

Name:	Child Safety Policy
Policy Number:	GOP020
Approved by:	Board
Last reviewed:	August 2022

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

YHA has a mission “to create a community in diverse spaces, by connecting the curious, inspiring personal growth and creating genuine local experiences, in a sustainable way.”

YHA has a duty to provide a safe and secure environment to all guests using our properties, including children. This policy is designed to provide information to guests, employees, contractors, volunteers, and Directors about the organisation’s commitment to child safety and the procedures YHA has in place to ensure we provide a safe and secure for children in our properties.

1.2 Scope

The scope of this policy extends to all YHA Directors, YHA employees, volunteers and contractors (temps and subcontractors) working on behalf of YHA when on site at YHA properties. The safety of children is everyone’s responsibility.

1.3 Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
Child	A person under 18 years of age
Responsible adult	A parent, guardian, or step-parent, grandparent, sibling, spouse who is over the age of 18 years, a person 18 years or over who is acting in place of a parent and who could reasonably be expected to exercise responsible supervision of the minor – for example, a sporting coach, responsible carer or supervisor or teacher
Worker	An employee, volunteer, or contractor of YHA Ltd
YHA	YHA Ltd

1.4 Organisational Context

YHA regularly provides accommodation to children either as part of a family group or a registered school, sporting or other group. Children are at all times the responsibility of their parent, guardian, or group leaders. YHA does not provide child-related services, such as child- minding or running activities or programs for children. As such, YHA workers have only a limited interaction with children as part of their regular work. However, workers will understand child safety issues and be aware of good practice when coming in contact with children in the workplace. This Child Safety Policy is in the context of YHA’s overall safety policies and does not replace them.

2. POLICY

2.1 YHA's Obligations

- 2.1.1 YHA has policies and procedures as outlined in this document that support the safety of, and minimise the risk to, children staying in or visiting our properties.
- 2.1.2 YHA operates buildings with safety and security measures appropriate to the local environment as outlined in section 3.3
- 2.1.3 YHA ensures employees are aware of their responsibilities when children are staying at YHA properties by requiring all new employees to read the YHA Child Safety Policy (this document) and signing a declaration that they have read and understood it.
- 2.1.4 YHA provides all contractors who are regularly engaged to undertake activities on YHA properties a copy of this policy and requires them to sign an agreement that they will abide by its principles and procedures.
- 2.1.5 YHA undertakes a careful, planned, and transparent recruitment process including maintaining reference checking procedures for new employees.
- 2.1.6 YHA has clear procedures for handling complaints and incidents relating to children and when to escalate these to the proper authorities as per Clause 3.1.
- 2.1.7 YHA abides with relevant state and territory legislation and regulations.
- 2.1.8 YHA will comply with local state licensing regulations to always ensure child safety on premises.

2.2 Child Accommodation Policy

- 2.2.1 YHA does not provide accommodation to guests under 18 unless they are accompanied by a responsible adult. The supervision of children remains the responsibility of their responsible adult whilst the child is at a YHA property. Under no circumstance should a child be left in the care of a YHA team member unless in an emergency situation.
- 2.2.2 Children under 18 years of age are only allowed to stay unaccompanied at a YHA property at the discretion of YHA management and are deemed to be in an emergency at-risk situation. In these circumstances the local Child Protection Agency must be contacted and made aware of the at-risk children.
- 2.2.3 No child will be accommodated in a room where they are sharing with a person that is not known to them. That is, they will only share a room with their responsible adults and their siblings, friends, or group mates (when staying as part of a registered group).
- 2.2.4 Children are not allowed to wander unaccompanied around the property or be left alone on the property at any time.
- 2.2.5 YHA does not provide child-minding or childcare services. This responsibility remains with their responsible adult.
- 2.2.6 Most of YHA's accommodation is bunk-style. For their own safety children under 9 years of age are not recommended to use top bunks.

