

Contents

1) Working Safely with All Participants	2
2) Behaviour	2
3) Be a Good Role Model	2
4) What We will Do	2
5) Language	2
6) Physical Contact	3
7) Doing the Right Thing	4
8) Program Style	4
9) Cultural Awareness	5
10) Special Needs	5
11) Team Member to Participant Ratios	6
12) Privacy & Social Media	7
13) Team Member Declaration	8

1) Working Safely with All Participants

- a) Kulture Break is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all participants, especially children and vulnerable people involved in programs run by our organisation.
- b) Team Members will work together to build and maintain a secure environment for all participants in all programs.
- c) Leadership is a position of power and influence over others. This can sometimes be abused. The Code of Practice offers a safeguard against abuse of positional power, providing boundaries for appropriate behaviour.
- d) The Code of Practice provides essential guidelines for behaviour when working with children and vulnerable people in our programs.
- e) The Code of Practice means that everyone on the team understands the expectations – we are all ‘on the same page’.

2) Behaviour

- a) What we do as Team Members reflects our values. It is vital to behave in a way that upholds what we believe about children and vulnerable people – that they are valued and deserve to be treated with respect and dignity.

3) Be a Good Role Model

- a) Children and vulnerable people learn as much from what Team Members do as from what they say.
- b) It is easy to ‘love the lovable’. The children and vulnerable people who are not easy to love often require more love from us.
- c) We will avoid behaviour that gives the impression of favouritism or encourages ‘special’ relationships with individual children.
- d) Where parents, carers or members of the community observe Team Members at work, they need to see a caring style that demonstrates the positive values Kulture Break seeks to uphold.

4) What We will Do

- a) We will Treat all participants with respect and take notice of their reactions to our tone of voice and manner.
- b) We will not be alone with a child.
- c) We will not enter the bathroom or changing facilities of members of the opposite gender, except in emergencies. Cleaning of these areas may be carried out by a staff member of the opposite gender only when the facility is not being used.
- d) We will be aware of situations when children or vulnerable people might be changing or using the toilet.
- e) We will take an accurate roll of all participants in each class.

5) Language

- a) Words Can Hurt

- I. It is important to use language that affirms the worth, dignity and significance of the participants.
- II. It is not unusual to use negative or critical language towards people in an attempt at humour. Humour is a wonderful thing, however we will ensure that jokes are not made at the expense of others as this erodes the sense of safety and care.

b) Minding our Language

- I. We will not use derogatory language towards Team Members or participants – even when meant as sarcasm or as a joke.
- II. We will not use ‘in jokes’, negative language, put downs or sexist language with other Team Members or with participants.
- III. We will not include some participants in a joke while excluding others.
- IV. We will not speak down to children or young people in a superior way, but instead speak to them as people of value.
- V. Where private conversations are necessary, the Team Member and child will remain visible to another adult in the group.

6) Physical Contact

Many children enjoy physical contact and will seek it as a simple expression of affection and confidence; however others do not appreciate or seek physical contact.

Physical contact between adults and children may be misconstrued. Children and vulnerable people may not be aware of creating such situations. It is your duty to be alert to such circumstances.

a) We must always be SEEN to be doing the right thing as well as knowing that we are.

- I. Expectations
- II. Physical contact will always:
- III. Be in response to the participant’s need and not the Team Member’s.
- IV. Be with the child or vulnerable person’s permission – resistance from the person should be respected.
- V. Ensure area normally covered by bathers/ swimwear is not contacted.
- VI. Be open and not secretive.
- VII. Be governed by the age and developmental stage of the person.
- VIII. Let the Participant Choose

Children and vulnerable people should be allowed to choose the degree of physical contact they have with others, apart from exceptional circumstances or when needing medical attention.

It is inappropriate to initiate close physical contact; this should come from the participant, if at all.

Physical contact between Team Members, and children and vulnerable people is inappropriate if it could be perceived as a threat, if it causes embarrassment to either person, or if it does not allow either person to disengage easily.

As a general rule, open displays of affection initiated by children in the presence of others, are acceptable, if they are infrequent and situationally appropriate. A child should not be permitted to consistently gain physical contact with a team member. If a child continues to persist in wanting regular, close physical affection (eg: long hugs, sitting on laps very often etc) with a team member, that member should report it to their supervisor with a view to speaking with the child’s parent or caregiver about appropriateness of physical affection.

