future legislative changes and it will therefore be reviewed initially annually to ensure Lions Australia maintains a very high standard and compliance.

For the purpose of this policy any youth, regardless of their age, participating in a Lion’s Youth Program will be covered by this policy but may have different statutory responses.

This policy relates to activities conducted directly by Multiple District 201 of Lions Clubs International. Clubs and District’s operating Youth Projects should adopt this policy and establish their own procedures consistent with this approach and the legislative arrangements in their jurisdiction.

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## 4 INTRODUCTION.

- a) Children and young people have a right to grow up in healthy communities.
- b) Lions Australia and its clubs have a responsibility to promote the safety and welfare of every child and young person having contact with the organisation and to work in a coordinated and co-operative manner to ensure protection and timely intervention where children and young people are at risk of harm.
- c) Lions Australia, in operating its programs for young people, aims to protect children and young people from situations that pose harm or risk of harm.
- d) In all actions and decisions concerning a child or young person, the safety, welfare and wellbeing of the child or young person must be the paramount consideration.
- e) Wherever a child or young person is able to form their own views on a matter concerning their welfare, they must be given an opportunity to express those views freely and those views are to be given due weight in accordance with the developmental capacity of the child or young person and the circumstances.
- f) In all decisions relating to children or young people, account must be taken of the culture, developmental capacity, language, religion and sexuality of the child or young person and, if relevant, those with parental responsibility for the child or young person.
- g) In deciding what action it is necessary to take, whether by legal or administrative process in order to protect a child or young person from harm, the course to be followed must be the least intrusive intervention in the life of the child or young person and their family. This will be consistent with the paramount concern to protect the child or young person from harm and promote the child or young person's development.

## 5 CHILD SAFE ORGANISATIONS

Lions Australia is committed to being a child safe organisation. As such:

- a) We will build an environment that will mitigate harm to children or young people.
- b) We will build an environment that will significantly improve the possibilities of identifying and reporting harm.
- c) We will react appropriately to any disclosure or allegations of harm.

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## 6 POLICY DEFINITIONS.

### ADULT.

Someone male or female who is 18 years and over. In some circumstance if a young person is 16 or 17 and is acting in a position of authority and where their behaviours is the subject of concern, they will be deemed as adults under this policy.

### ALLEGATION.

An assertion made by someone which is not yet proven in court.

### CHILD, CHILDREN OR YOUNG PERSON, PEOPLE.

Sometimes referred to as a minor, it is someone under the age of 18. For the purpose of this policy any person who is participating in a Youth Program is afforded the protection of a child safe environment.

### CHILD SAFE.

The most current term for what has been up until recently referred to as child protection.

### CODE OF CONDUCT.

Expected appropriate behaviour as deemed by Lions Australia and has been codified for both members, and children and young people for their own protection.

### DISCLOSURE.

When a child or young person informs someone of any age they had been either sexually, physically, emotionally abused or neglected.

### EMOTIONAL ABUSE.

Serious psychological harm as a result of behaviours such as excessive criticism, exposure to domestic violence, intimidation or threatening behaviours resulting in a loss of self-worth and confidence.

### GROOMING.

When a child or young person is psychologically manipulated by an adult to form a trust which is highly detrimental to them but allows the adult to advance their chance to sexually exploit the child or young person. Often children and young people do not know they are being groomed. This is commonly done either by face to face, texting or via social media.

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**NEGLECT.**

Neglect is when a parent or caregiver consistently fails to give a child or young person the basic things needed for their growth and development such as food, clothing, shelter, medical attention, supervision, parenting and care.

**PHYSICAL ABUSE.**

As defined in state and territory legislation but usually referring to physical contact to a child or young person that may include the following but not limited to: - Corporal punishment of any kind (e.g. smacking, hitting open or close hand). Restraining by use of force to any body parts. Restricted practices such as locking a child or young person in a room.

**REPORTING.**

Informing Police, Statutory Child Protection Services and Lion’s officials of an incident of sexual or physical abuse by a Lions member, volunteer or young person on a child or young person.

**RISK ASSESSMENT.**

An evaluation of the probability of an adverse departure and its consequences from an organisation’s principles. It is the first phase in managing risks to an organisation.

**SEXUAL ABUSE.**

As defined in state and territory legislation but usually referring to sexual contact of any kind with a child or young person under the age of 18 with or without consent. The perpetrator of this act could be an adult or under some circumstances a minor.

**WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK**

The ‘Working With Children Check’ refers to the government-regulated system in each State and Territory where individuals working with children can apply to be screened for voluntary or paid employment to enable them to work with children. It involves a national criminal history check and a review of findings of workplace misconduct.

It only identifies individuals who have come to the attention of authorities and must therefore be used in conjunction with sound risk management processes and local checks.

In this policy the term ‘Working With Children Check’ refers to the equivalent procedure in each state that may be referred to by other terms, for example, ‘working with vulnerable people’.

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## 7 WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK.

A Working With Children Check is a criminal screening check. It aims to prevent people who may pose a risk to children or youth from coming into contact with them through their employment or in a voluntary capacity.

- a) Arrangements for the Working With Children Check (WWCC) vary in each state. Lions operating any youth program must appraise themselves of the legislation in their state or territory and ensure compliance.
- b) In most states a Working With Children Check or its equivalent is only required for longer term work with young people. It is Lions Policy that the member of any Club operating Youth Programs who has direct involvement with young people, obtain a Working With Children Check or equivalent in their State.
- c) The Working With Children Check register must contain the name, date of birth, registration number and expiration date. If third party verification is required, as in NSW, the date and outcome of that verification should be indicated.
- d) It is the responsibility of the relevant volunteer Child Safety Officer at Club, District or Multiple District level, to maintain the Working With Children Check Register.
- e) It is highly desirable to eliminate risks to young people participating in a Lions Youth program through following the Child Safe policy rather than rely on a Working With Children Check.
- f) The MD201 Legal Officer is the responsible officer in the Multiple District for MD201 Child Protection compliance.

## 8 TRANSPORTING A CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON.

When a child or young person is required to be transported by a Lion in order to participate in a Lions Australia program the following must apply.

