



**CHILD PROTECTION POLICY  
AND  
PROCEDURES**

**EMU GULLY ADVENTURE EDUCATION  
GROUP INC**

(AL 3 – 25 Nov 2014)

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Policy Statement

Emu Gully Adventure Education Group Inc (Emu Gully) is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all staff and Camp Participants; particularly children.

The Emu Gully Child Protection Policy & Procedures aims to reduce the risk of abuse occurring, and to ensure that a caring and appropriate response is taken should abuse occur.

### 1.2 Scope

The Emu Gully Policy & Procedures apply to:

- All activities authorised by or under the control of the Emu Gully, including those activities undertaken at Emu Gully's premises or away from Emu Gully's premises.
- All Emu Gully staff or other persons engaged by Emu Gully.

### 1.3 Authority

These are the Child Protection Policy & Procedures of Emu Gully Adventure Education Group. This latest version was adopted for use by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) on 25 Nov 2014.

The CEO is committed to:

- implementing the Child Protection Policy & Procedures, and
- training Emu Gully staff and others engaged by Emu Gully in its content and application.

### 1.4 Definitions

**Child** Any person under the age of 18.

**Abuse** Can consist of one or more of but is not restricted to the following:

**Physical Abuse** – Any non-accidental physical injury.

**Sexual Abuse** – Any sexual act or threat to perform such upon another person. It occurs when a person uses their power and authority to take advantage of another's trust to involve them in sexual activity. It does not necessarily involve genital contact but is any act, which erodes the sexual boundary between two persons. It may appear consensual but the validity of consent is negated by the power differential.

**Emotional Abuse** – The chronic attitude or behaviour of one person, which is directed at another person, or, the creation of an emotional environment, which erodes a child's development, self-esteem and social confidence over time. Behaviors may include devaluing, ignoring, rejecting, corrupting, isolating, terrorizing or chronic and extreme domestic violence in the child's presence.

**Neglect** - Any serious omission or commission, which jeopardizes or impairs a persons' development.

- Organisation** Emu Gully Adventure Education Group Inc, located at 142 Twidales Rd Helidon
- Staff** Any person (paid or unpaid) over the age of 18 who is responsible for the care and/or control and safety of Camp Participants placed in their care whilst holding a formal position in Emu Gully. Staff include but are not limited to:
- Permanent Employees (both Part-time & Fulltime)
  - Interns
  - Casual employees
  - Volunteers
  - Contract Outdoor Facilitators from other organisations such as COEFFICIENT.
- Group Staff** Any person who is part of the Camp Participant group but is also responsible for the care and/or control and safety of the participants. Group Staff include but are not limited to:
- Youth Leaders
  - Teachers
  - Volunteers
  - Parents
  - Sports Coaches and Organisers
- Helpers** Any person under the age of 18 who is invited by an Emu Gully staff member or a Group Staff member to assist them in their duties.
- Camp Participants** Any person, including children, who attends or participates in Emu Gully's activities.
- Activity** Any organised activity that is authorised by Emu Gully.
- Activity Leader** The person recognised and authorised by Emu Gully as head of an activity.

### 2. EXTERNAL POLICIES

Some activities with Emu Gully might have external affiliation with other organisations. These organizations may have policies governing Child Safety and Abuse. Emu Gully's Policy & Procedures are not intended to replace or conflict with the other policies; they instead operate in conjunction with them.

### 3. POLICY REVIEW

The Policy & Procedures will be formally reviewed annually by the CEO who will inform all staff of any changes.

Staff can submit suggestions for changes at any time.

### 4. OBLIGATIONS

#### 4.1 Spiritual

The core beliefs of Emu Gully require all staff to treat all people with love, fairness and dignity and to care for those who are less powerful and in need of nurture and protection.

#### 4.2 Legal

Emu Gully and its staff are subject to Federal and State Child Protection legislation and principles established through common law.

#### 4.3 Ethical

Some actions may not be legally regarded as Abuse, but are considered unacceptable behaviour for Emu Gully staff. These include:

- Inappropriate conversation of a sexual nature.
- Coarse language, especially that of a sexual nature.
- Suggestive gestures or remarks.
- Jokes of a sexual nature.
- Inappropriate, but accidental touching.
- Inappropriate literature (e.g. PG, M, MA, R or X rated material used with young Children).
- Acts of violence committed by a leader in the course of an activity.

The age of individuals is recognised as one of the determinants in deciding what behaviour is acceptable or unacceptable. Regardless of ages, all Emu Gully staff are to ensure that high standards of conduct are maintained at all times.

The Emu Gully Staff Information Handbook includes a chapter on Unacceptable Behaviour and the Emu Gully Codes of Ethics, Practice and Behaviour. These both expand upon and reinforce much of what is covered in this document. All Emu Gully staff must comply with the Codes and read and sign as having read and understood them at a session during the annual In-Service.

