

1. Policy Statement

Our employees contribute to the success of our organisation and that of our participants.

Our employees/volunteers have an obligation to the Business, our clients and themselves to observe high standards of integrity and fair dealing.

Irabina is committed to the safety, wellbeing and best interests of children and young people.

Irabina has the responsibility to ensure that:

- participants have the right to make their own decisions, to be free to live the life they choose, and to have the same rights and freedoms as any other member of the community
- participants have the right to freedom of expression and the right to make decisions about, and exercise control over, their own lives.
- children's and young people's families have a key role in engaging with Irabina.
- children and young people and their families have the right to be informed about all the aspects of the delivery of supports they receive in a form of communication, language and manner that enables them to understand.
- expressed values and beliefs of participants, including those relating to culture, faith, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexuality, and age as well as type of disability is considered when engaging with Irabina.
- privacy is protected in a dignified way of everyone that receives supports and services of Irabina.
- provides a safe environment for, and consider the needs of, children and young people with a disability, and consider their needs in providing that environment.
- participants and their families receive care and support with integrity, honesty, and transparency.
- provides training and education to all staff on the Child Safe Standards, Reportable Conduct Scheme and creating a child safe organisation.
- has robust human resources and recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers.
- provides a culturally safe environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people and those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and consider their needs in providing that environment.
- provides a safe environment for, and consider the needs, of children and young people who have suffered trauma, and consider their needs in providing that environment.
- provides a safe environment for, and consider the needs of, same sex attracted and intersex children and young people, and recognises gender diversity in providing a safe environment, and consider their needs in providing that environment.

Irabina requires all staff to uphold these commitments. Irabina has specific policies, procedures, and training in place to achieve these commitments.

2. Purpose

Irabina Code of Conduct sets out the expected behaviour of adults with children and young people in our organisation.

Irabina Autism Services belief in responsible social and ethical behaviour from all employees. This Code of Conduct outlines the child safe principles and minimum expectations for appropriate behaviour that all employees, consultants, contractors, or volunteers engaged by Irabina must observe when in the company of children and young people.

The Code of Conduct applies to all physical and online environments used by all staff. It also applies in other locations provided by Irabina (for an example, a Community Service Program).

3. Policy

Our Code of Conduct policy applies to all employees and volunteers and provides the framework of principles for conducting business, dealing with other employees, participants, and suppliers. The Code of Conduct is aligned to the NDIS Code of Conduct and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Code of Conduct) Rules 2018, which are NDIS rules made under the National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (NDIS Act).

And the mandatory [Victorian Child safe Standards](#) that commenced in January 2016 have been reviewed and updated to align more closely with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

Irabina management, staff and volunteers are committed to ensuring that we:

- have zero tolerance for child abuse, and neglect
- act with respect for our participants' individual rights to freedom of expression, self-determination, and decision-making in accordance with applicable laws and conventions
- respect the privacy of people
- provide supports and services in a safe and competent manner, with care and skill act with integrity, honesty, and transparency
- promptly take steps to raise and act on concerns about matters that may impact the quality and safety of supports and services provided to people with disability
- take all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to all forms of violence against, and exploitation, neglect, and abuse of, people with disability
- take all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to sexual misconduct,
- actively work to listen to and empower children,
- have systems to protect children from abuse, will take all allegations very seriously and will responds to them consistently in line with the organisation's policies and procedures and
- are committed to promoting cultural safety of Aboriginal children, cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

4. Acceptable behaviours

As Irabina's staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of our organisation involved in child-connected work, we are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:

- always upholding our Irabina's commitment to child safety and adhering to our Duty of Care – Child Safety Policy.
- treating children and young people with respect in our organisation and outside Irabina's environment as part of normal social and community activities.
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of children and young people, particularly if they disclose that they or another child or young people has been abused or are worried about their safety or the safety of another child.
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children, children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with a disability, and LGBTQIA+ children.
- ensuring, as far as practicable, that adults are not alone with a child or young people – one-to-one interactions between an adult and a child or young people are to be in an open space or in line of sight of another adult.
- reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child/ young people safety concerns to Child Safety Officer.
- understanding and complying with all reporting and disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) in line with our child safety responding and reporting policy and procedures.
- if child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the child or young people are safe and protected from harm.

5. Unacceptable behaviours

As Irabina's staff, volunteers, contractors, and member of our organisation involved in child-connected work we must not:

- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse or harm.
- display behaviours or engage with children in ways that are not justified by the professional context.
- ignore an adult's overly familiar or inappropriate behaviour towards a child or young people.
- treat a child or young people unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, or ethnicity.
- engage in any unlawful activity with or in relation to a child or young people.
- engage in any activity that is likely to harm a child physically, sexually, or emotionally.
- be alone with a child or young people unnecessarily.
- arrange personal contact, including online contact, with child or young people with for a purpose unrelated to Irabina's activities.
- disclose personal or sensitive information about a child or young people, including images of a child, unless the child and their parent or legal guardian consent or unless required to do so by Irabina's policy and procedure on reporting.
- use inappropriate language in the presence of child or young people or show or provide children with access to inappropriate images or material.
- work with child or young people while under the influence of alcohol or prohibited drugs.

