



The Chow Foundation Child Protection Policy

1. Organisational Context

The Chow Foundation is a values-driven, not-for-profit organisation based in Australia, working to improve health equity, support vulnerable populations, and promote inclusive community development across Australia and the Asia-Pacific region. Through a range of public health, education, and humanitarian initiatives, the Foundation partners with local stakeholders to support meaningful and sustainable change, often operating in remote, culturally diverse, and resource-limited settings.

The Chow Foundation recognises the inherent rights of all children to live in safety, be protected from harm, and have opportunities to thrive. We are deeply committed to upholding the rights of children to survival, development, protection, and participation—principles set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and its optional protocols.

2. Purpose

This Child Protection Policy outlines the Chow Foundation’s commitment to promoting safe, respectful environments for children who come into contact with our programs—whether directly or indirectly. While child protection may not be the primary focus of all Chow Foundation projects, our activities occasionally involve direct engagement with children, such as during community outreach, education sessions, or health screenings. Children may also be indirectly affected—for example, by attending events with parents, or living in the communities we serve.

This policy establishes clear expectations and responsibilities for all individuals associated with the Chow Foundation to ensure that children are not exposed to harm through our work. It also provides guidance on recognising, reporting, and responding to concerns related to child safety and wellbeing.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all representatives of the Chow Foundation, including employees, board members, volunteers, interns, contractors, consultants, and visiting partners. It also applies to the family members of Foundation personnel when they are travelling or involved in activities under the organisation’s umbrella.

The policy is applicable at all times during official duties or engagements, including activities that take place outside standard working hours, or during travel to program locations, whether for work or associated social activities. It also extends to partner organisations and third parties operating in partnership with the Chow Foundation or receiving Foundation funding.

4. Guiding Principles

The Chow Foundation's approach to child protection is rooted in a commitment to uphold the best interests of the child, ensure the dignity and participation of all children, and foster a culture of prevention and accountability. The following principles guide our work:

- Zero tolerance for child abuse and exploitation
- Best interests of the child
- Shared responsibility
- Prevention and risk mitigation
- Procedural fairness and confidentiality
- Accountability and continuous improvement

5. Policy Commitment

The Chow Foundation recognises that children are present in many of the communities in which we work. While not all our programs are specifically designed for children, our commitment to safeguarding ensures that child protection measures are integrated across our operations.

Our practices include:

- Ensuring all representatives commit to 'do no harm.'
- Promoting awareness of child protection commitments publicly.
- Treating all children with respect and protecting their privacy.
- Recognising heightened vulnerabilities.
- Supporting child participation when appropriate.
- Responding swiftly to concerns or breaches.
- Protecting children's information and media use.
- Ensuring child protection prevails over publicity needs.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Directors: Provides oversight and approves policy updates. Reviews serious incidents.

CEO: Leads policy implementation. Allocates safeguarding resources.

Safeguarding Focal Point: The primary point of contact for questions and concerns. Supports training and reporting.

Compliance and Risk Manager: Ensures proper recruitment screening. Maintains training records. Monitors partner compliance.

All Representatives: Understand and comply with this policy. Report concerns. Model child-safe behaviour.

7. Implementation Strategies

7.1 Code of Conduct

All representatives must sign the Chow Foundation Child Protection Code of Conduct. It sets behaviour standards and protects both children and personnel.

7.2 Recruitment and Screening

The Foundation uses strict procedures, including:

- Position risk assessments
- Police and Working with Children Checks
- Behavioural interviews and reference checks
- Mandatory disclosures

7.3 Training and Awareness

All personnel receive:

- Policy and Code of Conduct induction
- Incident reporting guidance
- Refresher and role-specific training

7.4 Risk Management

Child safeguarding is embedded in our risk framework. All programs are risk-assessed and monitored.

7.5 Partner Organisations

Partners must:

- Sign our Code of Conduct
- Include child protection clauses
- Train staff and assess risk
- Comply with Foundation and donor requirements

8. Reporting and Incident Management

All suspicions, disclosures, or allegations of child harm must be reported immediately.

Reports may be made verbally or in writing to the Safeguarding Focal Point or Managing Director.

Where necessary, the Foundation will:

- Refer cases to child protection authorities
- Notify donors (e.g., DFAT)
- Cooperate with police or external investigators

Confidentiality will be maintained at all times. Whistleblowers are protected from retaliation.

9. Misconduct and Sanctions

Violations of this policy are considered serious misconduct. Consequences may include:

- Termination of employment or engagement
- Termination of partnerships
- Reporting to police or authorities

Failure to report known concerns may also result in disciplinary action.

10. Review and Amendment

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years or sooner if required. The Board must approve all revisions. Updates will be communicated to staff and stakeholders.

Annex 1: Child Protection Code of Conduct

I agree to:

- Respect children's rights and dignity
- Treat all children fairly and without discrimination
- Maintain clear boundaries
- Never engage in abuse or exploitative behaviour
- Avoid being alone with children without supervision
- Not share personal contact information with children
- Not use inappropriate language or behaviour
- Not give children drugs, alcohol, or inappropriate gifts
- Not use physical punishment
- Use images of children only with consent
- Immediately report all concerns or breaches

Declaration:

I, [Name], acknowledge I have read and understood the Chow Foundation Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct.

Signature: _____ Date: _____ Position: _____

Annex 2: Reporting Procedure

What to report:

- Abuse, neglect, exploitation, misconduct
- Inappropriate conduct or boundary-crossing

Who can report:

- Anyone: staff, volunteers, community, children

How to report:

- Notify Safeguarding Focal Point or Managing Director
- Use Incident Report Form
- Report verbally if urgent, then follow up in writing

Contact Information:

- Email: admin@chowfoundation.org
- Phone: [Insert Number]

What happens next:

- Initial review and risk assessment
- Referral to authorities if needed
- Confidentiality maintained
- Updates provided when appropriate

Reporters are protected from retaliation. All concerns are taken seriously and handled professionally.