## 5. SELECTION & SCREENING

### 5.1 Staff

Staff involved in children's activities must be carefully selected and screened. Prior to staff commencing organizing, running and/or supporting child-related activities, the following precautions will be taken:

- Potential permanent employees, Interns, casual employees and volunteers:
  - Will complete an application form, which requests details of referees and permission to contact them (see Appendix 1).
  - Referees will be checked and spoken to, using an agreed set of questions. The questions will seek to establish the applicant's suitability for the role or position with the responses documented and retained on file.
  - Will be interviewed by the CEO prior to being accepted. The Intern Program Manager will also interview Interns.
  - If found acceptable, all less volunteers, will be offered the position on probation (usually three months). Volunteers will offer their services as agreed.
  - If a current QLD Blue Card is not already held the person is to immediately apply for one. A Blue Card is to be obtained within three months of starting work at Emu Gully.
  - Permanent employment will only be offered subject to a satisfactory Working with Children Check and provision of a current Blue Card.

**Where Emu Gully has identified that an applicant has previously committed a violent or sexually related offence they cannot, under any circumstances, be considered for child related activities.**

- Contract Staff from other organizations are to hold a current QLD Blue Card and be familiar with, and comply with, the Emu Gully Child Protection Policy and Procedures and the Codes.

### 5.2 Helpers

Helpers are to be familiar with, and comply with, the Emu Gully Child Protection Policy & Procedures.

Any Helper who provides assistance with an activity or duty that involves children must be supervised by Emu Gully Staff or Group Staff at all times and will be accountable to that Leader.

Staff who ask for or accept the assistance of a Helper must be satisfied with the Helpers maturity and their suitability to work with Children.

## 6. TRAINING

All Emu Gully Staff will be issued with a copy of this policy and receive training in:

- The content and application of Emu Gully's Child Protection Policy & Procedures
- Reporting procedures and the associated legal requirements

The CEO is responsible for employing new staff and will monitor developments on Child Protection issues and undertake further education as required.

### 7. A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Incidents of Abuse are unlikely to take place in front of another person and the presence of a witness can assist in clarifying questionable allegations. For these reasons, where possible, two staff members will be present when working with or supervising Children. These can be either Emu Gully staff or Group Staff or a combination of both.

When transporting Children, Emu Gully staff should never be alone with a child in a vehicle. Where this is not practical, staff will take the child directly to and from venues and will not spontaneously detour or make additional arrangements.

All personal instruction is to be carried out within sight of another Emu Gully or Group staff member.

Staff will respect a Camp Participant's feelings and privacy when engaging in physical contact of any kind.

Adults and children are expected to respect each other's privacy during activities that require undressing, dressing or changing clothes. Staff are to set the example by protecting their own privacy in similar situations. No Emu Gully staff member is to be alone in a room with a child while either is changing.

Initiations and secret ceremonies are prohibited. All aspects of every child-related program will be open to observation by parents/guardians.

Staff have the right to ask people, who do not have a valid reason to be present at Child-related activities, to leave. Police may be contacted if such persons refuse to comply with any reasonable request to leave.

### 8. DISCIPLINING CHILDREN

Emu Gully staff do not 'discipline' or 'punish' children. Children are encouraged to abide by the rules and modify their actions in order to achieve group goals as identified by Camp Participants, Group Staff and Emu Gully staff. Consequences are used to encourage improved behavior. These consequences will not offend, belittle, tease, abuse, insult, humiliate, threaten or intimidate children. The approach Emu Gully will use with a group of children depends on numerous factors and is discussed with Group staff before activities commence. The approach and level of intensity is also discussed at a mid-camp meeting with both staffs.

Emu Gully may choose to exclude a child from an activity if they may harm themselves or other children or are an obstruction to Emu Gully's duty of care responsibilities to other children. If the behavior continues, Emu Gully may ask Group Staff to remove any child.

Emu Gully reserves the right to carry out Emu Gully's disciplinary procedures in accordance with its 'Unacceptable Behaviour and Complaints' procedure as laid out in the Staff Information Handbook.

## 9. REPORTING PROCEDURES

The CEO will deal with any allegations of abuse that arise during an Emu Gully camp. If necessary an independent person will be tasked with the specific duty of dealing with any allegations that arise.

While Emu Gully is not legally required to report abuse or suspected abuse, if there are reasonable grounds to suspect a Child has been or is suffering from Abuse at an Emu Gully camp, the CEO is to immediately contact:

- Police on (07) 4631 6333
- Emu Gully's Insurer - GJ Insurance Consulting Pty Ltd, po Box 772, Emerald VIC 3782. Phone: 1300 384 799 or (03) 5968 3361. Mob 0408 356 043. Fax (03) 8678 3223.
- Child Safety Services on 1800 177 135 or (07) 3235 9999. This is a 24/7 service. Can also try:
  - Freecall: 1800 811 810 (Queensland only)
  - Telephone: 07 3224 8045
  - Email: [Enquiries - info@childsafety.qld.gov.au](mailto:Enquiries - info@childsafety.qld.gov.au)

Reasonable grounds can be assumed when:

- A Child discloses that he or she has been abused, and/or
- Someone close to a Child (e.g. close friend) discloses on behalf of that Child.

