



**ZWIĄZEK HARCERSTWA POLSKIEGO**  
**POLISH SCOUTING ASSOCIATION Z.H.P. IN AUSTRALIA INC.**  
ABN 96 655 314 335 ARBN: 105 459 096 Reg. No. A0038164

[www.zhp.org.au](http://www.zhp.org.au)

# Child Protection Policy and Procedures

First Published 2014 Last Reviewed October 2014 Amendment by Executive  
Committee of the Polish Scouting Association (ZHP) in Australia Inc only  
Version 1.0

This document has been prepared by the Polish Scouting Association (ZHP) in Australia Inc. for the operation of all its units Australia wide. The contents of this document are not held to be applicable to, or appropriate for, any other organization or purpose. Comments and suggestions for improvement can be emailed to the Polish Scouting Association (ZHP) in Australia, Executive Committee "Zarząd Okręgu"

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## 1. Definitions

In these rules, unless the contrary intention appears:

**“Member”** means a financial and registered member of the Association as defined under Rule 1 Membership categories – Rules of the Polish Scouting Association Z.H.P in Australia INC;

**“Girl Scouts Organisation”** – in Polish **“Chorągiew Harcerek”**;

**“Boy Scouts Organisation”** – in Polish **“Chorągiew Harcerzy”**;

**“Helper”** – any non-registered member who participates in a scouting activity

**“Scout”** means either a boy scout or a girl scout or a venturer scout;

**“Branch President”** – in Polish **“Przewodniczący Obwodu”**

**“President”** – in Polish **“Przewodniczący/a ZHP”**;

**“World Commissioner for Boys”** – in Polish **“Naczelnik”**;

**“World Commissioner for Girls”** – in Polish **“Naczelniczka”**;

**“World Commissioner”** is a generic term for either “World Commissioner for Boys” or “World Commissioner for Girls”;

**“Australian Commissioner for Boys”** – in Polish **“Komendant Chorągwi”**; **“Australian Commissioner for Girls”** – in Polish **“Komendantka Chorągwi”**;

**“Australian Commissioner”** is a generic term for either “Australian Commissioner for Boys” or “Australian Commissioner for Girls”;

**“State Commissioner for Girls”** – in Polish **“Hufcowa”**;

**“State Commissioner for Boys”** – in Polish **“Hufcowy”**;

**“State Commissioner”** is a generic term for either “State Commissioner for Boys” or “State Commissioner for Girls”;

## 2. Introduction

Children and young people have the right to be emotionally and physically safe at all times. This paper details the policy and procedures of the Polish Scouting Association (ZHP) in Australia Inc (herein referred to as the Polish Scouting Association) which are designed to ensure, that as best as achievable, our youth members and adults may enjoy the Scout program in the safest and most secure environment.

The Polish Scouting Association aims, structure and rules are contained at reference A. The Polish Scouting Association presently has units and operates in QLD, NSW and VIC. Although the states have differing Acts and legislation relating to Child Protection, a common principle is the paramount importance of the “best interests of the child”. This is the guiding principle of the Polish Scouting Association’s Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

## 3. Objectives

These policies and procedures concerning child protection have the following goals:

- To provide ways to minimize the risk of child abuse to youth members.
- To ensure that all allegations of child abuse or suspected child abuse are handled in a consistent and appropriate manner.
- Protect children from exploitation and abuse of all kinds in the delivery of Polish Scouting

## 4. Policy Statement

The Polish Scouting Association exists to positively contribute to the physical, mental, social and spiritual development of young people so that they may take a constructive place in Australian society. Accordingly, we abhor any kind of child abuse and take very seriously any incidence of it. Our youth members and adults should be in a position to enjoy the Scout Program in the safest and most positive environment possible. The Polish Scouting Association will take every practicable step to ensure that all members feel safe within a setting of mutual respect, and that any allegations of child abuse are dealt with consistently and appropriately.

## 5. Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all members of the Association. Occasionally, other young people and adults who are not members of the Association participate in the Scout Program. This policy applies equally to these persons including all adult helpers and non-members as they participate.

This policy provides guidance in the following specific areas:

- Understanding child abuse.
- Identifying child abuse.
- Responding to situations of suspected or known child abuse.
- Prevention (screening, reinforcement, procedures).
- Training.
- Privacy.

## 6. Guiding principles

The policy is guided by the following principles

### Zero tolerance of child exploitation and abuse

Polish Scouting Association does not tolerate child exploitation and abuse. Such action attracts criminal, civil and disciplinary sanctions. The Association works to reduce the risks of child exploitation and abuse associated with delivering aid activities and trains its staff on their obligations. The Association will not knowingly engage—directly or indirectly—anyone who poses an unacceptable risk to children. The Association will not fund any individual or organization that does not meet the Association’s child protection compliance standards in their operations and activities.

### Recognition of the best interest of the child

Australia is a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Polish Scouting Association is committed to upholding the rights and obligations under this convention. The Association recognizes that some children, such as those with disability are particularly vulnerable.

### Sharing responsibility for child protection

To effectively manage risks to children, the Polish Scouting Association requires the commitment, support and cooperation of registered members and helpers of the association. They must meet the terms of this policy and will be held accountable.

### Risk management approach

While it is not possible to eliminate all risks of child exploitation and abuse, careful management can reduce the risks to children that may be associated with scouting activities. These are identified during initial risk assessments and are managed for the duration of the activity.

### Procedural fairness

The Polish Scouting Association uses fair and proper procedures when making decisions that affect a person's rights or interests. Our partners are expected to adhere to this principle when responding to concerns or allegations of child exploitation and abuse.

## 7. Definition of Child Abuse

Child abuse can be characterized in four ways:

1. Sexual abuse
2. Physical abuse
3. Emotional abuse
4. Neglect

Full descriptions of these forms of abuse are located in Appendix A: *Definitions of Child Abuse*.

