Child Safety Code of Conduct

All employees, contractors, consultants and volunteers (including Board of Directors, co-opted Board sub-committee members, carers, students and people on work experience) of Uniting are responsible for the safety and wellbeing of children and young people who engage with the organisation. The safety, rights and best interests of children will be the paramount consideration for all decision makers in the education and care system.
All paid and unpaid employees are expected to act in accordance with this Code of Conduct in their physical and online interactions with children and young people under the age of 18 years.
Uniting has a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse, harm and neglect.
Uniting has a zero-tolerance towards any form of bullying, harassment, or racism.

Noting that the relationship between some Uniting representatives (i.e. those living with a child or young person) may differ to those in professional working relationships, the following expectations apply.

Uniting representatives ***will***:

- Adhere to the **Uniting Child Safety Policy** and related policies, protocols and procedures
- Do everything in their power to safeguard children and young people from all forms of abuse, harm, neglect, racism, discrimination or exclusion.
- Lead by example and model appropriate behaviour in interactions with children/young people
- Understand forms of child abuse and take all reasonable steps to protect children/young people
- Take immediate and appropriate action where there are concerns about the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person
- Understand and promote children/young people's rights, including feeling connected to their lands, sea and culture.
- Treat children and young people with respect
- Maintain appropriate personal and professional boundaries with children and young people
- Encourage and provide a range of ways for children and young people to speak up, participate and provide feedback
- Listen and appropriately respond to the views, concerns or complaints of children and young people, particularly regarding abuse or neglect
- Involve children/young people in decisions about activities and processes wherever possible
- Support self-determination by empowering the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people

- Promote empowerment and culturally safe environments where children and young people are respected, nurtured and cared for, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, children/young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children/young people living with disability, children and young people that identify as LGBTIQ+
- Identify and mitigate risks in the online and physical environments
- Maintain an awareness of risk identification, minimise opportunities for children and young people to be harmed and respond and report concerns of risk
- Respect and protect the privacy of children, young people and their families
- Report any allegations of child abuse to the relevant authorities as per legislation
- Undertake any assigned child safety training
- Ensure any outside of work contact with Uniting consumers that are children/young people is discussed beforehand with my manager to ensure the potential contact is transparent and managed within the spirit of this code of conduct (excluding those in foster care and lead tenant programs)
- Report breaches of this code of conduct by Uniting representatives (self or others) to my manager or another senior representative
- Apply a therapeutic and child centred approach to care

Uniting representatives ***will not***:

- Engage in conduct that a reasonable person would consider inappropriate in an education and care service
- Ignore or disregard any concerns, observations, allegations or disclosures of abuse
- Breach professional boundaries
- Use inappropriate language
- Use inappropriate physical contact/complete personal tasks that a child/young person can do themselves
- Engage in sexual misconduct, which includes inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature
- Misuse electronic communication, including social media
- Take or share inappropriate photographs and videos as per organisational child safety practices and policy
- Engage in any action which could be considered grooming, including giving unauthorised gifts to individual children, young people or their families
- Be alone with children and young people, unless an approved program requirement or living with child/young person
- Make contact with/develop friendships with children/young people that are consumers of Uniting outside program hours, unless an approved program requirement or foster care or lead tenant programs
- Use inappropriate (physical or punitive) discipline or punishment or threats of such discipline or punishment
- Discriminate or disrespect children and young people or allow personal beliefs to affect the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

- Share personal information or details with children/young people, unless an approved program requirement (or living with a child/young person)
- Form special relationships or show favouritism
- Transport a child/young person alone unless an approved program requirement or living with a child/young person
- Work under the influence of alcohol or drugs or provide alcohol/drugs to children/young people.
- Early learning: no personal devices are allowed in Early learning rooms at all. BYOD devices can only be used in restricted areas - staff rooms and offices.

Attachment:
Child Safety Code of Conduct Acknowledgement

I agree to abide by this Code of Conduct during my employment/engagement with Uniting. I understand that breaches of this Code of Conduct may lead to disciplinary action or termination of my employment/engagement with Uniting.

If I think this Code of Conduct has been breached by another person at Uniting I will:
- Act to prioritise the best interests of children and young people
- Take actions promptly to ensure that children and young people are safe
- Promptly report any concerns to my manager, or another senior representative
- Follow Uniting's procedures for receiving and responding to complaints and concerns
- Comply with all legislated requirements

Signature:	
Name:	
Position:	
Site/Location:	
Date:	