

**The Student Robotics Club Of South
Australia Incorporated
Child Safe Policy and Code Of Conduct
June 2019**



The Student Robotics Club Of South Australia’s Child Safe Policy

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1. Purpose

This policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of The Student Robotics Club Of South Australia to child safety and establishing and maintaining child safe and child friendly environments.

SRCSA takes all practicable steps to ensure all members feel safe within an environment of mutual respect.

2. Objectives

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

- **To provide ways to minimise the risk of child abuse to youth members**
- **To ensure adults involved in the SRCSA act within professional boundaries and are committed towards appropriate behaviour to children and young people**
- **To ensure any allegations of child abuse and/or inappropriate adult behaviour are handled in a consistent and appropriate manner.**

3. Context

This policy reflects our commitment to provide a safe environment where every person has the right to be treated with respect and is safe and protected from harm.

It complies with our obligations under the *Children and Youth (Safety) n Act 2017*, and *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016*

This policy also complies with the Mandatory Reporting Guide 2018 and FIRST Youth Protection Program.

4. Scope

This policy, from the date of endorsement, applies to all people involved in the organisation, including:

- volunteers

- mentors

- Alumni members

- indirect service providers

- any other individuals, consultants or sponsors involved in this organisation

- Parents of students, particularly accompanying members to outside of SA competitions

5. Commitment to child safety

All young people who come to The Student Robotics Club Of South Australia have a right to feel and be safe.

We are committed to the safety and well-being of all children and young people accessing our club and the welfare of the children in our care will always be our first priority.

We aim to create a child safe and child friendly environment where all young people are valued and feel safe.

We have appointed a Member Protection officer as a first point of contact to provide advice and support to youth members, parents, mentors, Alumni members and volunteers regarding the safety and well-being of children in our organisation.

This policy was developed in collaboration with all our volunteers, the young people who use our services and their parents.

6. Young People's participation

The Student Robotics Club Of South Australia encourages and respects the views of children and young people who access our services.

We listen to and act upon any concerns that children, young people or their families raise with us.

We teach young people what they can do if they feel unsafe.

We ensure that children, young people and their families know their rights and how to access the complaints procedures available to them.

We value diversity and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices.

7. Alumni members to youth members contact

Rationale for this policy:

The Student Robotics Club of SA is a volunteer based organisation which provides non formal education in STEM activities for Children and young people from the age of 8 years.

There is a high emphasis in providing club activities in practical and child safe environments.

The Student Robotics Club of SA is aligned through its activities with USFIRST and complies with FIRST core values of cooperativity, and gracious professionalism which deems to treat others with dignity and respect in a helpful, supportive, fun team environment.

Such activities foster the need for courtesy, tolerance and the need to work harmoniously and responsibly by all members, volunteers and mentors for a positive team outcome.

Members develop strong friendships through these activities which are inclusive of gender, ability and age.

Once a youth member completes their SACE curriculum they are acknowledged as an Alumni member. During this time they are either nearing 18 years of age or have turned 18 years of age and are now deemed an adult who must abide by the club code of conduct.

However friendships with other and younger youth members generally remain strong.

Compliance of Alumni members

Alumni members who turn 18 years are expected to comply with code of conduct whilst they are undertaking SRCSA activities.

Compliance includes application for DCSI Working with Children Check as is required of other adult volunteers and mentors, and renewed awareness of boundaries and maintaining appropriate behaviour at all times.

The Student Robotics Club of SA recognises the uniqueness of some relationships, strongly encourages ongoing friendships and will take well considered steps to risk manage these relationships.

Should situations arise that places an Alumni member in a one on one situation with a youth member whilst involved in SRCSA activities, this should be done within a public venue or within supervision of other members, volunteers or mentors.

Where this is not possible, for example maintaining a transport arrangement, parental permission is to be sought and Member Protection officer or a committee member notified prior to such an event occurring.

Compliance with SRCSA code of conduct does not apply to ongoing friendships outside of SRCSA activities.

8. Recruitment practices

The Student Robotics Club Of South Australia takes all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with young people.

We employ a range of screening measures and apply best practice standards in the screening and recruitment of mentors and volunteers. This includes maintaining a register of compliance in screening and training. A copy of all adults who are compliant with our child protection policies are presented publicly at the workshop and on google drive.