Team Members need to be aware that consistent contact with the same person may give the impression of favouritism. It is unwise and may result in others competing for attention or feeling left out.

Any physical activity that is, or may be construed as, sexually stimulating to the Team Member or participant is inappropriate and must be prevented.

Physical touch has an important role in building healthy relationships. It needs to be done within these very clear guidelines and with a heightened awareness of changing community attitudes around safe and appropriate touch with children and vulnerable people.

7) Doing the Right Thing

a. How to be sure it's OK

- I. Touching a child or vulnerable person between the neck and the knees should be avoided, although contact with the bony areas of the body such as the shoulder, elbow or head, or holding a hand for guidance or protection is generally acceptable.
- II. A sideways hug around the shoulder is more acceptable than an arm around the waist.
- III. There will be occasions where displays of affection are natural. Children must not be shunned if they initiate and demonstrate their need for comfort, bearing in mind the age of the child and the circumstances. This might include an irregular, short hug, a jump up for a short hug, sitting on a lap briefly for comfort when distressed. Care needs to be exercised that such situations don't occur in private.
- IV. On no account may any form of corporal or physical punishment be administered, even in fun.
- V. The only form of physical restraint appropriate is to protect children from harm. This includes reasonable restraint to stop a fight, to stop bullying or to avoid an accident.
- VI. What is reasonable and lawful will depend on the circumstances, and appropriate judgement should be used.
- VII. Any situation where physical restraint was necessarily used should be reported to the supervisor and relayed to the parent or caregiver of that child.
- VIII. Allow children to determine the degree of physical contact they have with you, without showing favouritism.

8) Program Style

a. Why is this important?

- I. Children and vulnerable people are not always able to sense the risks associated with participating in activities.
- II. Our program and activity choices need to be made keeping the participant group's capability and risk appetite in mind.
- III. The activities we choose will speak loudly about the values Kulture Break hold about people.

b. What do I need to know?

- I. Activities or 'wide games' that require participants to operate on their own or in pairs out of sight of the Team Members need to be managed carefully. This includes activities that require participants to engage in public places.
- II. Clear boundaries and rules are needed to ensure that participants can engage in activities safely.

- III. It is not appropriate for participants to be made to feel stupid or embarrassed. Whilst competitive games or activities can be fun, if they exploit gender, intellectual or physical differences, then they should be avoided.
- IV. As you identify your program activities, take into account their age appropriateness.

c. What do I need to do?

- I. Be willing to drop an activity if you sense that it is not working safely, or is making participants feel angry or isolated.
- II. Put in extra planning and support measures when an activity has extra challenges.
- III. Ask your supervisor or another team member to help you plan well.

9) Cultural Awareness

a. Sensitivity

- I. Team Members need to be sensitive to cultures and family traditions different from their own. These differences may affect the degree of participation of children and vulnerable people in activities and games.
- II. Respect
- III. No pressure should be applied to participants from other cultures and traditions to encourage participation.
- IV. The family has many forms and leaders must respect a participant's support structures.
- V. Team Members need to be sensitive about using words that make assumptions about any participant's background, family status or principal caregivers.
- VI. Your team should have zero tolerance for language or activities that discriminate based on gender, race, age or ability.

b. What do I need to do?

- I. Show respect for the authority structures of other cultures and traditions.
- II. Do not make statements that reflect ignorance, bias or ridicule about other religions and cultures.

10) Special Needs

c. Who May Have Special Needs?

- I. People with special needs may include very small children, and people with intellectual, mental or physical disabilities, children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder and the elderly. Some of our programs are deliberately tailored for these groups, but other classes which are not specifically designed with these challenges in mind may also include vulnerable people.

d. Be Inclusive

- II. Being inclusive of children and vulnerable people with special needs has more to do with a positive attitude and a willingness to learn, than with a list of 'Dos and Don'ts'. Kulture Break is a social inclusion organisation and we will insist that all participants have the same opportunity to be included.
- III. Being inclusive means seeing that each person has both the potential to learn and the need to be loved and included like all other children and vulnerable people.

e. Be Proactive

- I. You may need extra adult help. The number of extra Team Members will depend on the needs of the child or vulnerable person.
- II. Some children and vulnerable people will require one-on-one assistance. If this situation becomes apparent, the team member will communicate with the team and ensure these extra needs are considered.
- III. Find out as much as you can about the specific disability, as well as constructive ways to include the participant.

