

Reporting Procedures for Child Safety Concerns

MAPA is committed to providing a child safe and child friendly environment in accordance with the Victorian Child Safe Standards and has zero tolerance for child abuse or harm.

All staff, contractors and volunteers share responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of children and must follow these reporting procedures.

What Must Be Reported

A child safety concern includes any situation where a child may be:

- Experiencing or at risk of abuse, neglect or harm
- Subject to inappropriate behaviour, boundary violations or grooming
- Feeling unsafe, distressed or uncomfortable due to the actions of an adult or another child

Concerns may arise from:

- A disclosure made by a child
- Observations of behaviour, injuries or emotional distress
- Information received from another person

Proof is not required. A reasonable belief or concern is sufficient.

Immediate Risk

If a child is in immediate danger:

- Call 000 immediately
- Take reasonable steps to ensure the child's safety
- Notify the Studio Director or Child Safety Officer as soon as practicable

Internal Reporting

All child safety concerns must be reported as soon as practicable to:

- The Studio Director / Child Safety Officer

Reports may be made verbally in the first instance but must be followed up in writing.

As part of this process, **MAPA's Child Safety Incident Report Form must be completed** for all child safety concerns, disclosures or incidents.

Staff must **not** investigate the concern themselves or attempt to resolve the matter independently.

External Reporting Obligations (Victoria)

Where required, child safety concerns must be reported to the appropriate external authority, including:

- **Victoria Police** (if a criminal offence or immediate risk is suspected)
- **Child Protection – Department of Families, Fairness and Housing**
- **Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP)** (reportable conduct involving staff or volunteers)

MAPA will comply with all obligations under Victorian law, including mandatory reporting and reportable conduct requirements.

Recording the Concern

All child safety concerns must be documented accurately and objectively using **MAPA's Child Safety Incident Report Form**, including:

- Date, time and location of the concern
- The child's name and details
- What was observed or disclosed (using the child's words where possible)
- Any immediate actions taken
- Names of people notified

All records will be treated confidentially and stored securely in accordance with MAPA's Child Safety policies.

Confidentiality

- Information relating to child safety concerns will only be shared on a need-to-know basis
- Staff must not discuss concerns with parents, carers, students or other staff unless authorised by management
- The privacy and dignity of all children involved will be respected at all times

Protection from Harm & Retaliation

No staff member, contractor or volunteer will be penalised for raising a child safety concern in good faith.

MAPA will take appropriate steps to:

- Protect children from further harm
- Support children and families as appropriate
- Support staff involved in reporting concerns

Failure to Report

Failure to report a child safety concern, complete the required **Child Safety Incident Report Form**, or follow these procedures may result in:

- Disciplinary action
- Termination of employment or contract
- Further action under Victorian law