We conduct application for DCSI Working with Children check for people working with children, as set out in Section 6 of the *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016*.

This is required for anyone within our organisation who:

has regular contact with children and is not directly supervised at all times

works in close proximity to children on a regular basis and is not directly supervised at all times or

supervises or manages persons who:

- have regular contact with children or
- work in close proximity to children on a regular basis; or
- has access to sensitive records relating to children or young people.
- Are supervising teams at interstate and/or overseas competitions which require overnight care and/or chaperone activities.

Exemptions from this requirement may apply in some circumstances.

9. Code of Conduct

All members are made aware of, and must comply with, our code of conduct.

Our code of conduct was developed in collaboration with all our volunteers, mentors, the young people who use our services and their parents.

This code of conduct is based on USFIRST Young Person's protection program code of conduct.

All members, volunteers, mentors and parents are able to access and discuss this document and all provide agreement to compliance.

10. Support for employees and volunteers

The Student Robotics Club Of South Australia seeks to attract and retain the best mentors and volunteers.

We provide support and supervision so people feel valued, respected and fairly treated.

We ensure that volunteers who work with children have ongoing supervision, support and training so that their capacity is developed and enhanced to promote the establishment and maintenance of a child safe environment.

Strategies we have implemented include:

All new volunteers undergo induction which includes information about the Student Robotics club of SA, the club requirements for mentors, Volunteers and Alumni members and how to access the SRCSA child safe policy and code of conduct through google drive and in hard copy at the workshop.

This information includes outlines of acceptable boundaries and appropriate behaviours as well as actions necessary if these are not honoured.

All mentors, volunteers and Alumni members are required to work through the child safe information overview presentation and complete some competency questions.

Opportunities are also provided for members, mentors, volunteers and Alumni members to access community training in Child safe environments.

Further opportunities are offered from time to time for all members, mentors, parents and volunteers to undertake in-house training from an accredited CSE trainer.

A Member Protection Officer has been appointed as a first point of contact for all child protection matters.

11. Reporting and responding to suspected child abuse and neglect

The Student Robotics Club Of South Australia will not tolerate incidents of child abuse.

All mentors and volunteers understand their obligation to notify the

Child Abuse Report Line on **13 14 78** as soon as practicable if they have a suspicion on reasonable grounds that a child has been, or is being, abused or neglected or that an adult is observed or reported as acting inappropriately towards children and young people.

We ensure that all members have access to relevant information resources such as:

- Child safe environment: Mandated Reporting Guide.

- DCSI reporting child abuse website:

- Free online SMART (Strategies for Managing Abuse Related Trauma) Learning package, developed by the Australian Childhood Foundation: www.childhood.org.au

- Free online “Play By the Rules” child protection training,

- USFIRST Young person’s protection program and code of conduct.

We ensure that support is also available for the adult making the report, particularly where an ongoing service is provided to the child, young person and their family.

12. Supporting children, young people and their families

Child Protection is everyone’s responsibility.

The Student Robotics Club Of South Australia recognises that even where a report is made, we may still have a role in supporting the child or young person.

This support may include:

- Referring the child, young person or their family to other appropriate services

- Providing a child safe environment

- Displaying information about services that can assist children and their families (such as the Kids Helpline and Youth Healthline) in areas accessed by children and their families.

Dealing with reports or concerns relating to the actions of a mentor or volunteer of our organisation

In addition to making a report to the Child Abuse Report Line, mentors, Parents, Alumni members and volunteers must also report to the Member Protection officer, or a Steering Committee member if they form a suspicion on reasonable grounds that a child has been, or is being, abused or neglected by another member, parent, mentor or volunteer.

In response to any report to Member Protection Officer or committee member the Committee of management may determine to take disciplinary action.

Other protective actions may also be introduced to ensure the safety of children and young people within our organisation.

13. Strategies to minimise risk

This will include Policies and procedures that address (but are not limited to:

- transportation of children and young people
- Relevant history assessments and National Police Clearances
- Child protection training
- Taking images of children and young people
- Management and storing of images
- Role of Member Protection officer
- Supervision of children
- Complaints procedures
- Physical contact
- Responsibilities
- Procedure for breaches of policy
- Protecting privacy and confidentiality
- Procedures for dealing with situations where a member is being investigated for, or is charged with, a serious criminal offence.

