



## **DVS Policy statement about Child Safety**

The Diamond Valley Singers (DVS) is committed to maintaining a child-safe environment in situations where children are engaged in our activities. DVS is committed to promoting and protecting at all times the best interests of children involved in its programs. All children, regardless of their gender, race, religious beliefs, age, disability, sexual orientation, or family or social background, have equal rights to protection from abuse. DVS has zero tolerance for child abuse. Everyone engaged in DVS activities is responsible for the care and protection of the children within our care and reporting information about suspected child abuse.

All members of DVS are bound by the Code of Conduct. Before engaging in a DVS activity involving children, members are required to obtain a Working With Children card and register it with the secretary. For more information see <[workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au](http://workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au)>.

### **DVS Code of Conduct**

This Code of Conduct outlines appropriate standards of behaviour by adults towards children and vulnerable persons. It aims to protect children and vulnerable persons and reduce any opportunities for abuse or harm to occur. It also helps members by providing them with guidance on how to best support children or vulnerable persons and how to avoid or better manage difficult situations. This Code of Conduct applies to all people involved in DVS activities that include children, including performers, leaders, volunteers and parents. Legally, persons under the age of 18 are deemed children.

By observing these standards you acknowledge the responsibility to immediately report any suspected instances of abuse to Police and Child Protection Authorities.

Compliance with this Code is a condition of membership of the Diamond Valley Singers (DVS). Breaches of this Code of Conduct will result in disciplinary measures according to the model rules, or if required by law, reporting to the authorities.

### **DVS members will**

- Welcome all children and vulnerable persons and their families and carers and be inclusive.
- Respect cultural, religious and political differences and act in a culturally sensitive way, particularly when interacting with children who are culturally or linguistically diverse or have a disability.
- Maintain a duty of care towards others involved in these programs and activities.
- Establish and maintain a child-safe environment considering the safety and needs of children as paramount.
- Treat children and young people with respect and value their ideas and opinions;
- Act as positive role models in their conduct with children and young people;
- Take all reasonable steps to protect children and vulnerable persons from abuse and to keep them safe from harm.
- Work with children and vulnerable persons in an open and transparent way – other adults should always know about the work you are doing in this respect.

### **DVS members will**

- At all times be transparent in our actions and whereabouts, and remain aware of each child and the adults who are with the children.
- Treat everyone with respect, including listening to and valuing their ideas and opinions.
- Respond to any concerns or suspicions of child abuse, and speak up when concerning behaviours of colleagues are observed.
- Respect the privacy of children and their families, and only disclose information to people who have a need to know;
- Report and act on any breaches of this Code of Conduct, complaints or concerns appropriately and treat them seriously and with respect.
- Contact the police if a child is at immediate risk of abuse (telephone 000).

### **DVS members will not**

- Engage in any DVS activities with children without obtaining a current Working With Children Check, and registering it with the secretary of DVS.
- Shame, humiliate, oppress, belittle or degrade children or young people or condone such behavior.
- Unlawfully discriminate against any child.
- Engage in any activity with a child or young person that is likely to physically or emotionally harm them, including smacking, hitting or physically assaulting.
- Initiate unnecessary physical contact with a child or young person, or do things of a personal nature for them that they can do for themselves.
- Without prior parental/guardian consent, seek to make contact and spend time alone with any child outside program times, including through personal social media networks or face to face and phone contact.
- Photograph or video a child without the consent of the child and his/her parents or guardians.
- Disclose information unless specifically required by law or policy.
- Discriminate on the basis of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability or sexuality.
- Act in a way that shows unfair and differential treatment of a child.
- Physically restrain, remove or isolate a child unless the child's behaviour endangers themselves or others.

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