



Policy Group - People

Policy Name - Code of Ethics and Conduct

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Policy Owner:	CEO
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Version:	3

1. Introduction

HeartKids is committed to upholding the highest ethical standards while fostering inclusivity, respect, and transparency. This Code of Ethics and Conduct reflects our organisational Values and the principles of our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), guiding all personnel to act responsibly and in alignment with our mission.

2. Purpose

The Code of Ethics and Conduct demonstrates HeartKids' commitment to creating a safe, inclusive workplace that champions diversity and cultural awareness. It supports compliance with workplace health and safety (WHS) and child protection laws while ensuring our Values serve as the foundation for ethical behaviour.

3. Scope

This Code applies to all HeartKids Representatives, including HeartKids Board Members, staff, volunteers, contractors, and community representatives, ensuring alignment with our organisational values and ethical responsibilities.

4. Values

HeartKids' culture is guided by three core Values:

Courageously Kind - We bring compassion to life through practical, insightful support that's grounded in real experiences. Trust, transparency, and care are at the heart of all we do.

- Compassion in action
- Practical support grounded in real journeys
- Valued experience and insightful care:
 - Lived
 - Commercial



- Transparency and trust

Championing Change - We embrace bold, purpose-driven action. Whether it's advocating for families, shaping future support, or innovating to make a greater impact, we move forward with clarity and purpose.

- Transformative impact
- Purpose-driven
- Innovative and nimble
- Supporting growth and resilience
- Shaping futures

United Community - We stand together - with families, partners, corporate supporters, volunteers, and each other. Every journey is unique, and we create space for all voices, valuing diversity, collaboration, and shared purpose.

- Connected through purpose
- Together in action
- Partnerships for life
- Inclusivity and Diversity
 - Many stories/unique journeys
 - Building collaboration
- Bringing joy

These Values are embedded throughout this Code and underpin the conduct expected of everyone in the HeartKids community.

5. Policy

HeartKids representatives are required to:

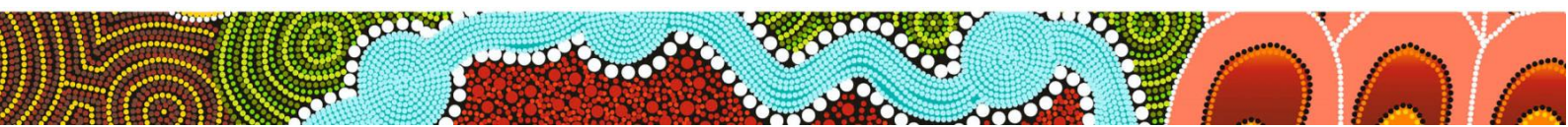
- Adhere to this Code and related policies, including WHS, Child Protection, and Harassment and Bullying.
- Act consistently with HeartKids' values, fostering a culture of inclusion, respect, and cultural awareness aligned with the Reflect RAP.
- Report any conflicts of interest, safety hazards, or breaches of child protection obligations promptly.

6. Definitions

Organisational values	The guiding statements that HeartKids uses to convey the culture of the organisation, to positively influence the way personnel work and the decisions they make on behalf of the organisation.
Workplace ethics	The set of moral principles that guide workplace behaviour.
Privacy:	The commitment and legal obligations of an organisation to keep personal, sensitive or health-related information secure and restricted to those who require access to it to deliver services required by their role.
Workplace confidentiality	The restriction of information acquired as part of a job at HeartKids until it is officially released.

7. Procedures

Agreement to Code: All HeartKids representatives agree to uphold this Code and align with HeartKids' Values, and are expected to agree to and sign off on this policy.



Cultural Awareness Training: Training on cultural competence and the RAP will be an integral part of the induction process for all HeartKids representatives.

Policy Integration: HeartKids representatives are expected to ensure alignment with organisational goals and compliance with existing policies.

8. Responsibilities

- The CEO is responsible for implementing and ensuring compliance with this Code of Ethics and Conduct.
- The Code applies to all HeartKids representatives.
- All individuals will perform their roles with professionalism and accountability, reflecting HeartKids Values in their actions and interactions.

Responsibility to CoHD individuals, families and community

HeartKids representatives will:

- Build respectful and transparent relationships, clearly communicating expectations.
- Maintain confidentiality, except when required by law or contract to disclose.
- Empower clients by ensuring access to information and supporting informed decision-making.
- Treat clients with dignity and respect, recognising their capacity for self-determination (United Community).
- Always maintain professional boundaries to protect the integrity of the relationship.