Evaluation of these strategies and the development of additional strategies to minimise and control risks to children and young people occur as part of our ongoing risk management process.

14. Harassment/bullying

The Student Robotics Club Of South Australia opposes all forms of harassment, discrimination and bullying.

We take this issue seriously and encourage anyone who believes that they, or another person, has been harassed, discriminated against or bullied to raise this issue with the Member protection officer, or a committee member.

15. Communication

The Student Robotics Club of SA will ensure that everyone to whom this policy applies is aware of and has had an opportunity to read the policy.

We also request volunteers, mentors, Alumni members and parents (where appropriate) to sign a written statement indicating that they have read and will comply with our child-safe policy. This forms part of the registration to become a mentor, volunteer or Alumni member with the Student Robotics Club of SA. We retain a copy of all signed statements and these are stored securely on protected area of the club drive.

16. Related policies and procedures

The Student Robotics Club Of South Australia Code of Conduct for Mentors

USFIRST Youth Protection Program guidelines

17. Professional conduct

All adults working with youth members in the Student Robotics Club of SA are expected to maintain professional boundaries in their interactions and relationships with youth members.

This represents a key component of their duty of care towards the wellbeing and safety of children and young people.

This responsibility refers to:

- Expectations of their own conduct
- Intervening in any inappropriate conduct of other adults towards members
- Reporting inappropriate behaviour of other adults if they observe or are informed of such behaviour.

Some examples below are to assist adults in establishing and maintaining expected boundaries.

This list is not exhaustive.

Treat all people with respect and honesty eg volunteers, alumni, mentors, members, and parents

Be a positive role model to children and young people in all your conduct with them

Follow organisational policy and guidelines for the safety of children as outlined in Child Safe Organisations Policy and USFIRST Youth Protection Program guidelines

Always have another adult present or in sight when conducting one to one mentoring.

Conduct mentoring activities where possible in visible environments and public spaces

Always have another youth member present if transporting a youth member or gain parental consent and notify the Member protection officer prior to this event.

Refrain from developing any special relationships with children or young people that could be seen as favouritism, such as the offering of gifts or special treatment

Refrain from any comments about a youth member's appearance including excessive flattering comments.

Photographing or recording any youth member must be done with parental consent and where possible use SRCSA equipment rather than personal equipment

Gain permission from the member protection officer or Committee member if required to use personal equipment

Storage of such images to be uploaded to SRCSA drive as soon as practicable rather than storing on personal equipment.

Raise any concerns, problems or issues with Member Protection Officer or a committee member as soon as possible

Record and act on complaints of abuse

Refrain from unwarranted or unwanted touching of a youth member including engaging in rough physical games.

Any concerns are dealt with in the following manner:

- Phone call or letter or email to the member protection officer expressing a concern.
- Mentors will be replaced if personality /mentoring style does not match student learning needs
- Template statement to be signed by mentors and volunteers to affirm that our Child Safe Policy has been read and understood as a part of the Registration to be a mentor with the Student Robotics Club of SA. This form is on our web site www.roboroos.org.au

18 SRCSA Child protection guidelines

Caring for children and young people brings additional responsibilities for mentors, alumni members and volunteers of this organisation.

All mentors, Alumni members and volunteers of this organisation are responsible for promoting the safety and well being of children and young people by:

- Treating all children and young people and other volunteers/mentors with dignity, equality and respect
- Adhering to this child safe policy at all times
- Listening and responding appropriately to the views and concerns of others particularly children and young people, within the organisation.
- Taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and protection of children and young people within the organisation