## 8. Responding to Suspected Child Abuse

### A. Basic Principles

Everything must be done to ensure the ongoing safety of the child concerned along with any other children potentially in contact with the alleged perpetrator. The best interest of the child is the primary concern and ALL other concerns (including guilt or innocence of the alleged offender) are secondary. This does not mean that the alleged offender is to be considered guilty without due investigation. Under no circumstances must any child be left in a hazardous situation or in a potentially hazardous situation.

### B. Reporting

Legislation varies between QLD, NSW and VIC on identifying people who are required by law to report suspected incidences of abuse. At the time of writing, the Polish Scouting Association volunteers are not considered mandatory reporters or mandatory notifiers in QLD, NSW or VIC.

**It is a requirement of the Polish Scouting Association that all volunteers report if they become aware of abuse or suspected abuse involving a child under the age of 18 and the alleged offender is a member or helper of the Polish Scouting Association. Alleged offender is to be reported immediately to their State Commissioner, the Australian Commissioner and removed from any contact with children within the Association.**

**The State Commissioner is to then notify the relevant state Child Protection authorities:**

- QLD: Child Safety Services Enquiries Unit: 1800 811 810
- NSW: Child Protection Help line: 132 111
- VIC: Child Protection Emergency Services 131 278

It is the State Commissioner's responsibility to first notify Child Protection Services and secondly to notify the Australian Commissioner. It is not the State Commissioner's role to conduct investigations.

**If timely contact cannot be made with neither state Child Protection authorities the State Commissioner must contact state Police for assistance.**

The Australian Commissioner shall inform the President via email [president@zhp.org.au] and telephone as soon as possible.

A need to know principle is to apply, with details only being disclosed to other leaders as required to avoid potentially hazardous situations for children, and not to compromise further investigations.

The President and Australian Commissioners must keep safe and confidential records pertaining to abuse and suspected abuse.

Young person's themselves should be encouraged to report any abuse or suspected abuse.

**In the event that the State Commissioner, Australian Commissioner or President are the alleged offender, the reporter is to report directly to the relevant state Child Protection authorities**

**It is a requirement of the Polish Scouting Association that volunteers contact their State Commissioner or the Australian Commissioner to discuss any Child Protection concerns they may have about either:**

- the behavior of any of its volunteers (that might not constitute suspicion that abuse has occurred)
- Potential improvements to these Child Protection policy and procedures.

### **C. Reporting Procedures**

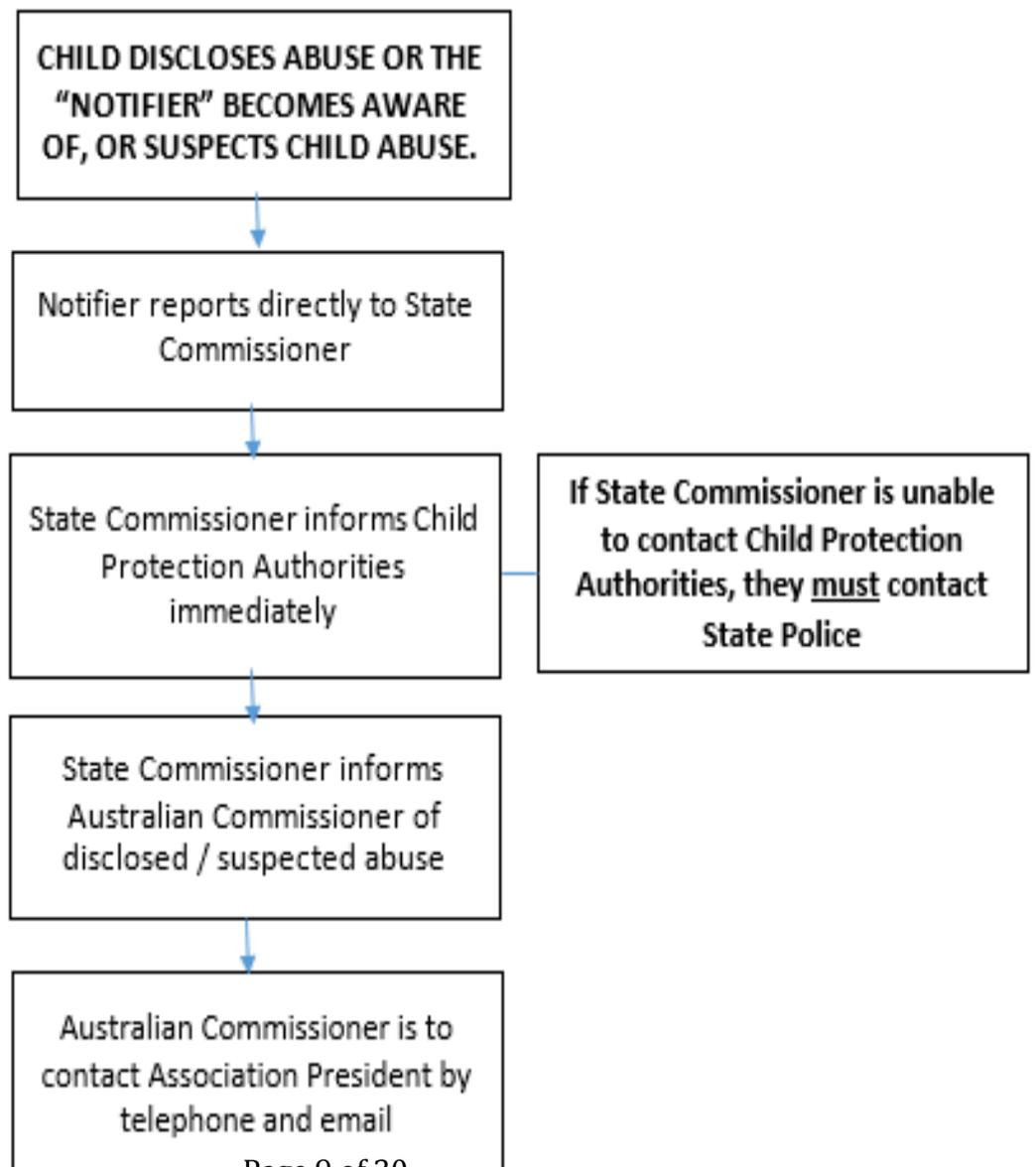
In line with this policy, it is a requirement of the Polish Scouting Association that where any member becomes aware of, or suspects an incidence of child abuse, the following actions are carried out as soon as possible after he or she forms the suspicion:

- Report the abuse or suspected abuse to their State Commissioner.
- State Commissioner shall notify the State Child Protection Authority and inform the Australian Commissioner.
- Australian Commissioner shall notify the President via email [president@zhp.org.au](mailto:president@zhp.org.au) and via telephone as soon as possible.
- Members are encouraged to also report the matter directly to the State Child Protection authority and/or the Police if they consider it warranted.
- Under no circumstances should any attempt to dissuade a person from making a notification, or delay notification to State authorities.
- If the person making the report is concerned about reporting to State Authorities, the State Commissioner or Australian Commissioner can assist.
- If the alleged offender is a member of the Polish Scouting Association, the Association will immediately advise the alleged offender in writing that a report has been made that involves them and that he/she is suspended from all Scout activity (including the wearing of Scout uniform and accoutrements and attending any Scout activities) until the matter is investigated by the appropriate authorities and finalized. This action is procedural policy, and not an indication or implication of guilt or otherwise of any person reported upon.
- It is important that no details of the report be communicated to the alleged offender. This must be left to the State authorities.
- If allegations are substantiated, the accused person is to be immediately dismissed from the Association and action taken to ensure that he/she cannot be readmitted (notification of dismissal will be forwarded to The Executive Committee with a view to barring future involvement in Scouting in accordance with this policy).
- In the case where a report is made involving abuse of a non-sexual nature, the Australian Commissioner and/or President may elect not to suspend a member immediately. The severity of the circumstances will determine the Polish Scouting Association's level of response in these cases.
- It is the responsibility of every member to immediately inform their State and Australian Commissioner if they are approached by the Police in relation to any matter involving Child Protection. Where an investigation has been concluded or, similarly, where an investigation has been concluded or 'cleared', and where this has been advised to a Member by an investigating authority, that member is to inform the President immediately.

Regardless of any legal outcome, the provisions of reference A may be invoked to expel members.

Notification Procedure Where the Alleged Offender is **NOT** a Member, Helper or Instructor of the Polish Scouting Association

The following diagram outlines the procedure to be followed when a person becomes aware of abuse or suspects abuse involving a child under the age of 18 and the alleged offender is not a member, helper or instructor of the Polish Scouting Association



Notification Procedure Where the Alleged Offender **IS** a Member or Helper of the Polish Scouting Association

The following diagram outlines the procedure to be followed when a person becomes aware of abuse or suspects abuse involving a child under the age of 18 and the alleged offender is a member or helper of the Polish Scouting Association. The Polish Scouting Association always acts in the best interest of the child and will suspend any member or helper suspected of child abuse from Scouting activities until such time as the matter is investigated and finalized.

**CHILD DISCLOSES ABUSE OR THE "NOTIFIER" BECOMES AWARE OF, OR SUSPECTS CHILD ABUSE. A THIRD PARTY ADVISES POLISH SCOUTING OF, OR SUSPICION OF, CHILD ABUSE. ANY MEMBER, HELPER OR INSTRUCTOR WHO IS APPROACHED BY POLICE OR FAMILIES IN RELATION TO ANY MATTER INVOLVING CHILD PROTECTION.**

Notifier reports directly to State Commissioner

State Commissioner removes the alleged offender from any contact with children within the Association

State Commissioner informs Child Protective Services as soon as possible

**If State Commissioner is unable to contact Child Protection Authorities, they must contact State Police**

State Commissioner informs Australian Commissioner of alleged/suspected abuse

**Regardless of any legal outcome, the Polish Scouting Association reserves the right to refuse reinstatement to any member, instructor or helper at its discretion**

Australian Commissioner informs President and World Commissioner of alleged/suspected abuse

President will review circumstances and advise the alleged offender in writing that a report has been made officially suspending the member from any Scouting activities until the matter is finalized

If member is found guilty, the President or Australian Commissioner will terminate his/her membership

If a helper is found guilty, the President will ban them from helping with Scouting Activities

#### ***D. If the Victim is Now 18 Years of Age or Over***

Regardless of the age of the victim, a notification to the Polish Scouting Association should be made if a member, or former member discloses abuse. Given that an alleged perpetrator in these circumstances, may have ongoing involvement in Scouting, the notification may assist the authorities in gathering a complete picture of the perpetrator's offending and importantly, alert the Polish Scouting Association to the potential for ongoing risk to young people. The Polish Scouting Association will report such disclosures directly to the Police.

In the case of a person 18 years of age or over who has disclosed his/her own childhood abuse, an attempt should be made to counsel them to see the wisdom of reporting their situation to the Police.

While reports concerning people who are 18 or over should not be made without their consent, the members, helpers and staff who become aware of the situation may well suspect that other children under the age of 18 could be at continued risk from the alleged perpetrator. In these cases, the above procedures for reporting such suspicions to Polish Scouting Association must be implemented (even though the alleged victim may decide not to make a report).