Responsibility to HeartKids

HeartKids representatives will:

- Fulfil their duties diligently and in alignment with HeartKids' policies and objectives.
- Act lawfully and in a manner that upholds the organisation's reputation.
- Manage relationships and communications responsibly.
- Disclose out-of-hours contact with clients.
- Where possible, avoid accepting gifts deemed material or substantial in value, or which would be deemed as causing a conflict of interest for the employee or HeartKids.
- Seek authorisation before speaking to the media in line with the Marketing and Communication Policy.
- Use public funds responsibly and transparently, in line with HeartKids' financial policies and the governance standards set by the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC).
- Address behaviour inconsistent with this Code and seek guidance from trusted parties (eg HR and Finance advisory) where necessary.

Responsibility to Colleagues

HeartKids representatives will:

- Collaborate effectively and support one another, respecting diverse skills and experiences.
- Raise ethical concerns with colleagues or managers openly and directly.
- Share knowledge and contribute to a culture of trust and professional growth.
- Ensure confidentiality regarding the personal information of colleagues and adhere to workplace health and safety, as well as anti-discrimination laws.
- Commit to professionalism and reliability in their duties.

9. Conflict of interest

HeartKids requires all personnel to:

- Act impartially and without prejudice.

- Declare any actual or potential conflicts of interest.
- Avoid gifts or benefits that could influence decisions.
- Conflicts must be managed to ensure HeartKids' services and activities remain unaffected.

10. Confidentiality and privacy

All personnel must respect confidentiality and privacy, particularly regarding sensitive client and organisational information, as outlined in related policies.

11. Use of resources

HeartKids representatives must:

- Recognise, use responsibly, and safeguard HeartKids' resources, including physical, financial, technological, and intellectual property.
- Behave professionally in all forms of communication, including emails, social media, and other digital platforms.
- Use technology in line with HeartKids' Values and ethical standards.
- Protect privacy and confidentiality when using digital systems.
- Ensure that technology supports, rather than replaces, human judgment and empathy.
- Use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools, including generative AI, thoughtfully and with care, especially when handling sensitive information or representing HeartKids.

HeartKids supports the ethical use of emerging tools such as AI. While not yet widely used, these tools may support future operations. Staff are encouraged to remain mindful of risks such as inaccuracy, bias, or privacy breaches when using AI, and to seek guidance when unsure.

12. Work Health and Safety

HeartKids prioritises the health and safety of its community. All personnel must actively participate in WHS initiatives and comply with policies to prevent harm.

13. Child Safety Compliance

HeartKids is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of children and complies with all Australian child protection laws, including:

- National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
- State and Territory-based child protection legislation
- Mandatory reporting obligations

All HeartKids representatives must prioritise child safety by undertaking mandatory training as specified by their role and reporting any concerns or suspected harm in accordance with relevant laws and internal policies.

14. Harassment and bullying

HeartKids is committed to a workplace free from harassment and bullying, as these behaviours are contrary to our Code of Ethics and Conduct and our organisational Values of Courageously Kind, Championing Change, and United Community.

Harassment or bullying based on characteristics such as sex, race, religion, age, or other protected attributes breaches anti-discrimination and human rights laws. Examples include making inappropriate remarks, using offensive materials, telling unwelcome jokes, engaging in physical contact, making threats, or creating a hostile environment.

All complaints will be addressed in line with the Harassment and Bullying Policy and the Complaints and Grievance Policy.

15. Breach of the Code

Failure to comply with this Code or related policies may result in disciplinary action or termination of employment. Breaches of the law will be reported to authorities.

Reporting concerns about a breach of the Code

Concerns about violations of the Code should be raised promptly:

- Address informally with the individual or your manager.
- Escalate unresolved issues to the next level of management, such as the CEO or the Board Chair, if the CEO is involved.
- Refer to the Complaints and Grievance Policy for formal reporting processes. You may also contact external agencies if required (www.fwa.gov.au). For guidance, consult your manager or the CEO.

Legislation

[Privacy Act 1988](#)

[Australian Privacy Principles](#)

[National Principles for a Child Safe Organisation](#)

Related documents

Complaints and Grievance Policy

Whistleblower Policy

Work Health and Safety Policy

Child Protection Policy

Social Inclusion and Workplace Diversity Policy

Marketing and Communication Policy

Harassment and Bullying Policy

Data Management and Retention

Working at HeartKids Manual