



Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

1. Introduction

Aliya Youth Space is a community-based youth organisation supporting young people through social connection, early support and relationship-based programs.

Our under-18 programs include Aliya Youth and Aliya Girls, weekly programs for teens aged 14–18.

Aliya also supports young adults aged 18+ through Aliya Legends, including Aliya Social & Aliya Lift.

This policy applies when Aliya's programs, activities or services involve a person under the age of 18.

The policy sets out Aliya's commitment to keeping children and young people safe and explains how our staff and volunteers work to protect them from harm and abuse.

This Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy was approved by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) on 30 June 2022 and reviewed in June 2024 and June 2026. It continues to reflect Aliya Youth Space's current child safety practices and procedures.

2. Application

This policy applies to all Aliya staff and volunteers who have contact with children.

It applies to all activities, programs, events and excursions that involve or relate to contact with children.

3. Commitment to child safety

All children and young people who come to Aliya have the right to feel and be safe.

The safety and wellbeing of young people in our care is a priority, and Aliya has zero tolerance for child abuse and harm.

We aim to create a safe, welcoming and child-friendly environment where young people can socialise, learn, celebrate Shabbat and Jewish festivals, attend trips and activities, and feel comfortable being themselves.

4. Purpose

This policy outlines how Aliya prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children and young people and the steps we take to support this.

5. Definitions

Child abuse means:



- a sexual offence committed against a child;
- an offence committed against a child under section 49M(1) of the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic), such as grooming;
- physical violence against a child;
- causing serious emotional or psychological harm to a child; or
- serious neglect of a child.

Harm is damage to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child or young person, including harm caused by child abuse by adults or the conduct of other children.

It includes physical, emotional, sexual and psychological harm. Harm may arise from a single act or event or may be cumulative as a result of a series of acts or events over time.

Child/Children means a person under the age of 18.

Concerns and complaints

A **concern** refers to any potential issue that could negatively affect the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person.

A **complaint** is an expression of dissatisfaction relating to one or more of the following:

- Aliya's services or dealings with individuals;
- allegations of abuse or misconduct by a staff member, volunteer or another person associated with Aliya;
- disclosures of abuse or harm made by a child or young person;
- the conduct of a child or young person at Aliya;
- the handling of a previous concern; or
- general concerns about the safety of a group of children or an activity.

6. Role of the Management Committee

The Management Committee is responsible for making sure Aliya prioritises child safety and that action is taken when concerns about a child's safety are raised.

The Management Committee will support and model a child safe culture at Aliya. We encourage anyone involved with Aliya to raise child safety concerns and aim to create an environment where people feel comfortable speaking up.

Everyone at Aliya has a role in identifying and managing risks of child abuse and harm.

The Management Committee will make sure staff and volunteers consider child safety risks and take appropriate steps to manage these risks in line with this policy.

The Management Committee will also make sure appropriate child safety training is identified and completed by staff and volunteers where required.

The Management Committee will conduct an annual review of how effectively Aliya is supporting child safety and wellbeing. Feedback from people involved with Aliya will be considered as part of this review.

7. Children's empowerment and participation



Aliya is a youth-centred and child-centred organisation. We actively seek to include the views and ideas of young people in our programs and planning.

We want young people to build positive friendships through Aliya and encourage them to support and look out for one another.

Bullying and abusive behaviour between young people is not tolerated and will be addressed when it occurs.

We respect the rights of children and young people, including their right to feel safe at Aliya.

We regularly speak with young people about what helps them feel safe and what they can do if they ever feel unsafe or concerned.

Aliya values the voices of young people and will act on safety concerns raised by young people or their families.

Aliya supports young people's participation through:

- regular conversations with young people about what helps them feel safe and supported;
- opportunities for young people to provide feedback and raise concerns;
- consulting young people about significant changes to programs, activities or the physical environment where appropriate; and
- providing information about Aliya's programs, staff and operations in ways that are appropriate for different age groups.

8. Families and communities

Aliya recognises the important role of families and carers.

Parents and carers may be involved when significant decisions are being made about their child where appropriate.

Parents, families and members of the community are welcome to provide feedback and are encouraged to raise any concerns they may have.

Aliya provides information about our child safe policies and practices by:

- publishing our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Code of Conduct on our website;
- providing information about Aliya's child safety approach, operations and management structure; and
- sharing child safety and wellbeing information through our website, newsletters and other appropriate communications.

9. Valuing diversity

Aliya values diversity and equity for all children and young people.

To support this, we:

- support Management Committee members, staff and volunteers to understand diversity, inclusion and cultural safety;



- welcome and support young people from different backgrounds and circumstances, including young people with disability, young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, young people who are unable to live at home and LGBTIQ young people;
- respect and value the cultures, identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people and aim to provide a culturally safe and welcoming environment;
- provide young people and their families with opportunities to tell us about any individual needs or circumstances that may help them participate safely and fully in our programs;
- have zero tolerance for racism and other forms of discrimination and take action where discrimination or exclusion is identified;
- aim to provide programs that recognise and respect the different backgrounds, interests and experiences of young people; and
- work to ensure our facilities, programs and online activities are welcoming and inclusive for children and young people of different abilities.

10. Code of Conduct

Aliya has a Child Safe Code of Conduct.