- a) Where transporting must occur, best practice states that it should occur only by a minimum of two adults preferably of differing gender. It is recognised this may not be possible at all times but should be practised whenever possible.
- b) Any member transporting a child or young person must have a valid Working With Children Check or their state or territory equivalent and have undergone child safety awareness training

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## 9 INTERVIEWING A CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON.

Many of our programs require children or young people to attend an interview, this teaches them valuable interviewing skills and techniques.

- a) When a child or young person is required to participate in an interview, face to face or online, for any Lions Australia program it will only be conducted with the consent and noted attendance of a parent, or guardian or support person endorsed by them, and by at least two Lions members preferably of differing genders.
- b) Any member interviewing a child or young person must have a valid Working With Children Check or their state or territory equivalent and have undergone child safety awareness training.

## 10 WHAT NEEDS TO BE REPORTED.

Any form of sexual, physical, emotional abuse or negligent as described in the definitions. If you are the person to whom the allegations have been disclosed or you have been made aware of the allegations, it is critical you do not excessively question the child or young person.

Interviewing is for the purpose of understanding the nature of the allegations and ensuring safety. Excessive interviewing can be traumatic for a victim and may inadvertently compromise the evidence and any further evidence may be deemed inadmissible in a court due to perceived coaching or rehearsing.

All pertinent conversations with the child or young person and relevant other parties need to be documented in an impartial manner and with reference to as many direct quotes as possible. Good documentation helps prevent the child from having to repeat the story.

Report any allegations of child abuse or neglect to the Club Child Safety Officer who will action the Child Safe Procedure (appendix 1) and complete the Child Safety Risk Assessment Form 1. (Appendix 2)

Once a child or young person has made a disclosure keep them safe and reassure them they have done the right thing in disclosing and any allegations of abuse are not their fault.

Professional independent counselling should be offered to any child or young person and their families where an allegation of abuse has been made.

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## 11 WHO REPORTS ABUSE?

A member may become aware of an allegation or incident of abuse by numerous means such as observation, face-to-face, telephone, social media, txt etc.

It is the responsibility of all Lions Australia Cub members to report abuse if they:

- a) Witnessed the alleged abuse.
- b) Were informed of the alleged abuse by another member and it had not been reported.
- c) Were informed of the alleged abuse by the child or young person who was the victim.
- d) Were informed of the alleged abuse by a child or young person who was not the victim.
- e) Were informed of the alleged abuse by a non-member of Lions Australia.

All immediate safety concerns are to be reported to the Police by any Lion member as a matter of priority. When the allegation is received by the MD Child Safety Officer (MDCSO) and where immediate safety has been assured the MDCSO completes the Child Safe Procedure (appendix 1) and complete the Child Safety Risk Assessment Form 1. (Appendix 2)

*Please Note:*

*So long as a report has been made in good faith, legislation in all states and territories protects reporters, therefore no criminal, civil or administrative proceedings can be brought against them.*

## 12 CLUB CHILD SAFETY OFFICER.

Each club operating youth programs will identify the position of a Club Child Safety Officer (CCSO) and appoint a member to this position. The CCSO will undertake specific training to increase their understanding and awareness of Child safety.

### ROLE

Responsible to:

- a. Ensure members have an understanding of Lions Australia Child Safe Policy and this understanding is revised annually.
- b. Maintain a register of all members Working With Children Check or its state or territory equivalent. This register will allow the CCSO to remind members of any expiry date.
- c. Additionally, maintain a record of all members who do not have a current Working With Children Check or its state or territory equivalent.
- d. Be responsible for the completion of the Child Safety Risk Assessment Form 1 (appendix 2).

\* See structure chart (Appendix 5)

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### 13 MULTIPLE DISTRICT CHILD SAFETY OFFICER.

Multiple District Child Safety Officer 201MDCSO has the responsibility to oversee all youth programs adhere to the Child Safe Policy. The position reports to the Executive Officer.

**ROLE:**

- a. Receive the Child Safe Risk Assessment Form 1 (appendix 2) from the Club Child Safety Officer.
- b. Ensure the Form 1 has been completed and provide advice and assistance to the clubs if required for completion.
- c. Forward Form 1 to the Executive Officer.
- d. Forward Form 1 to the National Office for archiving.

\* See structure chart (Appendix 5)

*Note:*

*The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse recommends that all documentation relating to child sexual abuse are held in archives for 45 years. It is recommended therefore all Form 1 records are archived for this period.*

### 14 FAILURE IN DUTY OF CARE.

Current state and territory legislation varies in terms of who are mandatory reporters and what needs to be reported. As a matter of best practice and in the spirit of protecting vulnerable children and young people it is considered by Lions Australia a failure in duty of care when a member:

- a. Knew abuse had taken place but did not report it to the police.
- b. Did not prevent the abuse from occurring when the member knew it was a likely outcome.
- c. Did not adhere to the child safe policy of Lions Australia.

### 15 PHOTOGRAPHY AND SOCIAL MEDIA.

Photos of young people involved in Lions activities are a valuable tool in promoting youth programs. However, photos are easily taken these days especially with the use of mobile phones. These images can be readily transmitted leaving young people vulnerable to online grooming and exploitation. Therefore, any photos taken of children or young people involved in Lions activities shall only be done with the consent of the young person and if under 18 years of age also with a parent or guardian consent. This consent can be obtained as part of the initial application into a Lions youth program.

Any photo taken must be appropriate and cannot be of a sexualised nature. Particular care should be taken when posting photos on social media.

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All social media communication with children and young people should be transparent and accessible to parents. Content should be focused on the youth program and appropriate in tone and language at all times.

## 16 INDUCTION AND SCREENING FOR CLUBS OPERATING YOUTH PROGRAMS

- a. Working With Children Check (WWCC) or its state or territory equivalent will be part of the induction of new members to a club.
- b. Any members who refuse to undergo a Working With Children Check or its state or territory equivalent will not be permitted to undergo any child or young person related function in a Lions program.
- c. Each club will keep a confidential record of all members WWCC or its state or territory equivalent status.
- d. As part of Lions induction all new members will be required to sign a Code of Conduct which gives reference to clear behavioural standards towards children.

