

Evolve All Stars CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING POLICY

Evolve All Star Cheer Pty Ltd (Evolve All Stars) proudly acknowledges the traditional owners, Casey's Aboriginal communities and their rich culture and pays respect to their Elders past, present and future. We acknowledge Aboriginal people as Australia's first peoples and as the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we work and live.

Evolve All Stars Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy ('The Policy') was approved by Evolve All Stars Directors on 30 June 2022. It demonstrates the strong commitment of Directors, coaches, staff and volunteers to child safety and wellbeing, and how our organisation keeps children safe from harm, including child abuse.

POLICY NAME	Evolve All Stars Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
DATE OF ISSUE	Original date 1/1/2017, updated 30/6/2022
NEXT DATE OF REVIEW	30/6/2024 to be reviewed by Ascha Boag, Director
ACCESS TO THE POLICY	available on Evolve's website www.evolveallstars.com.au

1. Commitment to Child Safety

Evolve All Stars is committed to ensuring that children and young people who participate in its activities have a safe and happy experience. Evolve All Stars supports and respects children, young people, staff, volunteers and participants.

Evolve All Stars commit to providing cheerleading coaching services to children in an inclusive environment. All children who come to Evolve All Stars have a right to be safe and to feel safe. We have a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and harm.

The welfare of young people in our care will always be our first priority. All children will be treated with respect and Evolve aim to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe and have fun.

We seek suggestions from young people, parents and coaches so that these standards are maintained, and this commitment applies to all staff, volunteers, children and individuals involved in our organisation.

Evolve All Stars values diversity and we do not tolerate any discriminatory practices. To achieve this we will promote cultural safety, participation and empowerment of all children including; Aboriginal children, children with a disability and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families.

1. Purpose

- The aim of Evolve All Stars Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (the Policy) is to prioritise and protect the safety and wellbeing of children in our care and prevent abuse from occurring. It sets out our expectations about child safe practices for staff, volunteers and the broader organisational community.

2. SCOPE

- This Policy applies to participants, parents, spectators, contractors, officials, coaches, judges and staff and applies to all Evolve All Stars events and activities that relate to contact with children.
- This Policy will continue to apply retrospectively to a person or Member following the cessation of their association or employment with Evolve All Stars

3. Definitions

Staff means: Evolve Directors, Coaches and Representatives.

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
- serious neglect of a child

Harm is damage to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child or young person, including as a result of child abuse by adults or the conduct of other children. It includes physical, emotional, sexual and psychological harm. Harm can arise from a single act or event and can also be cumulative, that is, arising as a result of a series of acts or events over a period of time.

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

Concerns and complaints

A concern refers to any potential issue that could impact negatively on the safety and wellbeing of children.

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction to Evolve All Stars related to one or more of the following:

- our services or dealings with individuals
- allegations of abuse or misconduct by a staff member, a volunteer or another individual associated with Evolve All Stars
- disclosures of abuse or harm made by a child or young person
- the conduct of a child or young person at Evolve All Stars
- the inadequate handling of a prior concern
- general concerns about the safety of a group of children or activity

4. Role of Evolve All Stars Directors

Evolve All Stars Directors have the role of making sure Evolve All Stars prioritises children's safety and that action is taken when anyone raises concerns about children's safety.

The Directors will champion and model a child safe culture at Evolve All Stars. We encourage anyone involved with the organisation to report a child safety concern. The Directors will work to create a positive culture around reporting so that people feel comfortable raising concerns.

Everyone at Evolve All Stars has a role in identifying and managing risks of child abuse and harm. The Directors will make sure that staff and volunteers are conducting risk assessments and taking action to manage risks in accordance with this policy. They will also ensure that appropriate child safety training for staff and volunteers is identified and completed.

The Directors will conduct an annual review of how effectively Evolve All Stars is delivering child safety and wellbeing. The input of people involved with Evolve All Stars will be sought as part of this review.

5. Children's empowerment and participation

Evolve All Stars is a child-centred organisation. We actively seek to include children's views and ideas in our organisational planning and delivery of services.

We want children to form friendships through Evolve All Stars and encourage children to be supportive of each other. We include team building activities throughout the year to encourage children to form meaningful connections with each other. We do not tolerate bullying or abusive behaviour between children and take action if this occurs.