Where an abuse allegation is made against an Emu Gully staff member, he/she will be removed from all Children activities pending the outcome of investigations.

A child may disclose an incident of abuse to an Emu Gully Staff member. If that incident occurred somewhere other than at an Emu Gully activity (e.g. home or school), that incident is to be referred to the Group staff who should refer it to the Police as per their procedures.

If a disclosure of abuse is made, the person who receives the disclosure is to maintain appropriate care to the one making the disclosure. This will include:

- Treating each allegation seriously and not attempting to deny the allegation or minimise its impact on the alleged victim. The matter should not be swept under the carpet.
- Not pushing the Child to disclose details of the alleged assault or attempting to investigate the allegation.
- Assuring the Child that they are understood: that their disclosure is being taken seriously; that what has happened is not their fault, and that they are correct in disclosing the incident.
- Reporting the abuse to the police and Emu Gully's insurer.
- Not contacting the alleged perpetrator. If he/she is a member of Emu Gully staff, at some stage the CEO may refer them to an appropriate organization for counselling and/or advice.

- If the alleged assault has taken place recently, clothing worn by the Child is to be retained and handed to the police for forensic examination.
- Maintaining confidentiality.

Any disclosures by a Child and all details of the subsequent investigation are to be documented promptly and the documents held in a secure location where a breach of privacy cannot occur.

### 10. MANDATORY REPORTING

In Queensland the only people required by law to report child protection concerns are:

- An authorised officer, employee of the department or a person employed in a departmental care service or licensed care service is required to report harm or suspected harm to a child in the care of a departmental care service or a licensee (Child Protection Act 1999, section 148)
- Staff of the Office of the Public Guardian
- A doctor or registered nurse who becomes aware, or reasonably suspects during the practice of his or her profession that a child has been, is being or is likely to be harmed (Public Health Act 2005, section 191 and 192)
- Family Court personnel and counsellors (Family Law Act 1975, section 67ZA).

Reports should be made to Child Safety Services.

### 11. REGISTRATION

Under the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000*, Emu Gully is required to be registered with Blue Card Services to enable screening checks to be undertaken on its behalf.

Emu Gully Registration Number with Blue Card Services is 40753

Emu Gully maintains a register of all paid and volunteer staff. This register includes their Blue Card details – number and expiry date.

### 12. ALCOHOL & DRUGS

The consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs by children under the age of 18 on Emu Gully grounds or during an activity is not permitted. Any Child found to be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs is to be counselled and the parents/guardians contacted so the Child can be returned home immediately.

Children required to take prescription medication will do so under the supervision of Group Staff. Emu Gully staff should not normally be involved.

**APPENDIX 1 – Application Form**

**WORKING WITH CHILDREN APPLICATION FORM**

Position Applied For: \_\_\_\_\_

**Personal Details**

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Residential Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Ph.: \_\_\_\_\_ Mob Ph.: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Ph.: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list any **qualifications** you have that relate to working with Children

Date	Qualification	Institution

Please provide any **experience** you have had that relates to working with Children

Date	Organisation	Position

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### References

Please provide details of two people we can contact, who can comment on your suitability for this position:

#### First Referee

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Residential Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Ph.: \_\_\_\_\_ Mob Ph.: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Ph.: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Position & Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Second Referee

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Residential Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Ph.: \_\_\_\_\_ Mob Ph.: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Ph.: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address:	_____
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Position & Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

### Declarations

Have you:

- ⇒ Read and understood Emu Gully Adventure Education Group's Child Protection Policy & Procedures and the Codes of Ethics, Practice and Behaviour? Yes / No
- ⇒ Ever been in serious breach of any Child Protection Policy or Code of Conduct? Yes / No
- ⇒ Had anyone expressed concerns about your behaviour towards a child? Yes / No
- ⇒ Ever been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of an investigation relating to the abuse of a child or inappropriate sexual behaviour. Yes / No

I confirm that the information provided on this application form is true and correct.

I consent to a National Police Record check and the release to Emu Gully Adventure Education Group of any matters deemed to be relevant which are recorded against my name.

Applicants Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX 2 – Interview Questions**

**WORKING WITH CHILDREN INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

***The questions asked in this interview may make you feel uncomfortable but they are a necessary part of our child safety policy and must be answered. The answers you provide will be kept confidential where possible but may be divulged to other Leaders within Emu Gully.***

1. Why have you applied for this position and why do you feel you are suitable for the role?

2. Please describe any positive experiences you have had with children or young people

3. Please describe any negative experiences you have had with children or young people

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4. Have you ever been in a situation where you have disciplined a child or young person, if so how did you handle this situation?

5. Have you ever been investigated for violent or sexually related offences, if so, what were the circumstances?

6. Is there any other information relating to your suitability for this position, which we should be aware of?