## 17 SUSPENSION AND TERMINATION.

- a. Lions Australia Head Office may recommend to a club the suspension or termination of membership for an individual member.
- b. A club may suspend or terminate an individual membership if the club believes a member has breached Lions Australia Child Safe Policy.
- c. A member who is subject to an allegation of child abuse or neglect will be asked to stand aside for the duration of any investigation, failure to do so may result in the club suspending or terminating their membership.

## 18 REVIEW DATES.

Lions Australia understands at this time some state and territory legislation is being reviewed in light of the Royal Commission into institutional responses to child sexual abuse (RCIRCSA). This Policy will operate on the understanding that all of the standards stated in the RCIRCSA shall be implemented nationally. This policy initially shall be reviewed annually and thereafter on a regular basis.

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## 19 YOUTH EXCHANGE CHILD SAFE PROCEDURE.

### PREAMBLE

Lions at all times believe in the principle the best interest of the child and young person is paramount. With this guiding principle Lions will take all practicable steps to prepare a youth for exchange and manage any incident that may arise during the exchange process. It is logical to understand the strict standards we apply to ourselves in working with inbound youths to Australia we should also apply to Australian youths who are outbound. On that precept policies to assist Lions members involved in the youth exchange program are important.

#### 19.1 Participants Code of Conduct

It is important for the youths, their families and the sponsoring club who participate in this program are prepared for the exchange as reasonably possible. With this in mind a Code of Conduct (appendix 3) will be followed by all participants in the process.

In order for youth participants to be sure of their own personal responsibilities the participants Code of Conduct will be explained to each of them and signed by them and a parent or guardian and witnessed by the sponsoring club representative. A copy will be given to both the youth and their parent or guardian and a copy retained by the sponsoring club and the Youth Exchange committee.

#### 19.2 Youth Exchange Interviews

All youth exchange interviews must be conducted as stated in Section 9 of the Child Safe Policy.

Clubs are directed to the Lions Clubs International MD201 Youth Exchange guidelines for Prospective Youth Exchange.

Unsuccessful applicants' applications must be returned to the applicant, all online applicants' information, including submitted photos are to be deleted.

#### 19.3 Communication with participants

- a) All email communication to be issued according to official template.
- b) Email addresses and contact information of participants is held securely and only provided to the District Youth Exchange Chairperson, Club Counsellor, the appointed Chaperones and the Lions travel agent.
- c) The contact details of participants must be forwarded to the Lions National Office for archiving by 30 March each year and local records deleted. Archived records will be securely stored at the National Office.

#### 19.4 Youth Exchange Club Counsellor (inbound and outbound)

Each club who participates in the Youth Exchange Program should appoint a Youth Exchange Club Counsellor for both inbound and outbound exchanges. This person is the point of contact with the club for any issues that an Exchangee may have concerning their host family including their safety.

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The Youth Exchange Club Counsellor is independent of the host families and is not a current member of the Clubs Executive. This ensures impartiality.

The Youth Exchange Club Counsellor must have a current Working With Children Check, or equivalent and have undergone child safety awareness training.

Outbound exchangees are to contact the Youth Exchange Club Counsellor via email on their arrival to each new host family and on their return home. This is a minimum communication standard

Inbound exchangees are to have independent contact with the Youth Exchange Club Counsellor as a minimum on their arrival to each new host family and on their return home.

Any concerns identified in the Youth Exchange including those identified as part of the debrief should be recorded on the Child Safe Risk Assessment Form 1 (See appendix 2) which is to be completed by the Club Child Safety Officer and forwarded to the Multiple District Child Safety Officer and the District Youth Exchange Person.

**19.5 Airport Greeter activities.**

- a. Ensure that others are present while speaking with participants, or are within sight of the situation.
- b. Where practical have two adults, of differing genders, in attendance.
- c. Greeters must have a current Working With Children Check or their state or territory equivalent.

**19.6 Youth Exchange Chaperone**

The Youth Exchange program currently involves transporting children or young people, inbound or outbound to locations in Australia and overseas. Lions who accompany these children or young people are referred to as Chaperone’s. Due to the variety of locations and situations Chaperone’s may find themselves in eliminating all risks is a difficult task. To reduce a child’s, young persons or chaperone’s risk the following guidelines should be adhered to where ever possible.

- a) Individual chaperones should not be alone with children and young people who are travelling as part of a Lions program unless they are clearly in a public space with other people around them.
- b) There must be two chaperones (a male and a female) on the London and Los Angeles stopover duties.
- c) Any chaperone must have a valid Working With Children Check or their state or territory equivalent and have undergone child safety awareness training.

**19.7 Pre Departure Briefings**

- a) Two adults one can be a parent or guardian, to be in attendance with the appropriate gender mix. Participants to remain with the group.

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- b) Two adults one can be a parent or guardian, to escort participants from the briefing to the departure lounge.
- c) Any chaperone must have a valid Working With Children Check or their state or territory equivalent and have undergone child safety awareness training.

**19.8 Working With Children Check**

- a) Arrangements for the Working With Children Check (WWCC) vary in each state. Lions operating the program must appraise themselves of the legislation in their state and ensure compliance.
- b) In most states a Working With Children Check is only required for longer term work with young people. It is however Lion’s policy that any member who has direct involvement with a child or young person obtains and maintains their WWCC or its equivalent status.
- c) The District Youth Exchange Chairperson is responsible for compliance with state child protection legislation. In states where the ‘employer’ must register and verify compliance, that individual is the District Youth Exchange Chairperson.
- d) In normal circumstances the District Youth Exchange Chairperson must ensure that adults directly participating in Youth Exchange hold a valid Working With Children Check. The specific approach by the District is to be advised, in writing, to the National Youth Exchange Chairperson by 31 August each year.
- e) Each District Youth Exchange Chairperson must obtain and manage the Working With Children Check or equivalent, for the adults in a direct care role with young people. (Note: This excludes those in a purely administrative role) These include:
  - I. Chaperones
  - II. Host families, including any children over the age of 18 years.
  - III. Airport greeters
  - IV. Camp personnel staying overnight or in child-care positions. (e.g.: Kitchen staff not in a direct care role do not require a WWCC)
- f) The register of those holding the ‘check’ must be compiled and held by the District Youth Exchange Chairperson. The District Youth Exchange Chairperson must confirm that they are complying with the relevant legislation, in writing to the Multiple District Youth Exchange Person each year on 31 July 2016 and 31 January.
  - I. The Working With Children Check register must contain the name, date of birth, registration number and expiration date. If third party verification is required, as in NSW, the date and outcome of that verification should be indicated.
  - II. The MD201 Child Safety Officer is the responsible officer in the Multiple District for MD201 Child Protection compliance, reporting through the Executive Officer. They will obtain and verify Working With Children Check for all members of the MD201 Youth Exchange Chairperson and participating District Youth Exchange Chairpersons

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- III. It is highly desirable to eliminate risks to young people participating in a Lions Youth program through following the Child Safe policy rather than rely on a Working With Children Check.