#### ***E. Responding to a Child Who Discloses Abuse***

A member, helper or staff member may become aware of abuse through disclosure by the victim. When a child under 18 years of age begins to share with you an experience of abuse the following guidelines should be followed:

- Listen carefully to the child.
- Reassure the child that you believe him/her. It is essential to understand that rarely do children fabricate allegations of abuse and therefore all disclosures of abuse should be believed.
- Reassure the child that what happened is not the child's fault. Children are never responsible for violence or sexual misbehavior inflicted on them by other people.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling someone, and that you are pleased that the child has shared this with you. Perpetrators often threaten a victim in an attempt to ensure silence.
- Acknowledge that it is hard to talk about these issues.
- Do not press the child for details. It is not your role to conduct an investigation. Asking leading questions may in fact prejudice any subsequent investigations.
- Do not make promises that you cannot keep (e.g. confidentiality).
- Tell the child that certain adults who can protect them need to be informed so that the abuse can stop.
- As soon as possible after the conversation, submit a report to the Polish Scouting Association - (See Appendices B and C).
- Make notes of the conversation immediately whilst the facts are still fresh in your mind for reporting purposes.
- Never say "I don't believe it" (through shock). Try not to show emotions such as horror, disbelief or panic in front of the child. This will make the child feel ashamed and helpless, adding to the abuse inflicted by the abuser. If a child senses that you cannot cope with the information, he/she will lose confidence in you and

withdraw, enabling the abuser to continue the abuse.

#### ***F. Forming a Suspicion on Reasonable Grounds that Abuse Has Occurred***

It is important to realize that it is not essential to have absolute proof that abuse has occurred before following the notification procedures outlined in this policy. All that is required is that you have formed a suspicion on reasonable grounds that abuse has occurred. Suspicion on reasonable grounds to notify child abuse may include the following:

##### **When a child tells you he or she has been abused.**

The report procedure must be followed as soon as possible after a child discloses the abuse to you. Rarely, if ever, do children lie about abuse. Every disclosure must be taken seriously. Do not confront a person named by a child, leave this to the authorities.

##### **When a child informs you that he or she knows someone who has been abused.**

The report procedure should also be followed in this situation and if the child identifies the victim then that information can form part of the report. However, the child could actually be speaking of him/herself.

So even if the child does not name this “friend” a suspicion of their own abuse has been raised, and a report should be made. Do not confront a person named by a child as a person who has been abused, leave this to the authorities.

##### **If someone else who is in a position to know (perhaps a relative, friend, neighbour or sibling of the child) informs you that a child is suffering abuse.**

Any information received from a person who is in a position to provide reliable information should always be taken seriously and the notification procedures outlined in the policy should be followed.

A report must be made, even though you might reasonably believe someone else has made a report.

##### **When you make observations of a particular child’s behaviour and/or injuries.**

If a child’s behaviour or appearance indicates that abuse or sexual misbehavior may be occurring and/or displays some of the symptoms of abuse, then a suspicion on reasonable grounds has arisen and a report should be made. A list of behavioural and physical indicators of abuse is provided at Appendix D. It is important to recognise that one or two indicators alone do not necessarily mean that abuse is occurring. Try to identify a pattern of indicators emerging. If there is any doubt, seek advice from the relevant state Child Protection Authority advice lines or discuss with the State Commissioner.

#### ***G. Forming a Suspicion on Reasonable Grounds that a Person is an Offender***

In addition to the abovementioned grounds for suspecting child abuse, it is important that all members exercise appropriate vigilance against potential perpetrators. Accordingly, the list below represents certain behaviour characteristics that often apply to a person who is engaging in, or who intends to engage in, child abuse.

Importantly, it needs to be understood that one or two of these behaviour characteristics on their own do not necessarily indicate that a person is an abuser, or a potential abuser. Several characteristics together provide reason to raise concern. Such a person would need to be observed closely.

If there is no known victim or suspected victim, the person who has concerns about someone else with respect to the characteristics below (or who suspects that a person's behaviour is inappropriate), must report their observations to the Australian Commissioner or President.

#### **Possible General Indicators of an Offender**

- When the majority of a suspected abuser's relationships are with children (Some abusers don't relate well to people of their own age).
- Is over friendly/familiar with children.
- Describes children as angelic or pure.
- Has low self-esteem, poor self image (possibly due to emotional deprivation or sexual abuse as a child).
- May remove himself/herself mid-way through an activity to have time with children who may be in the toilets.
- Gives articles of his/her clothing to a child as gifts, e.g. a cap, a jacket, footy-shirt etc. This is an attempt to demonstrate ownership of the child.
- Carries photos of children other than his/her own, often indicating that these children love him/her.
- Gives extreme affection to children, e.g. front-on close hugging, always touching or flirting.
- Flatters children and boosts their egos.
- Has favourites to whom gifts are given.
- Pays special attention to sad, isolated or lonely children and those in single parent families.
- Displays withdrawn, placid demeanour.
- Can be single or married. Some reports show that 47% of child abusers are married. May be experiencing marital problems, but not necessarily.
- Over emphasis upon morality – are legalistic and inflexible. Could well be a reflection of his/her own bad actions.
- Strong denial of offence or any intention to offend.
- Convincing in protests of innocence – has developed this as a defence mechanism. May be very outspoken about child sex offenders.
- Avoids screening processes, or attempts to do so.
- Attempts to create opportunities to be alone with a child, e.g., babysitting, targets single parents, child minding, etc.

- Offers to take or takes child home, shopping or on an outing. Offers to collect child from school.
- Dislikes submission to authority, prefers to work alone, and is negative (or dismissive) when sexual abuse topics are raised.
- Spends considerable time with children.
- Voices opinion on sex education, suggesting that children are not taught properly.
- Can be any personal or social make-up, e.g. extrovert, introvert, married, single, old, young, rich or poor. While the majority of abusers are male, they are not necessarily always so.
- Displays 'Grooming behaviour' aimed at engaging a child or young person as a precursor to inappropriate sexual activity. This activity may also involve the grooming of family members or scout volunteers to establish strong relationships of trust and to build up the credibility of the person.