f. Be Creative

- I. Make sure your attitudes and behaviour are positive and inclusive towards children and people with special needs, as this will have a significant influence on how others react.
- II. Encourage all children and vulnerable people to participate, play and learn together, and to share responsibilities.
- III. Where appropriate, ask the participant what they think or want.
- IV. Rather than avoiding some activities because your group includes children or vulnerable people with special needs, be creative in the ways you include everyone.
- V. Limit the amount of furniture and other obstructions to allow space to move.
- VI. Plan to include regular breaks in your program.

11) Team Member to Participant Ratios

a. Adhere to Kulture Breaks ratios standards

- I. Every program must have a safe number of adult Team Members in relation to the number of participants. This will differ according to the activity, age and capacity of the participants.

b. What do I need to know?

- I. ChildSafe recommended Team Member to participant ratio for any activity is no greater than 1:8 (i.e. 1 leader for every 8 participants).
- II. When young children or people with special needs are present the ratio should be lower.
- III. This ratio will be lower when activities are outside of the normal facility of operation.
- IV. Some organisations use lower ratios, allowing a greater opportunity to build quality relationships and provide higher safety standards.
- V. ChildSafe has other ratios for specific contexts, including working with the very young or when water activities are involved. Your Team Leader has Modules for these activities with more details.

c. What do I need to do?

- I. Ensure that you have sufficient Team Members to run your program.

12) Privacy & Social Media

a. Personal Information

- I. As a Team Member you may, at times, require access to private information about a participant (e.g. medical information).
- II. You have an obligation to abide by Kulture Break's privacy policy in relation to protecting the right to privacy of participants and their families. It is each team members responsibility to ensure they have read and understood Kulture Break's Privacy Policy.
- III. Personal information and photographs obtained from your involvement in programs must not be used without consent. Information is collected by Kulture break about the use of broad group photos¹ on social media. Team members need to check if each member in a broad group photo has parental permission to publish a group photo which includes their child.
- IV. Appropriate use would be within the context of the program itself or uses for which permission has been obtained from the caregiver or child (as appropriate).
- V. Contact Outside the Program
- VI. It may be necessary to continue to keep contact with participants outside a program. This requires care on your part, ensuring that the family grants permission, and that the child or vulnerable person welcomes such contact.

b. What do I need to do?

- I. Ask your Team Leader for a copy of your organisation's privacy policy if you do not have one.
- II. Photographs taken during programs must not be kept for personal use or publicly shown, including on social media sites, without permission as indicated above.
- III. Keep a record of ongoing contact with participants.
- IV. Communicate with the child or vulnerable person in an open manner, keeping in mind what you would be happy for their family to hear or read.
- V. Do not take a child or vulnerable person to your home or encourage meetings outside the program activity.
- VI. Ongoing contact with participants should only occur within strict guidelines set by Kulture Break.
- VII. Social Media
- VIII. The use of social media such as Facebook and Twitter can pose danger to participants, Team Members and organisations.
- IX. Participants under 18 should not be 'friended' on personal social media sites. Your program may choose to set up an authorised site, which can be used to keep in touch with participants.
- X. Be aware that whatever you post online cannot be taken back. Again, only share what you would be happy for a caregiver to see.

¹ A 'broad group photo' is a photograph of a group of participants that does not focus on any one person and does not provide a close-up image of any of the participants faces.

13) Team Member Declaration

Please read each point and sign when you fully agree with the entire statement.

- a. I have carefully read and fully understand the entire contents of this document and agree to uphold all Kulture Breaks policies detailed herein without reservation.**
- b. I agree to always keep my Working With Vulnerable People ACT status up to date and will inform Kulture Break immediately if my status changes while I am working with / volunteering for Kulture Break in any way.**
- c. I will always do everything within my power to protect, respect and value every participant and their family involved with Kulture Break.**
- d. I understand that I am the face of Kulture Break and will conduct myself with integrity both while working and in public.**
- e. There is no reason that I know of that I would not be suitable for a position leading, teaching and/or supervising children and young people with Kulture Break.**

Team Member's Name:

Team Member's Signature:

Date signed:

Supervisor's Name:

Supervisor's Signature: