

Our commitment to child safety

We're committed to providing a nurturing environment where all children feel safe, valued and heard.

Uniting WA is committed to developing and maintaining an open and aware culture that is transparent, accountable and focused on child safety. We strive to create an environment where leadership, team members and volunteers:

- Accept individual and shared responsibility for child safety
- Understand their roles and responsibilities in accordance with the relevant child protection legislation
- Actively work to raise family, team, organisational and community awareness of child protection issues.

At Uniting, we'll support and protect children and young people, and we'll be proactive and preventative in our approach towards keeping children safe.

We'll demonstrate this commitment by:

- Lifting and amplifying the voices of children and young people to ensure their views are heard and their concerns are acted on
- Listening to children and young people and empowering them to participate in the decisions that affect their lives
- Maintaining processes for conducting child-safe screening for all workers directly engaged in the delivery of services to children
- Ensuring that all organisations we partner with for child-related work have child-safe screening processes in place for their workers.

We'll ensure that all Uniting workers understand and adhere to the Child Safe Code of Conduct, which sets clear boundaries of behaviour between adults and children. We'll also ensure that, through induction and training, teams are informed, resourced and supported to understand their role in providing a safe environment for children.

We will not tolerate harm to children.

Uniting has zero tolerance for child abuse and neglect. And we'll take steps to protect children and young people from anything that jeopardises their safety, welfare or wellbeing.

In line with our mission, we pay particular attention to the needs of vulnerable children, and we'll respect diversity and promote equity for all children.

We'll educate our workers and the children we support to identify signs of harm and abuse. And we'll provide guidance to children about what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour when they're interacting with adults and with other children.

All Uniting workers are encouraged and supported to report suspected child abuse.

Uniting supports the rights and wellbeing of our workers and encourages their active participation in building and maintaining a secure environment – for everyone.

We'll encourage and support anyone who is aware of, or suspects a child is being abused, to immediately make a report to police and/or statutory authorities.

We'll ensure that processes for reporting concerns are clear and accessible, including the Uniting WA Whistleblower Policy.

We'll treat all allegations of abuse seriously, with respect, consideration and in alignment with our purpose to inspire people, enliven communities and confront injustice.

We'll support relevant authorities' investigations into any concerns about children and/or allegations of abuse or harm towards children, and we'll comply with all relevant statutory, contractual and legislative requirements in the course of an investigation.

We're committed to continuously improving.

We're committed to the work of implementing the Uniting Church's National Child Safe Policy Framework. This Framework reflects the Royal Commission's 10 Child Safe Elements as well as the 10 National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, as drafted by the Australian Human Rights Commission on behalf of the Council of Australian Governments.

As an agency of the Uniting Church Western Australia and a member of the UnitingCare Network, Uniting WA is wholeheartedly committed to the Uniting Church's pledge to:

- Continue to understand and to implement the lessons of the Royal Commission and remain open to the insights of survivors and professionals
- Continuously seek improvement by regularly renewing policies and practices in all parts of the organisation, to ensure that they reflect the best practice for care, service and support of children
- Ensure that these priorities are integrated into organisational culture and practices.

We'll work faithfully and carefully in the months and years ahead to ensure that the safety of children and young people is embedded and flourishes in our organisational culture and practices.

30 November 2020



Erica Haddon
Board Chairperson



Amanda Hunt
Chief Executive Officer