#### **Possible Domestic indicators of an Offender**

- Shows improper behaviour.
- Showers with children.
- Expects an open door policy in the bathroom.
- Attempts to sit children on lap, even when child or adolescent resists.
- Exhibits inappropriate hugging and/or kissing.
- Attempts to shut down spouse/child communications.
- Children don't want to be home alone with the person.
- Is jealous of child's boyfriend/girlfriend.
- Child is treated like a spouse in conversation or decisions.

#### **H. Dealing with Persons Displaying Possible Grooming Behaviour**

Grooming behaviour aims at engaging a child as a precursor to sexual assault. Grooming may involve a person identifying particularly vulnerable children, such as children who may be isolated, unhappy or needy and using tactics to establish trust with the child for inappropriate purposes.

The grooming process can include strategies such as:

- Persuading the child that a 'special' relationship exists: spending inappropriate special time with the child, inappropriately giving gifts, inappropriately phoning or texting, showing special favours to them but not other children, allowing the child to overstep the rules etc.
- Testing the boundaries: undressing in front of the child, allowing the child to sit on the lap, talking about sex, 'accidental' touching, for example, of the genitals etc. Such behaviours may not be indicative of grooming if occurring in isolation.

If suspected grooming behaviour is observed the notifier must report directly to the State commissioner who will take immediate action. It is the duty of the State Commissioner to notify the Australian Commissioner and the Branch President of the alleged offence and the individuals involved. Both the Branch President and the State Commissioner together warn the member of their suspected behaviour and work with the individual to prevent such actions from occurring and escalating. It is up to the discretion of the State Commissioner, Australian Commissioner and the Branch President to together gauge the severity of the offence and act accordingly. All contact made with the alleged offender is to be recorded.

### Minor offence Response

#### First Incidence

- Formal Verbal Warning

#### Second Incidence

- Formal Written Warning
- Suspension from contact with children within the association until retraining of this child protection policy is conducted

#### Third Incidence

- Suspension of membership
- All reports and incidences are sent to the Association President who will then decide whether to contact State Authorities
- Arbitration Committee will be notified who will then decide whether to cease the membership of the individual or to reinstate with conditional monitoring

### Major Offence Response

#### First Incidence

- Suspension of membership
- All reports and incidences are sent to the Association President who will then decide whether to contact State Authorities
- Arbitration Committee will be notified who will then decide whether to cease the membership of the individual or to reinstate with conditional monitoring

#### Second Incidence

- Cessation of membership
- All reports and incidences are sent to the Association President who will contact State Authorities

**Whenever suspected grooming behavior grows to suspected or reported abuse the notifier/Association must follow reporting procedures as described within this document.**

## Notification Procedure Where the Alleged Offender is suspected of Grooming Behaviour

The following diagram outlines the procedure to be followed when a person becomes aware of grooming behaviours or suspects grooming behaviours involving a child under the age of 18. The Polish Scouting Association always acts in the best interest of the child.

**CHILD DISCLOSES GROOMING BEHAVIOUR OR THE "NOTIFIER" BECOMES AWARE OF, OR SUSPECTS GROOMING BEHAVIOUR.  
A THIRD PARTY ADVISES POLISH SCOUTING OF, OR SUSPICION OF, GROOMING BEHAVIOUR.**

Notifier reports directly to State Commissioner

State Commissioner immediately notifies Australian Commissioner

State Commissioner immediately notifies Branch President

State Commissioner, Australian Commissioner and Branch President gauge severity of report

State Commissioner and Branch President Approach the Alleged Offender

**If at any moment suspected grooming behavior evolves to suspected/reported abuse the persons involved must follow the relevant reporting as disclosed in this document**

### Minor Offence Response

#### First Incidence

- Formal Verbal Warning

#### Second Incidence

- Formal Written Warning
- Suspension from contact with children within the association until retraining of this child protection policy is conducted

#### Third Incidence

- Suspension of membership
- All reports and incidences are sent to the Association President who will then decide whether to contact State Authorities
- Arbitration Committee will be notified, who will then decide whether to cease the membership of the individual or to reinstate with conditional monitoring

### Major Offence Response

#### First Incidence

- Suspension of membership
- All reports and incidences are sent to the Association President who will then decide whether to contact State Authorities
- Arbitration Committee will be notified who will then decide whether to cease the membership of the individual or to reinstate with conditional monitoring

#### Second Incidence

- Cessation of membership
- All reports and incidents are sent to the Association President who will contact State Authorities

## ***I. Dealing with Persons Accused of Child Abuse***

Any person accused or suspected of child abuse is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

Notwithstanding this presumption of innocence, given the overriding principle that the child is the primary concern and all other concerns (including guilt or innocence of the alleged offender) is secondary, any person who is the subject of a report will be suspended from Scout activity.

In certain cases, where a report is made involving abuse of a non-sexual nature, the Australian Commissioner or President may elect not to suspend a member or staff member immediately. The severity of the circumstances will determine the Polish Scouting Association level of response in these cases.

The Polish Scouting Association recognises that child sex abuse is a choice of the perpetrator and that despite the abuser's own personal history and all practicable measures taken by the Association to protect its youth members, an abuser has chosen to abuse on his/her own cognisance. He or she is directly responsible for these actions and must be held accountable.

Regardless of whether criminal child abuse charges against any member or helper of the Association are proven, the Polish Scouting Association may consider action against that individual.

### **Cooperation with Authorities**

If the alleged abuse is confirmed by investigation, the perpetrator should face the full legal implications of his/her actions. The Polish Scouting Association maintains a policy of openness and cooperation with local State Police to ensure all is done to assist in any investigation.

The Polish Scouting Association will share information with recognised authorities in the interests of child protection.

The Polish Scouting Association will only suspend a member in the interests of its youth members. In doing so, the Association does not make a judgment on the guilt or otherwise of any person nor does it imply guilt or otherwise of any wrongdoing by any person. All members and helpers of the Polish Scouting Association acknowledge this situation.