We respect the rights of children and provide them with information about their rights including the right to be safe at Evolve All Stars. We actively seek to understand what makes children feel safe in our organisation. We regularly communicate with children about what they can do if they feel unsafe.

Evolve All Stars values the voices of children and act on safety concerns raised by children or their families. Evolve All Stars supports children's participation in the following ways:

- Regular discussions with children, including child-led conversations on what makes them feel safe and unsafe.
- A suggestion box for children that is regularly emptied with suggestions assessed and acted on where appropriate. Children are provided with feedback on their suggestions.
- Consultation with children about any proposed significant changes to the physical environment, policies, procedures, programs or staffing. Children's views are collected by staff, provided to the Directors and considered in the decision-making process.
- Information provided to children and families about Evolve All Stars operations, staffing and programs are made suitable for different age groups and diversity of the children.

6. Families and communities

Evolve All Stars recognises the important role of families and involves parents and carers when making significant decisions about their child. Parents, families, and communities are welcome to

provide feedback at any time through via email or phone and are encouraged to raise any concerns they have with us.

Evolve All Stars provides information to families and community about our child safe policies and practices including through:

- publishing this Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Code of Conduct on our website
- including information about our child safety approach, our operations and staff, in the Evolve All Stars annual information pack
- including information on child safety and wellbeing, and reminders about our policies and procedures, in our newsletter.

7. Creating culturally safe environments for all Aboriginal children and their families

Evolve All Stars is committed to creating environments where Aboriginal culture is celebrated and Aboriginal children, families and community members are welcomed and included. Strategies to embed cultural safety for Aboriginal children include:

- an Acknowledgement of Country at Evolve show off performances
- consulting with families and members of the Aboriginal community to identify opportunities to promote Aboriginal culture and practices at Evolve All Stars
- providing opportunities for children to share their cultural identity and express their culture, including through Evolve All Stars activities
- supporting children who wish to explore their culture, including consulting with their family and relevant Aboriginal organisations
- providing training for staff and volunteers on the strengths of Aboriginal culture and its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children
- celebrating NAIDOC Week and acknowledging significant events including National Sorry Day and National Reconciliation Week
- seeking feedback from Aboriginal children, families and communities on their experience at Evolve All Stars, particularly how safe they feel expressing their identity including their culture.

8. Valuing diversity

We value diversity and equity for all children. To achieve this, we:

- provide training for all Directors members, staff and volunteers on understanding diversity and how to support inclusion and cultural safety
- welcome and support participation of all children, including children with disability, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who are unable to live at home, LGBTIQ children and Aboriginal children and their families
- have zero tolerance of racism and other forms of discrimination and take action when discrimination or exclusion is identified
- strive to reflect the diversity of our community through representation in our staff
- acknowledge and celebrate important cultural dates in our classes
- have a physical and online environment that actively celebrates diversity
- commit to ensuring our facilities and online activities promote inclusion of children of all abilities.

9. Code of Conduct

Evolve All Stars has a Child Safe Code of Conduct. Directors, Staff and Volunteers must comply with the Code of Conduct at all times. Breaches of the Child Safe Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action including termination of a person's involvement with the organisation.

All third-party contractors are also expected to abide by the Child Safe Code of Conduct, and where they are engaging with children will have to sign an agreement to comply with the code, prior to delivering any services.

10. Recruiting staff and volunteers

Evolve All Stars prioritises child safety and wellbeing when recruiting and screening for staff and volunteers as outlined in the recruitment and screening policy. We only recruit staff and volunteers who are appropriate to engage with children. Non-coaching members of staff must also be screened. Evolve All Stars will exercise discretion and may require applicants to provide a Police check in accordance with the law before they commence their engagement and during their time with Evolve All Stars in regular intervals.

We require a Working with Children Check and referee checks for all staff and volunteers who have a role with children or have access to children's personal information. We require staff to have appropriate qualifications for their roles and check to make sure these qualifications are valid.

11. Supporting staff and volunteers

Evolve All Stars is committed to ensuring that all staff members receive training to ensure they understand their responsibilities in relation to child safety and to support their engagement with children. Evolve All Stars assists its Directors, staff and volunteers to incorporate child safety considerations into decisions and to promote a safe environment where children are empowered to speak up about issues that affect them.

All Evolve All Stars Directors and staff are required to complete annual child safety training. Training will be recorded in the Child Safety Training Action Plan.