**19.9 Outbound Youth Exchange Issues**

Districts operating outbound Youth Exchange Programs will provide information and training to participants regarding child protection risks.

Districts will identify the availability of child protection working with children style checks in host countries and obtain those checks from host families.

Lions Australia will only endorse host countries which can provide the following assurances:

- I. Have statutory legislation regarding Child Protection Issues, and
- II. Host families can demonstrate they are compliant with any child protection legislation, and
- III. Host families can demonstrate that they have undergone a rigorous interview, including a home visit and a minimum of two referee checks of which none are family members or relatives, and
- IV. The host clubs can provide a point of contact for the Exchangee who will respond to child safety concerns and who is not a host family member.

The Youth Exchange Club Counsellor must arrange a post exchange debrief for outgoing Youth Exchangees. Any incidents will be noted on Form1 (appendix 2) and forwarded to the Multiple District Child Safety Officer and the District Youth Exchange Person.

**19.10 Youth Camp Specific Issues**

- a. Inbound Youth Exchangees can be aged from 16-21 years of age.
- b. Young people aged 18 or over are adults according to Australian law.
- c. Youth camps must not accommodate exchangees under the age of 18 in the same dormitories as over 18's.
- d. Accommodation in youth camps must separate males and females.

**19.11 Reported Incidents of Abuse or Neglect.**

Any allegation of child abuse or neglect that occurs during a Youth Exchange, inbound or outbound is of extreme concern and members must follow the Child Safe Procedure Flow chart (appendix 1) and be documented on the Child Safety Risk Assessment Form 1.

Where a child or young person is under 18 years a safety risk assessment must be conducted. If the allegation involves an allegation of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct it must be reported to the Police.

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A safety risk assessment must take into account a child or young person's age, intellectual capacity and specific vulnerabilities. The guiding principle shall always be to act in the best interests of the child and in a manner which is the least intrusive to the child or young person whilst securing their wellbeing.

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## 20 LEO CLUBS CHILD SAFE PROCEDURE

Due to the long-term relationship between a Leo club and its sponsoring Lions club, it is imperative that child safety procedures are followed. The following guidelines are specifically for Alpha Leo Clubs (members aged 12-18 years).

### 20.1 Working With Children Check

As per Article 7, all Lions or other adults having sustained or regular contact with Leos under the age of 18 years must comply with relevant WWCC requirements.

The Leo Advisor is the person responsible at club level for ensuring WWCC register is up to date. District Leo Chairmen, State Leo Coordinators and MD Leo Chairperson ensure compliance across all levels of the program.

### 20.2 Leo Clubs with mixed age groups

Some Leo clubs in Australia have an extended membership range (possibly from 12 to 30 years). It is important to ensure the safety of young and vulnerable Leo members in these circumstances.

- a) All Leo members over the age of 18 years must have WWCC or its state equivalent.
- b) Care must be taken to ensure that all interactions between club members occur in public spaces.
- c) Where possible, at least two adults should be present at all times when younger Leos are involved.
- d) Parental approval must be obtained before allowing an adult Leo to transport an underage Leo to any club activity.

### 20.3 Attendance at Leo club meetings, functions or projects

It is recommended that at least two Lions members (male/female) attend all Leo activities (unless held on school premises with school staff present).

### 20.4 Transporting Leos to club activities

As per Article 8.

### 20.5 Interviews for Leo of the Year

As per Article 9.

### 20.6 Contact with Leo members

- a) All email communication is to be issued to the club's email address.
- b) Email addresses and contact details for Leo members are held securely and are only provided to the Lions Club President, Secretary and Leo Advisor.

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c) Where it is necessary to email individual Leo members, this should be issued on official template, and copied to club or parent email address.

d) The contact details of Leo members must be forwarded to National Office for archiving by 30 December following their departure from the club, and local records should be deleted/destroyed.

**20.7 Photography and social media**

As per Article 15.

**20.8 Leo Camps and Conferences**

- a) Leo Camps and conferences may be held within District or State boundaries. They often take place over 2-3 days and include residential accommodation in a youth camp facility. Leo members aged between 12 and 30 years may attend these events, so particular care must be taken to ensure that the young people are safe.
- b) All adults (including Leos over the age of 18 years) participating in Leo camps or conferences must provide valid WWCC to the organising committee.
- c) All participants in Leo Camps must sign a Code of Conduct as part of the registration process.
- d) Leo camps must not accommodate Leos under the age of 18 in the same dormitories as over 18's.
- e) Accommodation in Leo camps must separate males and females. All personal contact details for camp participants must be archived at National Office and local copies destroyed within 3 months after the camp is held. The name of the participant, camp and dates of participation will be held by the National Office for 45 years.

**20.9 Leos attending Lions Conventions**

- a) Leos under the age of 18 years who attend Lions conventions must have a nominated chaperone, with appropriate WWC clearance and approved by parents/guardians.
- b) Leos involved in Leo of the Year program are under the jurisdiction of the MD Leo Committee and must abide by all reasonable requests regarding their conduct and attendance throughout the convention.

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## 21 YOUTH OF THE YEAR CHILD SAFE POLICY

### PREAMBLE

Lions have successfully run Youth of the Year program for over fifty years. It is a program for youths aged between 15 and 19 years of age. With encouragement and support from members, youth participants develop their self-confidence over several different challenges. As Lions, we carry this responsibility greatly as we are aware the young people undertaking this program are vulnerable and therefore require us at all times to be appropriate with them. The responsibility of helping young people in Youth of the Year to achieve their best is an honour we hold dearly and therefore subscribe to the child safe procedure. Volunteer partners are also expected to adhere to this procedure.

