

CHILD SAFE STATEMENT

Our commitment to Safeguarding Children and Young People



The Brotherhood of St. Laurence (BSL) is committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children, young people and adults who interact with, or are supported by, BSL services and programs, especially the most vulnerable.

We acknowledge that all children and young people have the right to feel safe and to be safe, when engaging with programs and in their communities. BSL has a zero-tolerance to all forms of abuse or violence and condemns all forms of exploitation, abuse and harm towards children and young people.

BSL complies with Australian Federal and State mandatory reporting requirements. We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are concerned about a child or young person's safety, which we rigorously follow.

Our comprehensive policies and procedures are in place to protect program participants from harm and focus on preventing child abuse by identifying risks early and removing or reducing these risks. We are committed to ensuring our staff and volunteers are educated on child abuse risks and mandatory reporting requirements.

In line with the Victorian Child Safe Standards, BSL has implemented appropriate recruitment and screening measures when employing staff and volunteers, including a National Police Check and Working with Children Check (or state equivalent for all staff in child-related occupations). When hiring for positions that involve working directly with children and young people, behavioural-based interview questions are used. All staff, volunteers and board members undertake orientation in our policies and procedures.

BSL is committed to the cultural safety of all children and young people and welcomes people from all cultures and backgrounds. We give particular attention to promoting the cultural safety, participation, and empowerment of:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people

- Children and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Children and young people with developmental delay and/or disability
- Children and young people who identify as LGBTIQ+.

The BSL Safeguarding Unit promotes the safety of children by providing training to staff and volunteers on mitigating risks, identifying harm, and reporting all allegations or concerns related to child safety. Our Child and Adult Safeguarding Policy is available on our [website](#). Our policy and related procedures support staff and volunteers to prevent, report and respond to allegations of abuse and harm towards children and young people.

If you would like more information related to BSL's Child & Adult Safeguarding Policy, you can contact our Safeguarding Unit at safeguarding@bsl.org.au or contact BSL's Safeguarding & Family Violence Lead – Melinda Gregory: melinda.gregory@bsl.org.au
Phone: 0491 156 089.

BSL has a confidential Whistle-blower Hotline managed by Stopleveline (independent, external service). Stopleveline enables reports to be made anonymously and confidentially. All reports are investigated. Phone: 1300 304 550. Email: BSL@stopleveline.com.au

If you believe a Child or Young Person is at immediate risk, please phone 000.



Travers McLeod
Executive Director



Stephen Newton AO
Board Chair