

Our Commitment to Children and Young People

Windermere is committed to keeping children and young people safe. Children and young people have a right to:

- Be cared for
- Feel safe and comfortable
- Be safe

Everyone at Windermere works hard to make sure children and young people are protected from any harm.

It is not okay for anyone to hurt a child.

It is okay for a child to say NO to an adult if they are asked to do something that makes them feel unsafe or uncomfortable.

About Windermere

Windermere is an independent community service organisation working across south east Victoria to help those who need it most. Since our beginning more than 150 years ago, we have been working to create a stronger, more connected and supported community.

Our support comes in many forms as we work together to find the right solutions for the many and varied complex issues faced by children, families and individuals in our community.

Our aim is to get in early by providing programs and services within these primary areas:

1. Family Wellbeing to create positive behavioural changes, greater understanding and respond to violence and/or neglect
2. Childhood Development, Education & Support including child care and services for children and adults with developmental delays and disability
3. Assistance and support for victims of trauma, assault and/or violent crime
4. Community Strengthening designed to respond quickly to critical and emerging needs.

Whilst we receive funding for some services from state and federal governments, others are funded solely by donors and sponsors to whom we are truly grateful.

We believe that everyone is someone in our community and that is reflected in our approach with those we work with everyday.



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windermere.org.au



If you require an interpreter, we can arrange for one to be provided.



Our Commitment to *Child Safety*



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Child Safety Policy:

- Windermere will give its highest priority to the promotion and protection of a child's safety, health, development, education and well-being
- Windermere will guide its people on acceptable behaviour and appropriate boundaries when interacting with children
- Windermere is committed to increasing community awareness on the importance of child wellbeing and child safety
- If we believe a child or young person is at risk of being harmed or has been harmed, we must report it to Windermere management for appropriate action
- Any form of child abuse is a crime in Victoria and concerns of this nature must be raised and referred to Police and/or Child Protection authorities
- Windermere works with children and young people in accordance with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005 and the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005.

NOTE: For a more detailed outline of Windermere's reporting process please request a copy of Windermere's Child Safety policy.

Reporting Process:

- Every member of the community has a responsibility to keep children safe and report to police any reasonable belief they have that a child¹ is being sexually abused
- Everyone who works with us is expected to report suspected abuse
- The child's family is included and informed as much as possible when reporting abuse.

¹ Under the age of 16 years

Physical Abuse

Where a person means to hurt a child by punching, beating, flogging, shaking, biting or burning them.

- Hitting a child and leaving marks, welts or bruises
- **Shaking a baby/child out of frustration**
- Burning a child with a cigarette.

Emotional Abuse

Where adults repeatedly say things to children that make them feel bad, mad or sad; feel threatened or rejected.

- Telling a child they are no good
- **Not giving a child love or affection**
- Leaving a child alone or locking up a child
- **Not allowing a child to have friends**
- Subjecting a child to family violence (seeing or hearing parents or adults in the home fighting).

Neglect

Where a child is hurt because their parent or carer doesn't give them what they need in the way of food, nurturing, a home, physical and emotional care.

- Not taking the child to the doctor or hospital when they are sick or hurt
- **Repeatedly ignoring a child when they are upset and needing a hug**
- Not sending children to school
- **Not providing children with food, clothing or hygienic housing.**



Sexual Abuse

Where an adult or older child does sexual things to a child or gets a child to do sexual things to them or someone else, or expose them to explicit sexual activity or images.

- Forcing or coercing children to have sex or engage in sexual acts with other children or adults.
- **Inappropriate touching**
- Saying things that are obscene or suggestive
- **Taking or exposing children to sexually explicit images and videos.**

Grooming

Where a trusted person seeks a special bond with a child/adolescent with the intent of involving them in sexual activity.

- Favouring or giving gifts to a child or young person
- **Inappropriate interactions with children either in person or via social media**
- Asking a child or young person to keep a secret of any aspect of their relationship
- **Ignoring professional boundaries or rules.**