

Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy

Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia. We pay our respects to Elders past and present. We recognise the First Peoples of this Nation and their ongoing cultural and spiritual connections to the lands, waters, seas, skies, and communities. We acknowledge First Nations Peoples as the Traditional Custodians and Lore Keepers of the oldest living culture and pay respects to their Elders past and present. We extend that respect to all First Nations Peoples.

This Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy was approved by the Directors on 23 November 2024. It demonstrates the strong commitment of management, staff and volunteers to child safety and wellbeing, and how our organisation keeps children safe from harm, including child abuse.

Commitment to child safety

All children who access services at Halo Journey have a right to feel and be safe. The welfare of the children in our care will always be our first priority and we have a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and harm. We aim to create a child safe and child-friendly online environment where children feel safe.

Purpose

This Policy outlines how Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children and what steps we will take to do this.

Scope

This policy applies to all Directors, paid and volunteer team members, children and other individuals involved in our organisation. This policy applies to all activities conducted by Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd that involve children.

Definitions

Child abuse means:

- a sexual offence committed against a child
- an offence committed against a child under section 49M(1) of the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic), such as grooming

- physical violence against a child
- causing serious emotional or psychological harm to a child
- serious neglect of a child.

Harm is damage to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child or young person, including as a result of child abuse by adults or the conduct of other children. It includes physical, emotional, sexual and psychological harm. Harm can arise from a single act or event and can also be cumulative, that is, arising as a result of a series of acts or events over a period of time.

Child/Children means a person who is under the age of 18 years.

A concern refers to any potential issue that could impact negatively on the safety and wellbeing of children.

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction to Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd related to one or more of the following:

- our services or dealings with individuals
- allegations of abuse or misconduct by a team member or another individual associated with Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd
- disclosures of abuse or harm made by a child or young person
- the conduct of a child or young person participating in services at Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd
- the inadequate handling of a prior concern
- general concerns about the safety children or activity.
- serious neglect of a child.

Role of the Directors & Business Manager

The Directors & Business Manager have the role of making sure Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd prioritises children's safety and that action is taken when anyone raises concerns about children's safety.

The Directors & Business Manager will champion and model a child safe culture at Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd. We encourage anyone involved with the organisation to report a child safety concern. The Directors & Business Manager will work to create a positive culture around reporting so that people feel comfortable to raise concerns.

Everyone at Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd has a role in identifying and managing risks of child abuse and harm. The Directors & Business Manager will make sure that

team members are conducting risk assessments and taking action to manage risks in accordance with this policy. They will also ensure that appropriate child safety training for all team members is identified and completed.

The Directors and Business Manager will conduct a review every two years of how effectively Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd is delivering child safety and wellbeing. The input of team members and clients including young people involved with Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd will be sought as part of this review.

Children's empowerment and participation

Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd is a child-centred organisation. We actively seek to include children's views and ideas in our organisational planning and delivery of services through electronically sent feedback forms and surveys.

Where relevant, we encourage children to be supportive of each other at Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd. We do not tolerate bullying or abusive behaviour between children and act proactively in the best interests of the children if this occurs.

We respect the rights of children and provide them with information about their rights including the right to be safe at Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd. We actively seek to understand what makes children feel safe in our organisation. We regularly communicate with children about what they can do if they feel unsafe.

Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd values the voices of children and will act on safety concerns raised by children or their families. Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd supports children's participation in the following ways:

- Feedback forms are sent electronically to children who are current participants/clients. These feedback forms ask children for;
 - Their feedback on the services provided and what makes them feel safe/unsafe
 - any suggestions for the services provided

Children are provided with feedback on their suggestions in writing.

- Consultation with children through email about any proposed significant changes to the policies, procedures, programs or staffing. Children's views are collected electronically by the Business Manager, provided to management and considered in the decision-making process.
- Information provided to children and families about Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd operations, staffing and programs are made suitable for different age groups

and diversity of the children. Child Safety information sessions/meetings can be offered to clients in Cantonese or Mandarin when required.