## **9. Prevention**

The foundation of our Child Protection Policy is **prevention**. Polish Scouting Association uses a range of processes designed to minimise the potential for harm to young persons. Key processes of the Polish Scouting Association prevention strategy involve the formal screening of Leaders and adults, regular in-service reinforcement of these policies and procedures, and supervision practices that minimise the risk of single adult supervision of single children.

### **A. Screening of Leaders and Adult Members**

Polish Scouting Association leaders and adult members have almost always joined the organization as youth members and risen through the ranks. This has traditionally provided a natural screening process where leaders and adult members have grown up in the organization and are thus their character is generally well known.

Where an adult wishes to join Polish Scouting Association, the guidelines of reference B shall be followed using the Australian equivalent organization and position descriptions.

As a condition of being an adult members and leader (ie direct supervision of children), members are required to comply with their local state requirements for police checks / registration for working with children as follows:

- QLD: Blue card
- NSW: New working with children check
- VIC: Working with children check

The State Commissioner shall record the status of their local members compliance with these requirements and advise the Australian Commissioner of changes in status/expiry.

Failure to comply with local state requirements may result in a membership application (or a current membership) being cancelled and the member not being allowed to attend scouting activities. Other information gained from other appropriate civil authorities may also preclude an applicant from membership. The Polish Scouting Association reserves the unfettered right to refuse membership to any applicant.

### **B. Tracking of Occasional Adult Helpers**

From time to time, adults (who are not Leaders or members) assist the Polish Scouting Association on a more casual and occasional basis. Examples of 'occasional help' are parent helpers assisting in travel arrangements, helpers accompanying sections of youth at outings, activities, hikes, BBQ's etc (usually in the company of Leaders).

As a not-for-profit, volunteer organisation, Polish Scouting Association recognises that the assistance of parents and 'occasional helpers' is very important. At the same time, it must take all reasonable steps to ensure that its Child Protection processes are as effective as possible.

It is Polish Scouting Association policy that where parents and helpers are assisting in Scout activities involving youth members, that a Leader or member of Polish Scouting Association is in a supervisory position at all times (see 'transportation' below).

### **C. Regular Reinforcement**

The Polish Scouting Association requires that all Leaders and members take the opportunity to reinforce the longstanding Association policy of 'Report, Report, Report' at training venues, meetings, seminars and conferences conducted regularly every year as part of the Scout Program.

The "Report, Report, Report" policy together with this regular reinforcement at all levels, is designed to remind all persons of the need to remain vigilant. Importantly, this

reinforcement policy is to continue to pertain to the youth membership. The Polish Scouting Association requires that youth members be reminded regularly (at Group Level and upward) of their inherent right to make a report without recrimination.

#### **D. Preventative Measures**

##### **Supervision.**

It is the policy of The Polish Scouting Association that whenever Leaders are supervising and conducting activities with youth members, at least two adults are present whenever practical. Wherever possible, youth members should be separated by gender when accommodated overnight. Where this is not possible, adult supervision by at least two adults must be provided on-site. Mixed gender groups which do not have both a male and female Leader shall have a male or female parent accompanying them throughout the duration of the camp or overnight activity. If necessary, two leaders of the same gender may supervise a camp provided they have written consent from the parents. Separate shower/toilet facilities must be available for all youth members involved in overnight activities. Only Leaders or parents of the appropriate gender are to supervise ablutions. In these circumstances, the guiding principle is that Leaders and parents should not place themselves in positions where they feel uncomfortable, or, where their actions may be misinterpreted.

##### **Transportation.**

On certain occasions (for example transporting youth members from venue to venue) it is likely that only one Leader, parent or helper will be placed in a position of supervision. In these circumstances, permission is to be obtained from the parents of the youth members concerned. Under no circumstance should any Leader, parent or helper accept a third party (for example, hitch-hiker) into travel arrangements without the permission of parents (unless the third party is another, known Scout member). Helpers and parents should not place themselves in positions where they feel uncomfortable, or, where their actions may be misinterpreted (example: unless travelling alone with own child, ensure more than one child is present).

##### **Youth Member to Youth Member.**

All Leaders, parents and adult helpers are to be vigilant regarding each other, external parties, as well as towards the youth members themselves. Child abuse can also occur as a result of youth member to youth member interaction ranging from harassment and bullying to sexual contact. Any behaviour of this nature is to be corrected immediately. Should this type of behaviour persist, it is the responsibility of the supervising adult(s) to protect the recipient of the behaviour. If necessary, an activity may need to be cancelled to protect an individual. For seriously unacceptable behaviour, a report should be made by the observing supervisor under the guidelines of this policy as soon as practical. For relatively lesser (but still unacceptable) behaviour, the supervisor should report the matter to the next higher Scout authority and to the youth member's parents.

### Access.

It is the responsibility of all leaders and other adult supervisors of youth to ensure, as best as practicable, that while engaged on Scout activities, youth members are protected from unauthorised access by external parties. Care is to be taken to include this consideration in the planning of activities. This includes 'remote access' by camera or recording. Generally, permission should be obtained from the parent(s) of youth member's aged under 18 years before photographs are taken. Under no circumstances should photography be allowed by a third party, unless for authorised Marketing purposes in accordance with the Polish Scouting Association Marketing and PR Policy (parental consent also required).

State level Media access to youth members is to be authorised by the Branch HQ (Obwód). Local media may be authorised by the activity/event coordinator, however, parental permission is to be gained before any youth member is photographed or interviewed.

The Polish Scouting Association acknowledges the difficulty in controlling the use of digital cameras, phone cameras and similar devices by internal and external parties. Leaders, parents and adult helpers will exercise their judgement in this area on a case by case basis.

## 10. Member Induction and Training

As part of the Polish Scouting Association application for membership and induction process, all members are required to acknowledge that they have read this policy and agree to abide by the requirements contained herein. If this acknowledgement and agreement is not made, the member application will not be processed.