#### 21.1 Recruiting and Interviewing Candidates

At all stages through the process there shall be at least two Lions members or volunteer judges, preferably of differing genders, when talking to a Youth of the Year candidate. Although the child safety risk may appear small with this program it nevertheless still requires us to be vigilant, particularly as the age range of participants may vary from a young person (15 years) status to adult (19 years).

#### 21.2 Working with Children's Check

As with Section 7 of the Child Safe Policy, all Lions or other adults, including volunteer judges volunteers having sustained or regular contact with Youth of the Year candidates under the age of 18 years must comply with the relevant Working with Children Check requirements in their state or territory.

The District Youth of the Chairperson is the person responsible at club level for ensuring Working with Children Check register is up to date.

#### 21.3 Allegations of Assault

For allegations of assault refer to Section 13 of the Child Safe Policy. The MD201 Child Safety Officer has overall responsible for adherence to the Policy and the progression and completion of Form 1 if required. This is initiated by the appropriate Child Safety Officer at the corresponding level of the competition.

#### 21.4 Transporting and Escorting Youth of the Year Contestants

- a) It is the responsibility of the parents or guardians of the candidate to ensure the participant arrives at the event in good time.
- b) Should transport occurs by a Lion, then two Lions members, preferably of differing genders and with relevant Working with Children Checks are to provide the transport.
- c) Written parental or guardians approval must be obtained prior to any transporting of under 18 year olds applicants.

#### 21.5 Communication

When communicating with a Youth of the Year candidate it is important this communication is transparent at all times, appropriate in language, content and tone. When communication is by

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email or hard copy, ensure a copy of your communication is on the appropriate letterhead and is cc'd to the parents or guardians.

## 21.6 Photography and Social Media

As with Section 15 of the Child Safe Policy.

## 21.7 Accommodation at Events

If a candidate is fortunate enough to progress through one or more stages and if any accommodation is required, then it will solely be the responsibility of the parent or guardian. At no time will a Lions member accommodate a candidate at their own accommodation.

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## 22 HISTORIC ABUSE COMPLAINT HANDLING PROCEDURE

### PREAMBLE

People who are victims of abuse are gaining more confidence in coming forward and disclosing their abuse. Historical abuse refers to abuse disclosed by people over the age of 18 years in respect to abuse they had been subjected to as a child or young person, often at the hands of an adult who had been entrusted to care for them. Lions as with other organisations who work with children may become subject to an allegation of historical abuse. For the purpose of section 22 the term allegations or complaint are interchangeable.

Allegations are usually made against an individual, however the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (2017) declared it is not only an individual’s responsibility but also and organisational responsibility in how historic abuse is managed. The Royal Commission noted all too often organisations treated victim’s allegations with disbelief, contempt and with total disregard, leaving victims feeling an additional abuse.

Lions Australia is a responsible and respected service organisation in the Australian community and therefore we take any allegation of abuse seriously. Where there are allegations of harm, Lions Australia will investigate those complaints promptly, transparently, compassionately and with the legal framework of each jurisdiction. We will endeavour whenever it is within our power to work with alleged victims in managing their complaint.

### 22.1 Challenges

Lions Australia operates a limited number of programs directly. These are determined each year at the National Convention.

Each Lions Club and District operates independently, and many are incorporated in their own right. Where allegations of harm are raised with Lions Australia regarding District or Club programs, Lions Australia will promptly advise complainants of the contact details of the responsible organisation, if known.

### 22.2 MD201 Complaint Handling Procedure and Child Safe Policy

Allegations relating to historical child sexual abuse are to be read in conjunction with MD201 Complaint Handling Procedure. Given the sensitive nature of child abuse allegations the procedure for managing complaints and allegations fall within the Child Safe Policy.

### 22.3 Who can make an allegation?

Historical allegations of child sexual abuse may be received from members of the public, representatives of Government departments, media, commercial organisations and members of Lions clubs within Australia and overseas. The complaint may or may not come from the alleged victim. It may take the form of a verbal or written report via a variety of mediums. The allegation may be received at any level of the Lions Organisation.

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## 22.4 How to Respond to a Complaint.

- a. All reports regardless of where they are received are to be forwards to the **MD201 Child Safety Officer** who will instigate the Allegations of Historical Child Abuse Procedure as illustrated in The Historic Child Abuse Complaints Flowchart (appendix 4). The Child Safety Officer will ascertain if the allegations involve a current Lion member and if there are any current child safety issues.
- b. If the alleged perpetrator has access to under 18 year olds the Safety Risk Assessment is to be followed and the Child Risk Assessment Form 1 completed and forwarded to the **National Office Executive Officer**.
- c. As noted in the Child Risk Assessment any immediate safety concerns are to be referred to the Police and relevant Statutory Authorities.
- d. Where there are no identified current child protection concerns and the allegations are reported by the alleged victims the following procedures will take place:
  - a. The **Executive Officer** will write to the alleged victims.
    - i. Initially:
      1. requesting confidential details of the complaint and requesting advice as to what remedy is being sought.
      2. reassuring the victim or survivor they did the right thing in reporting the matter
      3. explaining the likely process, people involved, the anticipated time frame and what will be required of the victim or survivor.
    - ii. Subsequently:
      1. Identifying the accountable organisation within Lions for the allegation.
      2. offering referral to any necessary medical treatment and psychological support and counselling.
      3. offering a trusted adult, independent support person and/or advocate to assist them.
      4. explaining the options that may arise from a complaint; for example, breach of code of conduct and/or criminal charges.
      5. avoiding making the victim or survivor repeat their account of what happened.
  - b. Subject to the nature of the allegation, it is likely that the complainant will need to be referred to the Lions Club of which the alleged perpetrator is a member.
  - c. In most circumstance, the complainant will be asked to report the matter to the police to ensure that an appropriate investigation can take place.
  - d. The **Executive Officer** will continue to communicate throughout on the investigation's progress and any resulting court proceedings or results of any other investigation (noting that if the police are also investigating the matter, this communication should only be carried out in consultation with the police).
  - e. MD201 strongly recommends all parties (alleged victim and alleged perpetrator) seek independent legal advice if appropriate. MD201 is not in a position to furnish any legal advice and cannot do so.
  - f. The Policy acknowledges that each Lions Club is autonomous and that the rights, privileges and responsibilities of membership are matters for the sole determination of the Board of Directors of each Club. Neither the Council of Governors nor any District Governor has the authority to direct the Board of Directors of any Lions Club to act in relation to such matters. In accordance with section 17 of the Child Safe

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Policy the alleged perpetrator may be requested by their club to stand aside from Lion duties for the duration of any investigation.

- g. All documentation once completed is to be forwarded to the Executive Officer for possible actioning, registering and archiving

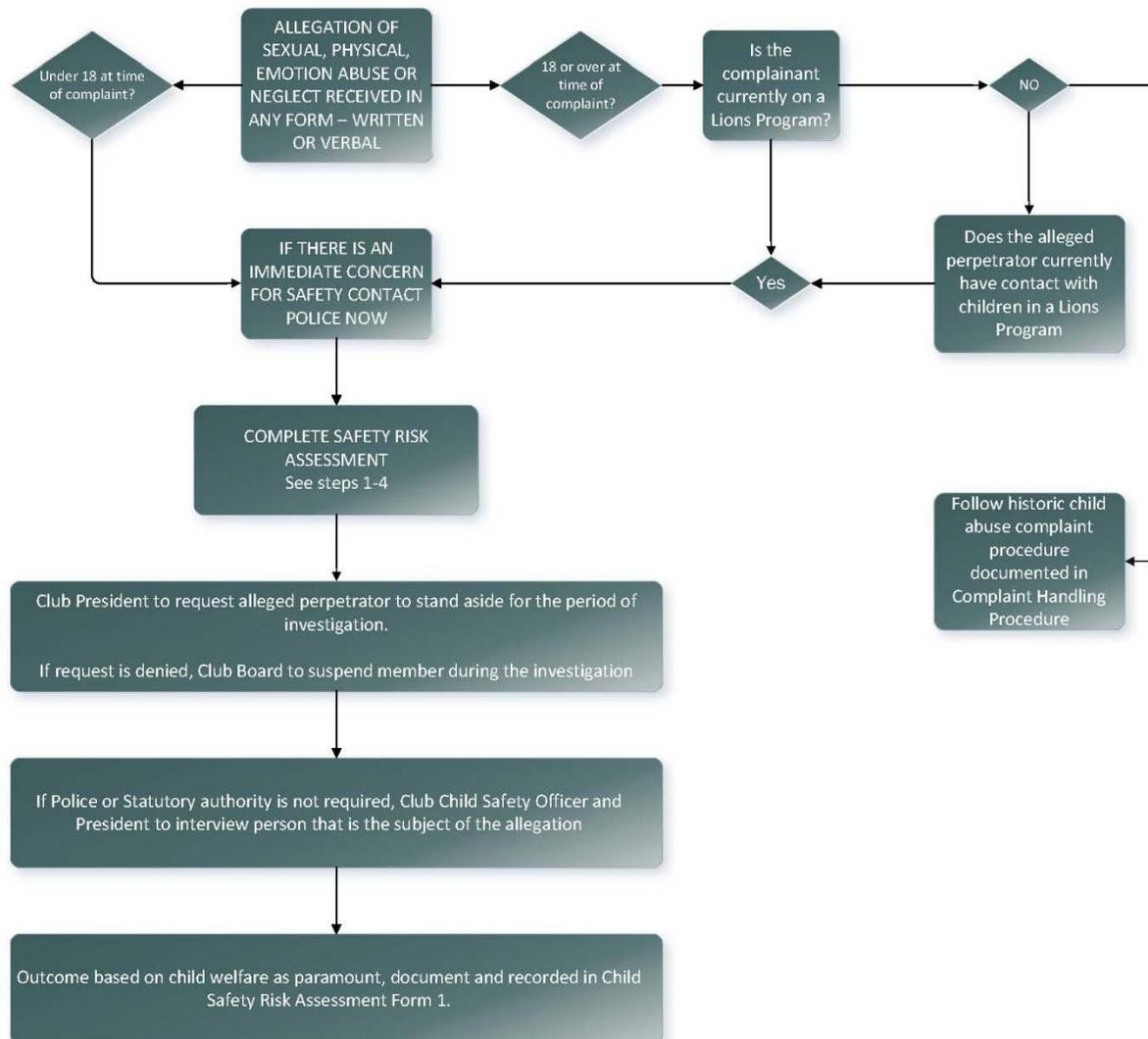
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## APPENDIX 1 CHILD SAFE PROCEDURE