Families and communities

Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd recognises the important role of families and involves parents and carers when making significant decisions about their child. Parents, families and communities are welcome to provide feedback at any time through our contact email address (info@halojourney.com.au) and are encouraged to raise any concerns they have with us.

Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd provides information to families and community about our child safe policies and practices including through:

- publishing this Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Code of Conduct on our website
- publishing information about our child safety approach, our operations, and management structure on our website

Creating culturally safe environments for all Aboriginal children and their families
Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd is committed to creating environments where Aboriginal culture is celebrated and Aboriginal children, families and community members are welcomed and included. Strategies to embed cultural safety for Aboriginal children include:

- an Acknowledgement of Country on our website and at the beginning of any presentations/workshops conducted by or on behalf of Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd
- providing opportunities for children to share their cultural identity and express their culture when participating in services
- supporting children who wish to explore their culture, including consulting with their family and relevant Aboriginal organisations
- providing training for team members on the strengths of Aboriginal culture and its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children
- celebrating NAIDOC Week and acknowledging significant events including National Sorry Day and National Reconciliation Week on the home page of our website

- seeking feedback from Aboriginal children, families and communities on their experience at Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd, particularly how safe they feel expressing their identity including their culture

Valuing diversity

We value diversity and equity for all children. To achieve this, we:

- provide training for all team members on understanding diversity and how to support inclusion and cultural safety
- welcome and support participation of all children (in all of our services available to children under 18 years), including children with disability, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who are unable to live at home, LGBTIQ children and Aboriginal children and their families
- have zero tolerance of racism and other forms of discrimination and take action when discrimination or exclusion is identified
- strive to reflect the diversity of our community through representation in our team members
- acknowledge and celebrate important cultural dates on our website
- have an online environment that actively celebrates diversity

Code of Conduct

Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd has a Child Safe Code of Conduct. All Directors, the Business Manager, and contracted, employed and voluntary Team Members (including Reception/Administration staff and all Practitioners) must comply with the Code of Conduct at all times. Breaches of the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action including termination of a person's involvement with the organisation.

All third-party contractors are also expected to abide by the Child Safe Code of Conduct, and where they are engaging with children will have to sign an agreement to comply with the code, prior to delivering any services.

Recruiting team members

Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd puts child safety and wellbeing at the center of recruitment and screening processes for all team members as outlined in the recruitment and screening policy. We only recruit team members (in relation to our

services provided to children online) who are appropriate to engage with children. All Directors and the Business Manager must also be screened.

We require a Working with Children Check, Police Checks and referee checks for all team members who have a role with children or have access to children's personal information. We require staff to have appropriate qualifications and relevant registration(s) for their professional roles and check to make sure these are valid. All Directors and the Business Manager must hold a valid Working with Children Check and a national Police Check is required.

Supporting team members

Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd is committed to ensuring that all team members receive training to ensure they understand their responsibilities in relation to child safety and to support their engagement with children. Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd assists its team members to incorporate child safety considerations into decisions and to promote a safe environment where children are empowered to speak up about issues that affect them.

All Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd Directors, Management, and team members of any kind are required to complete annual child safety training regardless of their role with the organisation. Training will be recorded in the Child Safety Training Action Plan.

Issues or concerns about behaviour with children will be raised immediately and addressed in line with our Code of Conduct, complaint handling policy and disciplinary policy.

Complaints and reporting

All reports of child abuse and child safety concerns will be treated seriously, whether they are made by an adult or a child and whether they are about the conduct of an adult or a child. All complaints and child safety concerns will be responded to promptly and thoroughly.

Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd has a complaint handling policy that includes information for team members about how a complaint or child safety concern will be responded to. An easy-to-understand complaints information sheet will be provided for all clients including children and families to know about the complaint process

and the supports available to those making a complaint and those involved in the complaint process.