In conjunction with the above preventative processes, Polish Scouting Association operates a 'Child Protection Training Program'. Module One of this program is to be undertaken by all new adult members within the first six months of service as part of their basic training. Module Two training should be undertaken by all adult members as part of 'Continuing Development' training if not already completed.

Other training sessions are scheduled throughout the year to include members who have not completed the training as part of their Basic, or Continuing Development training and so that other persons and staff, who may not be 'members' but may have regular contact with our youth, can receive the training.

Leaders and youth members are bound by the code of conduct articulated in the Scout Promise and Laws (both attached as Appendix E).

All leaders are responsible to quickly correct any behavior they become aware of that could be perceived to be inappropriate (e.g overly physical contact between members, offensive language, etc).

The Polish Scouting Association Child Protection Training Program is detailed at Appendix F.

## 11. Privacy

The Polish Scouting Association recognises the sensitive nature of reporting and responding to child abuse and therefore will protect, as far as is practicable, information pertaining to notifiers, victims and alleged offenders. Importantly, it should be remembered that a person who reports child abuse or suspected child abuse is protected by law, and to that end, a 'notifier' may make a report anonymously.

A person who receives notification of child abuse from a notifier, or who otherwise becomes aware of the identity of a notifier, must not disclose the identity of the notifier to any other person, unless the disclosure is made in the course of official duties to another person acting in the course of official duties, or is made with the consent of the notifier.

Within this context, Polish Scouting Association will share information with local state Police (and any other appropriate civil authorities) at its discretion in the interests of protecting children.

**The President is the only authority that may make public comment on child protection issues to the public or to the media.**

## 12. Policy Review

This policy is issued by the authority of the Executive Committee. The President will review this policy every two years.

## Appendix A: Definitions of Child Abuse

In general, child abuse is categorised in four ways.

Physical abuse is commonly characterised by physical injury resulting from practices such as:

- Hitting, punching, kicking (indicators: marks from belt buckles, irons, fingers, cigarettes)
- Shaking
- Burning, biting, pulling out hair
- Alcohol or other drug administration

Sexual abuse occurs when someone in a position of power to the child uses her/his power to involve the child in sexual activity. Behaviour can include:

- Sexual suggestion
- Exhibitionism, mutual masturbation, oral sex
- Showing pornographic material e.g. DVD's, internet
- Using children in the production of pornographic material
- Penile or other penetration of the genital or anal region
- Child prostitution.

Emotional abuse tends to be a chronic behavioural pattern directed at a child whereby a child's self esteem and social competence is undermined or eroded over time. Behaviours may include:

- • Devaluing
- • Ignoring
- • Rejecting
- • Corrupting
- • Isolating
- • Terrorising
- • Chronic or extreme spousal abuse in the child's presence

Neglect is characterised by the failure to provide for the child's basic needs. Behaviours may include:

- Inadequate supervision of young children for long periods of time
- Failure to provide adequate nutrition, clothing or personal hygiene
- Failure to provide needed or appropriate health care/ medical treatment
- Disregard for potential hazards in the home
- Forcing the child to leave home early
- Allowing children to engage in chronic truancy

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## Appendix B: Reporting

The following points are provided as guidance in consideration of making a report:

- You do not have to be able to prove that the child abuse has occurred.
- Support is available from the State Commissioner, Australian Commissioner, or President of Polish Scouting Association at any time.
- Your identity as a reporter will remain confidential
- You are immune from civil liability for reporting your suspicion in good faith.
- You are not breaching any code of professional etiquette or ethics, nor are you departing from any accepted form of professional conduct when you report in good faith.

Your identity will be kept confidential unless it is necessary to disclose your name in the course of “official duties” to another person acting in the course of “official duties” e.g. a police officer, or where the court deems that the identity of the notifier is evidence of critical importance to the proceedings and that failure to admit it would prejudice the proper administration of justice, or where you have consented to the release of your name.

You are required to submit an Incident Report (Child Protection) in accordance with the guidelines in Appendix C below.

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## Appendix C: Polish Scouting Association–Incident Report (Child Protection)

### Report Details

- Name of Person making report (not mandatory – if given, name is protected by law)
- Has State Child Protection Authorities been notified? YES NO Date of Report
- Name of person suspected
- Report Observations
- Please record what has been observed or what information has been received, by whom, when, where and who else may have been effected
- How did the person making the report become aware of this situation?

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## Appendix D: Behavioural and Physical Indicators of Abuse

The following lists include common behavioural and physical indicators of abuse. It should be noted that in most instances the appearance of one or more of these

indicators do not necessarily indicate that abuse is taking place and that caution should be exercised in drawing conclusions based on only a few indicators.

### ***Sexual Abuse***

Some behavioural indicators associated with sexual abuse include:

The sexually abused younger child may:

- Engage in persistent and inappropriate sexual activity, e.g. rubbing genitals against an adult, playing games that echo the abuse, sexual themes in artwork or stories.
- Have a detailed understanding of sexual behaviour beyond what would be expected at their age.
- Display regressive behaviour (bedwetting, speech loss, infantile or immature behaviour)
- Suffer sleep disturbance and night terrors.
- Inhibition to play.
- Serious difficulty relating to peers and/ or adults.
- Constant complaints of headaches or abdominal pains.
- Sudden appearance of material goods (given as presents).
- Sexually inappropriate language.
- Outside interests may wane.
- Onset of fears and phobias.
- Lack of concentration or significant changes in school performance.

As they become older, the child may present with some of the following in addition to the above:

- Exhibit delinquent or aggressive behaviour.
- Show signs of depression.
- Display injurious behaviour such as:
  - Drug and alcohol abuse.
  - Self mutilation.
  - Attempts at suicide.
  - Prostitution.