**Safety Risk Assessment Steps**

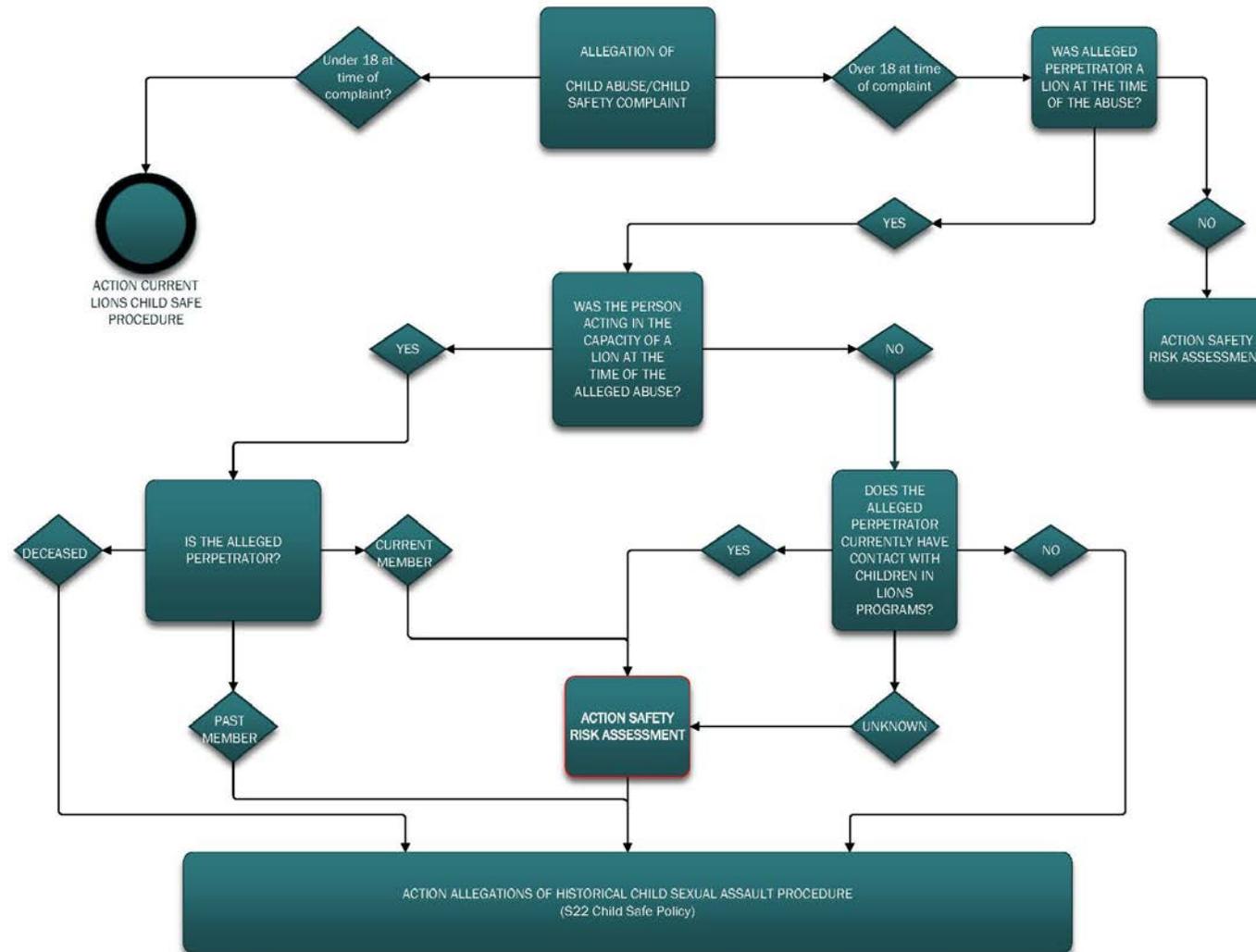
1. Report allegations to Club Child Safety Officer (CCSO)
2. CCSO to check information required for Child Safety Risk Assessment (9CSRA) Form 1 and report to Police or Statutory bodies if definitions of abuse are met.
3. CCSO and club counsellor to assess immediate safety of child or young person.
4. CCSO to send copy of Child Safety Risk Assessment Form 1 to inform relevant parties as to the outcome of the investigations.
5. Child Safety Risk Assessment Form 1 to National Child Safety Officer.



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## APPENDIX 2 ALLEGATIONS OF HISTORICAL CHILD ABUSE PROCEDURE



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## APPENDIX 3 CHILD SAFE RISK ASSESSMENT FORM 1 serve

<b>To be completed by the Club Child Safety Officer.</b> <i>NOTE: - ALL IMMEDIATE SAFETY CONCERNS ARE TO BE REPORTED TO THE POLICE BY ANY MEMBER AS A MATTER OF PRIORITY.</i>	
<b>Lions District &amp; Club Name</b>	
<b>Details of Child or Young Person if known.</b>	Name: <span style="float: right;">Age:</span>
	<span style="float: right;">DOB:</span>
<b>Program (circle)</b>	Youth Exchange   Leo   YOTY   Other (Name)
<b>Reported by</b>	Name: <span style="float: right;">Date &amp; Time reported:</span>
	Address and Contact Details:
<b>Reported to (if different from above)</b>	Name:
	Address and Contact Details:
<b>Incident Location (if known)</b>	Incident Date & Time:
<b>Person/s involved in incident</b>	Name/s:
<b>Description of allegation.</b>	
<b>Immediate actions taken and by whom. State reason if no action taken.</b>	
<b>Witness/es (if any)</b>	Name & Contact Details:
<b>Outcome of allegation if known at this stage.</b>	

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## **APPENDIX 4 CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **3.1 NO CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOL**

Rationale: Alcohol is forbidden for youths on the Youth Exchange program. There are countries that permit the consumption of alcohol for people under 18, for example Belgium and Denmark, as it is not legal in Australia and children of this age in Australia have most likely not yet learnt safety issues involved with alcohol. Additionally, there is no recommended safe drinking levels and drinking is often associated with the grooming process in child sexual assault. Therefore, participants on the Youth Exchange will not consume alcohol at all.

### **3.2 NO DRIVING OF MOTORISED VEHICLES.**

Rationale: Not all countries are as safety conscious as Australia when it comes to motor vehicle safety, after all, the world’s first compulsory seat belts law was introduced into Victoria in 1970. Although youths who participate in the exchange program may be of age and already hold a driver’s license it would be safer if they did not drive a motorised vehicle of any description including electric motor scooters. Motor vehicle driving is a potentially dangerous activity even for an experienced driver. European countries require drivers to drive on the right-hand side. Once again this is a challenge for experienced drivers and potentially lethal for inexperienced drivers. Given the age and therefore the likelihood of the youth having only a small amount of experience of driving, Youth Exchange participants shall not drive a motorised vehicle of any description while on their exchange.

### **3.3 NO PERMANENT BODY DECORATING**

Rationale: It has been fashionable for youth’s male and female to decorate their bodies in tattoos, body piercing and implants or any other permanent body modification. Australia has stringent health rules in regards to such matters. Once again this may not be the case in other countries and Australian tourists have been known to contract infections while participating in these activities in overseas countries. Therefore, no participant on the Youth Exchange program shall permanently decorate their body while they are on their exchange.

### **3.4 NO DRUGS**

Rationale: Although some drugs are no longer deemed to be illegal in an increasing number of countries for example Marijuana is legal to consume in the Netherlands and more recently Canada and a few states in the USA, it is not yet deemed legal in this country. Research into marijuana is actively been trialled in Australia for very limited medicinal use only. Other common drugs such as opioids are sold as either prescription only medication e.g. Codeine and morphine or illicitly sold e.g., heroin and opium. These drugs are highly addictive and overuse can lead to accidental death. It should be noted that, identification of illicit drugs and their ingredients are of real concern. Other drugs like stimulants are of no less concern such as crystal methamphetamine (otherwise known as ice). These can lead to erratic and harmful behaviour.

At this stage the only drug that can be considered safe is that which is prescribed only to the person whose name is on the prescription and only under a medical practitioner’s supervision.

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Therefore, no participant on the Youth Exchange program shall take drugs unless prescribed to them by a medical practitioner.

### **3.5 RESTRICTED DOWNLOADING AND UPLOADING.**

Rationale: Although firewalls and internet security are at a much higher standard today than it was just a few years ago internet surfers are still vulnerable to predators. This is particularly noticeable with youths whose world is mostly conversing with online friends. They are vulnerable to online scams whether it is of a sexual nature, financial or otherwise. To the uninitiated downloading could prove to be costly, embarrassing and illegal in the host country. Downloading or uploading of any content shall be limited for school purposes, the youth's own family purposes and Lions International purposes and with the knowledge of the host family. Therefore, no participant on the Youth Exchange program shall download or upload contrary to what is stated in the previous sentence.

### **3.6 NO DATING**

Rationale: It is understood youths on the exchange may be attracted to another person whether the other person is also on an exchange or not. If this is left to grow and the youth becomes romantically attached, then the youth on the exchange has lost the opportunity they first sought by applying for the exchange in the first place. Romantic relationships at this age can exclude other relationships and may hamper the opportunity to make new friendships and acquaintances. Given the exchange is time limited it would appear this would not be helpful to them. However non-romantic correspondence with other exchange students and youths in their host country are to be expected as it adds to the student's experience while on the program. Therefore, no participant on the Youth Exchange program shall date another person while participating in the program.

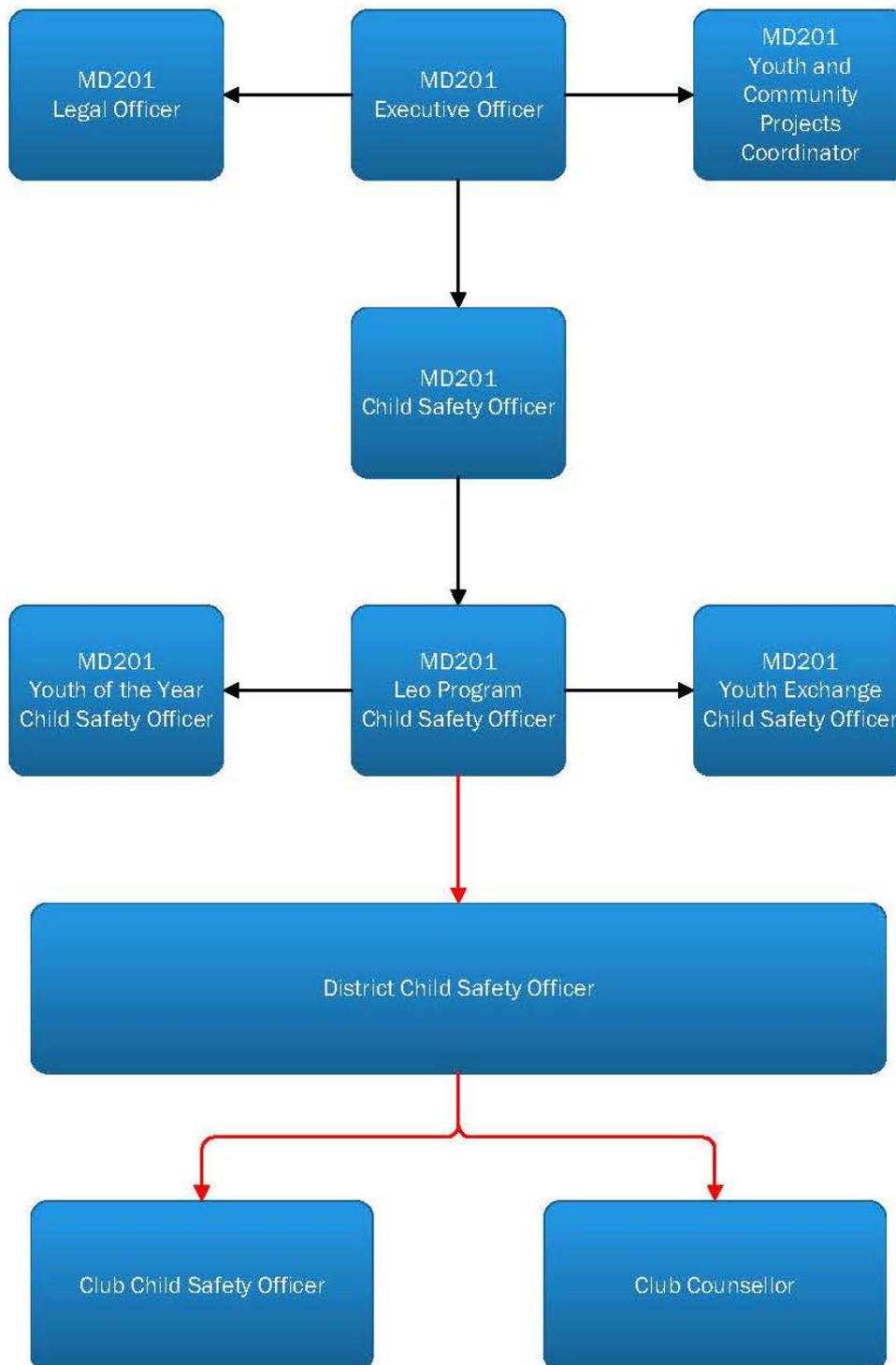
### **3.7 NO DANGEROUS ACTIVITIES AND SPORTS**

Rationale: The list is too long to name all potentially dangerous activities but youth exchange participants and their families will have a reasonable idea what they are. An indication are activities insurance companies may not cover. The youth on the exchange may participate in dangerous sporting activities in Australia with their parent's consent. For example, skydiving in Australia may be done by a twelve-year-old with parents' consent. However, whilst in another country's activities considered dangerous may not be rigorously accredited as most are here in Australia. Insurance will most likely not cover such an activity and may well leave the exchange student's family with a heavy medical bill and transport costs home. Therefore, no participant on the Youth Exchange program shall participate in dangerous activities.

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**APPENDIX 5 CHILD SAFETY STRUCTURE**



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## 23 TABLE OF REVISIONS

Rev #	Clause	Description of Change
1.0		Policy adopted by Council

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