- Ensuring children and young people understand their rights and explaining this in age appropriate language what they can expect when participating in SRCSA through competition activities, training and social activities
- Responding quickly, fairly and transparently to any serious complaints made by a child, young person or their parent/guardian.
- Complying with mandatory notification expectations as soon as practicable if they form a suspicion on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is being abused or neglected
- Ensuring there is another adult, parent or guardian present when working with children
- Mentors, volunteers and Alumni members will not:
 - Take part in any unnecessary physical contact with a child or young person
 - Discriminate against any child or young person because of age, gender, cultural background, religion, vulnerability or sexuality
 - Make comments on the clubs' social media sites that would denigrate others or bring negative attention to SRCSA
- When attending interstate and overseas competitions it is the policy of SRCSA that youth members are accompanied by a parent or guardian.
- It is a requirement of membership of SRCSA and registration with USFIRST that a photography consent form is completed and members informed that their image may be obtained in the process of recording team events.
- It is a mandatory requirement of SRCSA that all youth members, Alumni members, mentors and volunteers attend club safety training including cyber safety, safe use of tools, PPE training and child safe environments training.

APPENDIX 1

Conducting relevant history assessments applications

Assessments required for prescribed positions

All mentors, Alumni members, members over 18 years and volunteers of The Students Robotics Club Of South Australia who occupy a prescribed position are required to make an application for a DHS Working with Children Check once every five years.

Exemptions from this requirement may apply in some circumstances: Where mentors and volunteers are Registered Teachers within South Australia, The Student Robotics Club Of South Australia requires a photocopy, fax or scanned copy of the Registration Certificate and sighting of the original document.

The Student Robotics Club Of South Australia retains the discretion to decide on a case-by-case basis whether any relevant exemptions will be exercised.

This requirement applies to all volunteers, mentors and alumni members who regularly work with or around children in an unsupervised capacity or have access to prescribed records relating to children.

This also includes parents who will be accompanying their children to competitions outside of South Australia including World Competitions overseas where they are likely to be chaperoning other students apart from their own child.

Procedure for conducting Working with Children Checks

Mentors, volunteers, parents and adult alumni members must provide a current Department of Human Services Screening Check.

Prior to the appointment of a new mentor, volunteer or Alumni members and then at five yearly intervals, The Student Robotics Club

Of South Australia will direct those with ongoing involvement to make another application as evidence that the applicant does not pose an increased risk of harm to children and young people.

The Student Robotics Club Of South Australia may obtain a DHS Working with Children Check for any mentor, volunteer or Alumni member at any time that club believes it necessary or desirable for the purpose of maintaining a child safe environment.

Information relating to a person's relevant history and the assessment process is managed securely and confidentially.

Exemptions

The following organisations, persons and positions are exempt

- (a) an organisation that provides equipment, food or venues for children's parties or events and does not provide any other services;
- (b) a person who undertakes work on a voluntary basis to provide a service in their capacity as a parent or guardian of a child to their own child;
- (c) a person who undertakes work on a voluntary basis to provide a service and who is under 18 years of age;
- (d) a person who is a registered teacher (within the meaning of the *Teachers Registration and Standards Act 2004*);
- (e) a person who undertakes, or a position that only involves, work that is not for the exclusive benefit of children and is not provided to any child on an individual basis;

APPENDIX 2

Student Robotics Club of SA overview of compliance document



Student Robotics Club SA (Roboroos 4537) has a strong commitment to child safety and establishing and maintaining child safe and child friendly environments.

WHY COMPLIANCE? –

- Legislated under the Child and Youth (Safety) Act (2017) and Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016
- Working with Children Relevant history check assessments will be compulsory as of 1st July 2019 for all people aged 18 years + volunteering and working with children.
- It is expected by *FIRST.org* that all competing teams are Child safe and meet Legislative requirements of your country.

THESE CHECKS ARE FREE AND CAN BE USED IN ALTERNATIVE SETTINGS

Current DCSI – Child Related Employment Screening is acceptable until expiry and then DHS Working With Children Check.

If you are over 18 & your function in Student Robotics Club SA - Roboroos is:

- Regular contact with children on a regular basis
- Are in close proximity to children during any overnight or outside of State event
- Supervise or manage persons who have regular contact with children
- Have access to sensitive records relating to children or young people
- This includes
 - Mentors,
 - Students and alumni aged 18 or over,
 - Parents and carers who are supporting children other than their own at times during build, competition and club training and events.
 - Members of steering committee
 - Volunteers over 18 years involved in schools outreach

You should also undertake training for Compliance

- Dept. Child Protection Child Safe Environments information session
– Wendy Stockton Member Protection Officer to schedule 2hr training