

Complaint Handling Policy - working with children

1. Background

Where Aliya Youth Space & Aliya Girls Space receives a complaint, it must be handled in accordance with this policy, as amended from time to time by Aliya.

2. Who can report a complaint?

The following people can make a report or complaint to Aliya:

- a. parent or carer;
- b. child;
- c. staff member or volunteer; and
- d. others in the community.

3. What to report?

Concerns or complaints may be made regarding:

- a. Aliya's services or dealings with individuals;
- b. allegations of abuse or misconduct by a staff member, a volunteer or another individual associated with the organisation;
- c. disclosures of abuse or harm made by a child;
- d. the conduct of a child at the organisation;
- e. the inadequate handling of a prior concern; and
- f. general concerns about the safety of a group of children or activity.

Call 000 if a child is in immediate danger.

4. How might a complaint be made?

Aliya may receive a complaint via a face-to-face verbal report, letter, email, telephone call or meeting.

5. Who do I make a complaint to?

A complaint may be made to Aliya's Child Safety Person [Menny Overlander], manager, or an alternate person [Shuie Gestetner] if a complaint needs to be made about Aliya's Child Safety Person.

6. What happens next?

The Child Safety Person or manager will:

- a. as an initial response, offer support to the child, the parents or carers, the person who reports and the accused staff member or volunteer;

- g. initiate internal processes to ensure the safety of all children including an alleged victim, clarify the nature of the complaint and commence disciplinary process and investigation (if required); and
- h. decide, in accordance with legal requirements and duty of care, whether the matter should/must be reported to police, Child Protection and/or the Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP) and make a report as soon as possible if required.

7. **Outcome**

Following a complaint, Aliya will complete the following steps:

- a. complete an investigation;
 - i. decide on an outcome;
- j. notify relevant staff, volunteers, parents, carers and child of outcome of investigation;
- k. suspension or expulsion, where appropriate; and
- l. review and update policies, procedures where necessary.

8. **Record keeping**

Aliya keeps records of:

- a. complaints;
- b. notes and documents collated in the course of investigating and responding to complaints;
- c. notifications provided to the complainant or other entities; and
- d. action taken in consequence of any complaint.

These records are stored securely and in accordance with record keeping requirements.

9. **Reporting to external authorities**

Child safety is Aliya's main consideration when considering reporting to external authorities.

Aliya has obligations in relation to mandatory reporting to Victoria Police, the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH), the CCYP and some other regulators.

The complaints which may require external reporting involve allegations or suspicion of child abuse or harm, family violence, other child protection concerns, or other criminal conduct.

10. **Supporting documents**

The following policies and procedures work together to support child safety and wellbeing across all of our operations:

- a. Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy;
- b. Code of Conduct;
- c. Risk Management Plan; and
- d. Child Safe Training Plan.