



Wollangarra Child Protection Guidelines

A child is defined as anyone under the age of 18. It is condition of employment and is a legal requirement that anyone working with children must hold a relevant state recognised certification. In Victoria it is the Working with Children's Check (WWCC). The WWCC is also a legal requirement for any adult (18+) volunteers and helpers that come to Wollangarra – including personal visitors and participants on work weekends.

This strict policy comes as a result of a legislation change in August 2017.

Wollangarra is a unique place. We want the young people to be welcomed and befriended. It is part of the Wollangarra magic that a young person can find their “place” and be accepted.

We as staff and volunteers must be incredibly aware of the fine line we walk in dealing with our young people. We really get to know some of them quite well, and you will start to care for them on a deeper level.

However, we must keep our relationships appropriate and professional at all times.

Please consider the following suggestions when dealing with our young people:

- Never be one on one with a young person out of sight or earshot of others
- Keep hugging to – greetings and goodbyes, and only in a group situation
- Avoid “friending” young people on your personal social media
- Wear appropriate attire around young people at all times – including while swimming. i.e. no swimming in underwear with young people present.
- Avoid telephoning young people “just for a chat”
- Avoid texting young people
- Consider the reason you would give out your personal phone number to young people
- Visiting young people at their homes may not be appropriate
- Avoid over-sharing of your personal life and situation
- Don't say or do anything you wouldn't say or do in front of the young person's parents.
- No sleeping in the vicinity of young people unless tasked to do so in a supervisory role, and then only with another Leader present.

Young people may disclose personal information and their mental health issues. We are not trained to deal with or fix young peoples mental health issues. Throughout the program we are aiming to keep young people safe, focused on ‘The Now’ and give them a positive experience. If you are feeling out of your comfort zone, please speak to a Wollangarra staff member or Director. If a young person discloses information relating to sexual, physical or emotional abuse, self harm or suicide, you must report this to the Directors immediately.

You will have a profound effect on the young people, who come to Wollangarra, and they will give you so much adoration and love in return, but please remember, they are not your friends and must not be treated as such.