Child Safe Policy & Procedure

 **Policy Statement**

This policy is intended to empower children who are vital and active participants of Including You. We involve them when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them. We listen to their views and respect what they have to say.

We promote diversity and tolerance at Including You, and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome. In particular we:

• promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children

• promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds

• ensure that children with a disability are safe and can participate in their community as equal and respected citizens.

In this policy and procedure, all people in receipt of Including You services are referred to as an ‘individual’.

**Our staff**

This policy guides our staff on how to behave with children at Including You.

All of our staff must agree to abide by our conditions of employment which specifies the standards of conduct required when working with all individuals of Including You.

**Training and supervision**

Training and education are important to ensure that everyone at Including You understands that child safety is everyone’s responsibility.

Our organisational culture aims for all staff, parents/carers and children to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns. We train our staff to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse.

We also support our staff through ongoing supervision to: develop their skills to protect children from abuse; and promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability.

New employees will receive regular phone-based supervision to ensure they understand our commitment to child safety and that everyone has a role to play in protecting children from abuse, as well as checking that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate (please refer to conditions of employment to understand appropriate behaviour further).

Any inappropriate behaviour will be reported through appropriate channels, including the Department of Health and Human Services and Victoria Police, depending on the severity and urgency of the matter.

**Recruitment**

We take all reasonable steps to employ skilled people to work with children. We develop selection criteria and advertisements which clearly demonstrate our commitment to child safety and an awareness of our social and legislative responsibilities. Including You understand that when recruiting staff, we have ethical as well as legislative obligations.