



Child Protection Guidelines

Introduction

Oz GREEN adheres to statutory laws in Australia and foreign countries regarding child exploitation, and has guidelines in place to protect the rights of children in all aspects of its program.

Oz GREEN is committed to ensuring that all possible and necessary steps are taken to acknowledge the rights of and protect the well being of all children that we work with, both in Australia and overseas. Oz GREEN is a signatory of the Australian Council For International Development (ACFID) Code of Conduct and is required to implement “policies and procedures to promote the safety and well-being of all children accessing their services and programs-to minimise the risk of abuse of children”. It is the responsibility of all Management Committee, staff and volunteers to protect children “...from all forms of physical and mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse

Guideline aim

This Guideline aims to provide guidance and direction to all Oz GREEN staff and volunteers so that:

- the rights of children in Australia and overseas are protected and enhanced through programs and projects
- volunteers and staff understand issues of child protection, and are aware of the problem of child abuse
- organisational risks and duty of care are covered through implementing program procedures in recruitment, placement and management of volunteers designed to safeguard children through good practice.

Risks and protection

Oz GREEN Staff and Volunteers in contact with children should:

- be aware of situations which may present risks and manage these
- plan and organise the work and the workplace so as to minimise risks
- be visible to others when working with children whenever possible
- create and maintain a non-defensive attitude and an open culture in which to discuss any issues or concerns
- foster a culture of mutual accountability so that any potentially abusive behaviour can be challenged
- respect each child’s boundaries and help them to develop their own sense of their rights as well as helping them to know what they do if they feel there is a problem.

Requirements

Whilst running workshops or programs, or during travel, all staff and volunteers must acknowledge and accept that it is inappropriate (unless they are a parent, family or guardian) to:

- spend excessive time alone with children away from others
- take children to their own home, especially where no-one else will be present
- smack or hit children
- have a child or children to stay at their home unsupervised
- sleep in the same room or bed as a child
- do things for children of a personal nature that they do for themselves.



Oz GREEN Staff and Volunteers must never develop sexual relationships with children; develop relationships with children that could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive; or act in ways that may be abusive or may place a child at risk of abuse.

Oz GREEN Staff and Volunteers must avoid actions or behaviour that could be construed as poor practice or potentially abusive, which includes:

- using language, making suggestions or offering advice which is inappropriate, offensive or abusive
- behaving physically in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative towards a child
- condoning, or participating in, behaviour of children which is illegal, unsafe or abusive
- acting in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children
- showing unfair differential treatment, or favouring particular children to the exclusion of others in the same group.

Oz GREEN Staff and Volunteers should develop a contingency plan to discuss or report any knowledge of child abuse in the local workplace or local community with a trusted local.