Some physical indicators associated with sexual abuse are:

There may be some physical indicators associated with sexual abuse. Obviously all bruising and bleeding in genital areas, chest, or in the lower abdomen or thighs are prime indicators, as are complaints or soreness in these areas. Sexual Abuse is indicated in the case of early pregnancy or infections including STDs.

### ***Physical Abuse***

Some behavioural indicators associated with physical abuse include:

- Unduly wary of physical contact with others.
- Unduly frightened by a parent or caregiver.
- Express little or no emotion when hurt.
- Unduly compliant, shy, withdrawn, passive and uncommunicative.
- Offer unlikely explanation of injuries.
- Unusually nervous or hyperactive, aggressive, disruptive and destructive (both to self and others).

The physical indicators include bruising, bleeding, bite marks, swelling, welts, burn-marks etc.

### ***Emotional Abuse***

Some behavioural indicators associated with emotional abuse include:

- Withdrawal or pleaser.
- Unduly compliant, passive and undemanding.
- Have a low self esteem.
- Extremely demanding, aggressive and angry.
- Antisocial and destructive.
- Depressed and suicidal.
- Attention seeking.

### ***Neglect***

Some behavioural/physical indicators associated with neglect include:

- Dirty.
- Constantly sick/tired.
- Indiscriminate use of affection.
- Constantly miserable and irritable.
- Alienated from peers, withdrawn, pale listless, beg or steal food.
- Engage in delinquent acts, vandalism, and drug and alcohol abuse.
- Poor social skills.
- Skin problems.
- Careless dress.
- Sadness/grief.

## Appendix E: Polish Scouting Association Member Code-of-Conduct:

All members agree to abide by the following the Code-of-Conduct contained in our Scout Promise (Przyżeczenie Harcerskie) and Scout Law (Prawo Harcerskie):

### **Scout Promise (Przyżeczenie Harcerskie)**

Mam szczerą wolę całym życiem pełnić służbę Bogu i Polsce, nieść chętną pomoc bliźnim i być posłusznym Prawu Harcerskiemu.

### **Scout Law (Prawo Harcerskie)**

1. Harcerz służy **Bogu** i **Polsce** i sumiennie spełnia swoje obowiązki.
2. Na słowie harcerza polegaj jak na **Zawiszy**.
3. Harcerz jest pożyteczny i niesie pomoc bliźnim.
4. Harcerz w każdym widzi bliźniego, a za brata uważa każdego innego harcerza.
5. Harcerz postępuje po **rycersku**.
6. Harcerz miłuje **przyrodę** i stara się ją poznać.
7. Harcerz jest karny i posłuszny rodzicom i wszystkim swoim przełożonym.
8. Harcerz jest zawsze pogodny.
9. Harcerz jest oszczędny i ofiarny.
10. Harcerz jest czysty w myśli, mowie i uczynkach i zwalcza szkodliwe nałogi.

## Appendix F: Polish Scouting Association Child Protection Training

The Polish Scouting Association Child Protection Training Program Aims to:

**Develop Awareness in the Following Areas:**

The underlying principles of the Polish Scouting Association Child Protection Policy.  
Polish Scouting Association relationship to QLD / NSW / VIC state legislation.

- What constitutes child abuse.
- Identifying the signs of child abuse.
- Responding to children.
- Polish Scouting Association protocols and reporting requirements.
- Prevention measures.

**Provide Participants with the following knowledge and skills:**

- Awareness of one's own values, attitudes and experiences and how this will impact on a persons understanding of child abuse and his/her response to children who may have been abused.
- Awareness of the importance of maintaining a 'child focus' and perspective when considering the possibility of child abuse.
- Ability to recognise suspected child abuse.
- Awareness and understand of the responsibility to notify suspected child abuse inaccordance with this policy.

### ***Training Schedule***

The Executive committee will coordinate and notify training schedules.

### ***Training Structure***

The training program will be available in the following two modules:

#### ***Module 1 – Child Protection Orientation Training.***

This training provides a basic understanding of child abuse and reporting requirements. It aims to develop awareness in the following areas:

- The underlying principles of the Polish Scouting Association Child Protection Policy.
- Polish Scouting Association relationship to QLD, NSW & VIC legislation.
- What constitutes child abuse.
- Identifying the signs of child abuse.
- Responding to children.
- Polish Scouting Association protocols and reporting requirements. □□Prevention measures.

## ***Module 2 – Child Abuse Notification Training.***

The Polish Scouting Association aims to adopt the principles behind the reporting requirements contained in relevant state legislation in the interests of its youth members. Therefore, Module 2 training aims to cover the current state approved training module for mandated notifiers.

Module 2 training aims to provide participants with the following knowledge and skills:

- Awareness of one's own values, attitudes and experiences and how this will impact on a persons understanding of child abuse and his/her response to children who may have been abused.
- Awareness of the importance of maintaining a 'child focus' and perspective when considering the possibility of child abuse.
- Ability to recognise suspected child abuse.
- Awareness and understand of the responsibility to notify suspected child abuse in accordance with this policy.

Module 1 training will be delivered by Polish Scouting Association senior volunteers.

Module 2 training may be delivered by Polish Scouting Association senior volunteers or an authorised state child protection training provider.

The President is to ensure that all leaders undertake Module 1 of this training initially, and thereafter approximately every 3 yrs. Module 2 training should be undertaken at the earliest convenience for Executive committee members.

All adult members are to be provided ready access to this policy for their individual reference upon joining Polish Scouting Association as part of their induction program.

## ***Certification***

Each participant who successfully completes the training will receive a Certificate of Attainment (upon full attendance of the course and the completion of CA assessments), or a Certificate of Attendance (upon full attendance of the course).

## ***Evaluation***

The training program will be evaluated using the following methods:

- Participant feedback evaluation forms at each course.
- Facilitator Self Evaluations.
- Observation by Supervisors.
- Skills/Knowledge Assessments.

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## **Bibliography/Acknowledgements**

Scouts SA Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2012

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