6. Breach of the Code of Conduct

All staff of Irabina who breach this Code of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary procedures (including termination) in accordance with the relevant industrial instrument and/or relevant terms of engagement.

All staff are obliged to report any breaches of this Code of Conduct to the Child Safety Officer or appropriate person. In instances where a reportable allegation has been made, the matter will be managed in accordance with Irabina’s Reportable Conduct Policy and may be subject to referral to Victoria Police.

If a staff member thinks that this Code of Conduct has been breached by another staff member, they will:

- act immediately in the best interest of the child or young person
- act promptly to ensure that the child or young person is safe
- promptly follow departmental reporting procedures.

Irabina Autism Services expects all employees conduct themselves in a professional, ethical, and socially acceptable manner of the highest standards. For any breach of this code, the Irabina Incident Management Policy and Procedure must be applied to the management of reportable incidents to the NDIS Commission, information about the Reportable Conduct Scheme to the Commission for Children and Young People.

7. Key Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Executive Management/Clinical Services Manager	Responsible for communicating Irabina’s expectations to all staff. Also responsible to support staff appropriately in the workplace and provide a work environment that facilitates effective performance of duties.
Clinicians/ Employees/Volunteers	Ensure compliance with the code of conduct during all aspects of Irabina business.

8. Definitions

Term	Meaning
Consumer	All end users (parents/guardian/carers, those with ASD and related conditions, Professionals, Schools, etc.) of goods or services provided by Irabina or is directly affected by the services
Disciplinary Action	The circumstances surrounding an employee's actions and the seriousness of such action will determine the appropriate level of disciplinary action to be undertaken and can include: performance counselling, verbal or written warnings, investigation and/or termination of employment.
Carer	Someone who provides support and help to a person with disability in the activities of their day-to-day life but not as an employee or person otherwise engaged by an NDIS provider. A carer will often be a family member or guardian of the person.
Complaints Process	In addition to the NDIS Commission having a complaints function overseen by a Complaints Commissioner, registered NDIS providers are required to have effective internal complaints management and resolution systems that are appropriate for the size of a provider and for the services or supports they provide.
LGBTQIA+	LGBTQIA+' is an evolving acronym that stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning, asexual. Many other terms (such as non-binary and pansexual) that people use to describe their experiences of their gender, sexuality, and physiological sex characteristics.
Sexual Misconduct	Inappropriate behaviour that may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • asking the person on a date • touching any part of a person's body in a sexual way • touching a person in a way they do not wish to be touched • displaying their genitals to the person • coercing, by pressuring or tricking, a person to engage in sexual behaviours or acts • making sexual or erotic comments to the person – in person or by text message, email, or social media message (as well as written comments, this includes images and audio) • making sexually suggestive comments or jokes • intentionally staring at a person in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable • making comments about a person's sexuality or appearance

Term	Meaning
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> making requests of a sexual nature, including to remove clothing, for sexually explicit photographs, videos or for sexual activities showing the person pictures or videos of naked people, or people undertaking sexual activities ignoring or encouraging sexual behaviour between people with disability that is non-consensual or exploitative. <p>This list does not cover all situations and there may be other activities or behaviours that constitute sexual misconduct.</p>
Participant	A person who the CEO of the NDIA decides meets the NDIS access requirements in response to a valid access request and so becomes a participant in the NDIS.
Incident Management System	The incident management system that registered NDIS providers are obliged to implement and report on to the NDIS Commission, in accordance with the NDIS (Incident Management and Reportable Incidents) Rules 2018.
Support	Things to help a person undertake daily life activities and enable them to participate in the community and reach their goals.
Worker	Persons employed or otherwise engaged by an NDIS provider. For example, people working in the disability support sector in either a paid or voluntary capacity for an NDIS provider.

9. Related Documents

Irabina HR Manual Media Policy
 Public Affairs Policy
 National Disability Insurance Scheme (Code of Conduct) Rules 2018
 The National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (NDIS Act)
 The Irabina Duty of Care – Child Safety Policy
 The NDIS Code of Conduct
 The Irabina Feedback and Complaints Policy and Procedure
 The Irabina Incident Management Policy and Procedure
 The National Disability Insurance Scheme (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018
 The National Disability Insurance Scheme (Incident Management) Rules 2018
 Irabina Recruitment Policy

10. Relevant Legislation, Standards and Agreements

Commission for Children and Young People – Child Safe Standards
Victorian Government – Child Safety code of conduct
Children, Youth and Families Act 2005
Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)
Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
Disability Act 2006
Privacy Act 1988
The National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013.
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
The Victorian Child Safety Standards
The National Principles for Child Safety
NDIS (Incident Management and Reportable Incidents) Rules 2018 (Cth)
NDIS (Complaints Management) Rules 2018 (Cth)
NDIS (Code of Conduct) Rules 2018 (Cth)
NDIS (Worker Screening) Rules 2018 (Cth)
The Victorian Disability Worker Exclusion Scheme
Safety Screening Policy for registered NDIS providers operating in Victoria, October 2019
The Human Rights Framework
National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children 2009-2020