If a complaint includes an allegation or incident of child abuse or harm, then team members at Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd must report it in accordance with the complaint handling policy. Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd team members are required to prioritise children's safety in any response and to report all potentially criminal conduct to Police. Under the complaint handling and disciplinary policies, team members may be subject to actions to support child safety including:

- being stood down during an investigation or terminated following an investigation
- having their duties altered so they do not engage with children at Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd
- removing or changing their access to the Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd IT systems and programs.

Complaints can be emailed to info@halojourney.com.au or you can speak with a Child Safety Person.

If there is concern for the immediate safety of a child, immediately call 000.

A circular logo with a green background. The words "HALO Journey" are written in a light pink, sans-serif font. Below this, the words "Child Safety Person" are written in a bold, green, sans-serif font.

Child Safety Person

Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd has two trained child safety persons with responsibility for responding to any child safety related complaints or concerns. Practitioners ensure that child safety persons are made known to children who access the service(s) at Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd so they know and understand who the appointed officers are, and how and when they may contact them. Photos and names of the child safety persons are displayed on our website.

If a person does not feel comfortable making a report to a child safety person, they may report their concern to any other team member or via email at info@halojourney.com.au.

Record keeping

Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd is committed to making and keeping full and accurate records about all child-related complaints or safety concerns.

All child safety complaints, concerns, incidents and near misses will be recorded in the incident reporting system.

Records which may assist with the investigation of a complaint or safety concern will be identified and kept as part of the record of an investigation. Records will be kept even if an investigation does not substantiate a complaint.

We will record and keep the outcome of any investigations, and the resolution of any complaints. This includes findings made, reasons for decisions and actions taken. Records will be stored securely and kept by Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd for at least 45 years.

Information sharing

Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd may share relevant information to promote the safety and wellbeing of children, where it is appropriate and in their best interests. Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd will keep information about complaints confidential, except where it is necessary to share information to respond properly to a complaint or to prioritise child safety. We may also need to share information about incidents or complaints with external authorities to comply with the law or to prioritise safety. More information is available in our complaint handling policy.

Risk management

We recognise the importance of identifying and managing risks of child harm and abuse in the online environment operated by Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd. We conduct regular risk assessments and have a risk management plan to address the risk of child abuse and harm at Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd. The risk management plan will be reviewed annually in consultation with our team members together with a pool of current clientele made up of families, parents/carers, and children who use the service(s) provided to them. We will ensure that any risk controls put in place balance the need to manage harm with the adequate facilitation of services provided through Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd. The Directors & Business Manager are together responsible for approving the risk management plan. Any contractors or other providers of relevant services to children will always be supervised by a team member (e.g. be present at online workshops provided etc) while working with us to ensure child safety. See also Code of Conduct above.

Non-compliance with this policy and the Code of Conduct

Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd will enforce this policy, the Code of Conduct and any other policies related to child safety and wellbeing (see list below). Potential breaches by anyone will be investigated and may result in restriction of duties, suspension or termination of employment/contract or engagement or other corrective action. More information can be found in our disciplinary policy.

Review

Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd will review all child safe practices and policies at least every two years. We also review relevant practices and policies in response to a child safety incident or 'near miss'. Findings from reviews will be reported to the people involved in our organisation and inform our approach to continuous improvement of our child safety practices. Reviews are overseen by the Directors & Business Manager and will be informed by consultation with other team members and families/parents/carers/children who are current clients at the time.

Supporting documents – Halo Journey Australia Pty Ltd child safety and wellbeing system

The following policies and procedures work together to support child safety and wellbeing across all of our operations:

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Code of Conduct
- complaint handling policy
- recruitment and screening policy
- disciplinary policy
- risk management plan
- child safe training plan.

Supporting legislation

- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic) (including Child Safe Standards)
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic) (including reporting to Child Protection)
- Crimes Act 1958 (Vic) (including Failure to Protect and Failure to Disclose offences)

- Wrongs Act 1958 (Vic) (including Part XIII – Organisational liability for child abuse)

Date Reviewed: 23 November 2024

Next review due: 23 November 2026