2.3 Working around Children – Employee Policy

2.3.1 Under no circumstances should YHA workers:

- a. Be alone in a room, bathroom, or other private space with a child.
 - i. When performing maintenance or cleaning work, no child should be present unless the child's responsible adult is also in the room.
 - ii. If a worker enters an area of the property (such as a communal bathroom) and finds a child present without their responsible adult, the worker must leave the space until the child also vacates. If there is concern that the child is lost or should be in the company of an adult, the worker should make reasonable efforts to locate the child's responsible adult.
- b. Put themselves into any position with a child that could be seen as compromising.
- c. Touch a child, except in the circumstance of providing emergency first aid if adequately trained to do so.
- d. Behave in ways that could be considered physically, emotionally, or sexually provocative or abusive towards children or any other persons in the workplace.
- e. Initiate communication designed to develop inappropriate trust or further contact with the child outside of the workplace.
- f. Photograph or video a child without the consent of the child and their responsible adult.

2.3.2 Workers will have only minimal interaction and/or communication with children in the workplace as necessary in the provision of hospitality services, and as much as is practicable any communication regarding a child will take place between the worker and the child's responsible adult.

3. PROCEDURE

Procedure Step	Responsibility
<u>3.1 Handling Child-related Complaints and Incidents</u>	
3.1.1 Should an incident or issue occur at a YHA site involving children, the incident must immediately be reported to the Property Manager or their designated representative.	All staff
3.1.2 Only interview the child(ren) involved with their responsible adult/s being present.	All staff
3.1.3 Where possible, work to isolate the child(ren) from any other parties which may be involved in the complaint.	All staff
3.1.4 Prepare a report of the incident after talking to all parties involved and keep it on file.	All staff
3.1.5 Advise the Head of Operations and the relevant Area Manager of the incident.	Property Manager
3.1.6 Keep all information confidential except when necessary to report the incident to an appropriate authority.	All staff
3.1.7 Report any suspicious or concerning behaviour to the appropriate authority.	All staff

3.2 Supporting Documentation

Name	Location	Document Type
Child Safety Section of Operations Manual	FUSE (YHA Intranet)	Manual
Workplace Health and Safety Policy	FUSE	Policy
Workplace Health, Safety, and Environment for Contractors Policy	FUSE	Policy
Workplace Discrimination and Harassment Policy	FUSE	Policy
Guest Incident Report Form	FUSE	Jira Form
eLearning material regarding safety	YHA Academy (eLearning system)	Training material
Australian YHA Hostel Standards and Gradings	FUSE	Guideline
YHA Volunteers Policy & Volunteer information pack	FUSE	Policy and procedure

3.3 List of YHA Property Safety and Security Measures

Mandatory safety and security measures:

- Photo ID is required to be presented upon check-in for all individual guests 24-hour staffing, or on-site emergency contact.
- Photo taken and placed on electronic file for all individual guests.
- 24-hour staffing, or on-site emergency contact.
- Families accommodated together in family rooms with ensuites where available and are not to share rooms with other guests.
- Swimming pool access controlled with security and meets regulations.
- Window and balcony balustrade heights meet regulations.
- Limit access to areas where alcohol is being served and in line with local liquor licensing regulations.

Additional safety and security measures YHA incorporates in properties subject to the conditions of the local environment:

- CCTV coverage.
- Key-swipe access to bathrooms by gender.
- Key-swipe access to lifts, front doors after hours, and other guest-only zones.
- Restricted access zones for groups (where available).
- Groups are accommodated as close together in the property as possible or in separate section of building (where practicable).

4. ADMINISTRATION

4.1 Responsibility

Policy Owner	<i>CEO</i>
Policy Approver	<i>Board</i>
Review Frequency	<i>Biennial</i>

4.2 Version Control and Change History

Version Number	Approval Date	Approved by	Amendment
1	23 February 2019	Board	
2	November 2021	Board	Conversion from OPP50 to GOP020
3	17 th August 2022	Board	Amended wording on points 2.2.2 & 3.1.7