Directors and Staff will receive supervision to support their engagement with children and for compliance with our Code of Conduct and Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

Issues or concerns about behaviour with children will be raised immediately and addressed in line with our Code of Conduct, complaint handling policy and disciplinary policy.

12. Complaints and reporting

All reports of child abuse and child safety concerns will be treated seriously, whether they are made by an adult or a child and whether they are about the conduct of an adult or a child. All complaints and child safety concerns will be responded to promptly and thoroughly.

Evolve All Stars has a complaint handling policy that includes information for staff about how a complaint or child safety concern will be responded to. An easy-to-understand complaints information sheet will be provided for children, families and the community to know about the complaint process and the support available to those making a complaint and those involved in the complaint process.

If a complaint includes an allegation or incident of child abuse or harm, then staff and volunteers at Evolve All Stars must report it in accordance with the complaint handling policy. Evolve All Stars staff are required to prioritise children's safety in any response and to report all potentially criminal conduct to Victoria Police. Under the complaint handling and disciplinary policies, staff and volunteers may be subject to actions to support child safety including:

- being stood down during an investigation or terminated following an investigation
- having their duties altered so they do not engage with children at Evolve All Stars
- not allowing unsupervised contact with children at Evolve All Stars
- removing their access to the Evolve All Stars system and facilities.

Complaints can be emailed to info@evolveallstars.com.au or you can speak with a Child Safety Person.

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

13. Child Safety Person

Evolve All Stars Director Ascha Boag is the trained child safety person with responsibility for responding to any child safety related complaints or concerns.

Child safety person is introduced to children so they know and understand who the appointed officers are, and how and when they may contact them. Ascha's name will be included in the newsletter as the child safety person.

If a person does not feel comfortable making a report to a child safety person, they may report their concern to one of the other Evolve Directors.

14. Record keeping

Evolve All Stars is committed to making and keeping full and accurate records about all child-related complaints or safety concerns.

All child safety complaints, concerns, incidents and near misses will be recorded in the incident reporting system.

Records which may assist with the investigation of a complaint or safety concern will be identified and kept as part of the record of an investigation. Records will be kept even if an investigation does not substantiate a complaint.

We will record and keep the outcome of any investigations, and the resolution of any complaints. This includes findings made, reasons for decisions and actions taken.

Records will be stored securely and kept by Evolve All Stars for at least 45 years.

15. Information sharing

Evolve All Stars may share relevant information to promote the safety and wellbeing of children, where it is appropriate and in their best interests. Evolve All Stars will keep information about complaints confidential, except where it is necessary to share information to respond properly to a complaint or to prioritise child safety. We may also need to share information about incidents or complaints with external authorities to comply with the law or to prioritise safety. More information is available in our complaint handling policy.

16. Risk management

We recognise the importance of identifying and managing risks of child harm and abuse in the physical and online environments operated by Evolve All Stars.

We conduct regular risk assessments and have a risk management plan to address the risk of child abuse and harm at Evolve All Stars. The risk management plan will be developed in consultation with our staff, volunteers, children, and Evolve All Stars Community. We will ensure that any risk controls put in place balance the need to manage harm with the benefits of participating at Evolve All Stars. The Directors are responsible for approving the risk management plan.

Any contractors or other providers of services will always be supervised by a member of staff while working with us to ensure child safety. See also Code of Conduct above.

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

Evolve All Stars will enforce this policy, the Code of Conduct and any other child safety and wellbeing policies (see list below). Potential breaches by anyone will be investigated and may result in restriction of duties, suspension or termination of employment or engagement or other corrective action. More information can be found in our disciplinary policy.

18. Review

Evolve All Stars will review all child safe practices and policies at least every two years. We also review relevant practices and policies in response to a child safety incident or 'near miss'. Findings from reviews will be reported to the people involved in our organisation and also inform our approach to continuous improvement of our child safety practices. Reviews are overseen by Ascha Boag and the Directors and will be informed by consultation with children, families and staff.

Supporting documents – Evolve All Stars child safety and wellbeing system

- The following policies and procedures work together to support child safety and wellbeing across all of our operations:
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (this policy)
- [Code of Conduct](#)
- [Evolve All Stars Child Safety Reporting Process](#)
- complaint handling policy + complaint handling form
- recruitment and screening policy
- risk management plan
- child safe training plan.

Supporting legislation

- [Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005](#) (Vic) (including 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)
- [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#).