



WBM CHILD SAFETY OFFICER

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Chief Clinical Officer

Principal Speech and Language
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As the WBM Child Safety Officer
(CSO), Melinda welcomes feedback
from the WBM community about
our Child Safe Policy.

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COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY:

Word By Mouth Pty Ltd (WBM) is committed to child safety. This policy meets the obligations and objectives as outlined by the Victorian Child Safe Standards (2022), specifically:

- We ensure that the health, safety and wellbeing of all children receiving speech pathology from WBM is protected at all times;
- We protect all children from any reasonable, foreseeable risk of injury or harm; and
- We support the rights of all children to feel safe, and be safe, at all times.

WBM is committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children. We support and respect all clients, as well as our staff and parents. We have zero tolerance to child abuse and all allegations of harm and safety concerns will be dealt with immediately. We have legal, ethical and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety. WBM is committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child safety risks.

We are committed to the safety of all children, including the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse background, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability. We have specific policies, procedures and training in place that support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments.

All staff at WBM recognise and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal culture and understand its importance to the overall wellbeing and the safety of Aboriginal children and younger people.

CHILD SAFE STANDARDS:

- **Standard 1:** Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.
- **Standard 2:** Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.
- **Standard 3:** Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
- **Standard 4:** Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
- **Standard 5:** Equity is upheld, and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.
- **Standard 6:** People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
- **Standard 7:** Processes for complaints and concerns are child-focussed.
- **Standard 8:** Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.
- **Standard 9:** Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.
- **Standard 10:** Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.
- **Standard 11:** Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

THE SPEECH PATHOLOGY TEAM

Our speech pathologists hold the accreditation of Certified Practising Speech Pathologist (CPSP). As part of their membership to Speech Pathology Australia (SPA), they must adhere to and practise according to all parts of the profession's Code of Ethics (2020). This Code of Ethics supports the Victorian Child Safe Standards (2022) and underpins our interactions and inform how we behave.

SPA CODE OF ETHICS CORE VALUES:

- Respect and dignity
- Responsiveness
- Quality and Safety
- Professionalism and integrity

COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY:

WBM staff are required to undertake training within the area of child safety. This includes following a plan of action to ensure a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children are respected and valued.

WBM actively seek input from children and young people regarding their speech pathology goals. WBM is committed to inclusive goal setting that takes the individual wishes of children and young people into consideration.

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS:

- This policy guides our staff and volunteers on how to behave and provide a safe environment for all children. All of our staff and volunteers must agree to abide by our *Code of Conduct*. This specifies standards of conduct required when working with children.
- All staff and volunteers working with children must have a current 'Working With Children Check'.

PRIVACY:

All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved, unless there is a risk to someone's safety. WBM has practices in place to ensure any personal information is protected. Everyone is entitled to know how this information is recorded, what will be done with it, and who will have access to it. Please refer to WBM's privacy statement and policy by contacting our Client Care and Administration on 9873 0102.

CHILD SAFE ENVIRONMENT:

- WBM will ensure that children are supervised;
- All children 17 years and under attending a one-to-one session at our clinic or via Telepractice must have a guardian available on site;
- WBM ensure the physical environment is safe, secure and free from hazards for all children;
- WBM ensures all equipment and materials used meet relevant safety standards;
- WBM ensures the practice maintains a clean environment daily, and tripping / slipping hazards are removed as soon as they become apparent;
- All dangerous substances such as cleaning products and chemicals are stored safely.