Board members, staff, volunteers and members of the Management Committee must comply with the Code of Conduct at all times.

Breaches of the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, including the termination of a person's involvement with Aliya.

11. Recruiting staff and volunteers

Aliya puts child safety and wellbeing at the centre of our recruitment and screening processes for staff and volunteers.

We aim to recruit staff and volunteers who are appropriate to work and engage with children and young people.

Aliya requires all staff and volunteers who have a role involving children or access to children's personal information to hold a current Working with Children Check.

A record of the Working with Children Check must be provided to Aliya.

Referee checks may also form part of the recruitment and screening process.

Where qualifications are required for a role, Aliya will take steps to confirm that these qualifications are appropriate and valid.

Members of the Management Committee must also hold a valid Working with Children Check.

12. Supporting staff and volunteers

Aliya is committed to making sure staff, leaders and volunteers understand their responsibilities in relation to child safety.

Training and support are provided to help staff and volunteers safely engage with young people and consider child safety in their decisions and actions.



Aliya aims to create an environment where children and young people feel comfortable speaking up about issues that affect them.

Any concerns about the behaviour of a staff member or volunteer towards a child or young person will be raised and addressed in line with our Code of Conduct and Complaint Handling Policy.

13. Complaints and reporting

All reports of child abuse and child safety concerns will be taken seriously, whether they are raised by an adult, child or young person.

This applies whether a concern relates to the conduct of an adult or another child or young person.

Complaints and child safety concerns will be responded to promptly and thoroughly.

Aliya has a Complaint Handling Policy that explains how complaints and child safety concerns are responded to.

We aim to provide young people, families and the community with clear and easy-to-understand information about how to raise a concern or complaint and what support is available.

Where a complaint includes an allegation or incident of child abuse or harm, Aliya staff and volunteers must report it in line with the Complaint Handling Policy.

The safety of children and young people will always be prioritised.

Potentially criminal conduct will be reported to Victoria Police.

Staff and volunteers may be subject to actions to protect child safety, including:

- suspension during an investigation or dismissal following an investigation;
- changes to their duties so they do not engage with children or young people;
- restrictions on unsupervised contact with children or young people; and
- removal of access to Aliya's IT systems or facilities.

Complaints can be emailed to Director@aliya.org.au or raised directly with a Child Safety Person.

If there is an immediate concern for the safety of a child, call 000.

14. Child Safety Persons

Aliya has Child Safety Persons responsible for responding to child safety complaints and concerns.

The names of current Child Safety Persons are made available to staff, volunteers and young people at Aliya.

If a person does not feel comfortable making a report to a Child Safety Person, they may report their concerns to:

Shuie Gestetner
Shuieg@gmail.com



15. Record keeping

Aliya is committed to making and keeping full and accurate records relating to child safety complaints and concerns.

Child safety complaints, concerns, incidents and near misses will be recorded through Aliya's incident reporting process.

Records that may assist with the investigation of a complaint or child safety concern will be identified and kept as part of the investigation record.

Records will be kept even where an investigation does not substantiate a complaint.

Aliya will record the outcomes of investigations and the resolution of complaints. This includes findings, reasons for decisions and actions taken.

Records will be stored securely and kept by Aliya for at least 45 years.

16. Information sharing

Aliya may share relevant information where it is appropriate and in the best interests of the safety and wellbeing of a child or young person.

Information relating to complaints will be kept confidential except where information needs to be shared to properly respond to a complaint, protect a child or young person, or meet legal requirements.

Aliya may also need to share information about incidents or complaints with external authorities.

Further information is available in our Complaint Handling Policy.

17. Risk management

Aliya recognises the importance of identifying and managing risks of child abuse and harm in both physical and online environments.

We conduct risk assessments and maintain a risk management plan addressing child safety risks at Aliya.

Our risk management approach may include input from staff, volunteers, parents and young people.

Risk controls will aim to balance the need to protect children and young people from harm with the benefits of participating in Aliya's programs and activities.

The Management Committee is responsible for approving the risk management plan.

Where external service providers have contact with children or young people, Aliya will take appropriate steps to manage child safety risks and ensure suitable safeguards are in place.

18. Non-compliance with this policy and the Code of Conduct



Aliya will enforce this policy, the Code of Conduct and other relevant child safety and wellbeing policies.

Potential breaches will be investigated and may result in restrictions on duties, suspension or dismissal from the organisation.

19. Review

Aliya will review its child safe practices and policies at least every two years.

Relevant practices and policies will also be reviewed following a child safety incident or near miss where appropriate.

Findings from reviews will help inform the ongoing improvement of Aliya's child safety practices.

Reviews will be overseen by the Management Committee and may include input from young people, families, staff and volunteers.

20. Supporting documents

The following policies and procedures support child safety and wellbeing across Aliya's operations:

- Code of Conduct;
- Complaint Handling Policy;
- Risk Management Plan; and
- Child Safe Training Plan.

Supporting legislation

Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic), including the Child Safe Standards

Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic), including reporting to Child Protection

Crimes Act 1958 (Vic), including Failure to Protect and Failure to Disclose offences

Wrongs Act 1958 (Vic), including Part XIII – Organisational liability for child abuse