



Family Homestay Services

Your safe and friendly family away from home

www.familyhomestay.com.au

Postal address:
PO Box 87
Miranda NSW 1490
Australia

Child Safety Code of Conduct ('The Code') - DRAFT

Purpose

1. Family Homestay Services ('FHS', ABN 37 111 924 095) is committed to an environment that promotes child¹ safety, and to demonstrate leadership and education in the area.
 - a. Our '**Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy**' ('the Policy') contains the full scope of FHS's commitment.
 - b. This Code supports and complements the Policy.
2. The Code provides guidance to all adults on how to behave around children, so that:
 - a. Acceptable behaviours can be encouraged;
 - b. Unacceptable behaviours – those that represent serious breaches of this Code – are clearly outlined;
 - c. Examples of concerning behaviours are provided – whilst in isolation each may not be a breach, but together may indicate a pattern of behaviour posing child safety risk.
 - d. There is clear recognition of likely action if those standards are breached.

Who does the *Child Safety Code of Conduct* ('the Code') apply to?

3. This Code applies to²:
 - a. All FHS staff, including directors, management, full-time, part-time, casual staff;
 - b. All FHS contractors; and
 - c. All families who have engaged to provide international student homestay for FHS ('homestay hosts').

The Code

4. I will... (i.e. Positive behaviours consistent with the above standards)
 - Take all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse;
 - Take child's disclosure of harm or abuse seriously,
 - Report disclosure of harm/abuse, and/or concerning behaviours (Section 6), to FHS (and to appropriate authority where abuse is disclosed);
 - Report any breaches to this Code to FHS immediately (see Section 9.b).
 - Participate in compulsory training on child safety and wellbeing;

¹ Defined as persons under the age of 18.

² Also see The Policy.

- Treat all children with respect regardless of race, sex, gender identity, language, religion, political or other opinion, nationality, cultural background, financial situation, disability or other characteristics;
- Act to make FHS a place where persons of Aboriginal background, all cultures, and backgrounds feel welcomed, safe, and included. This includes FHS workplaces and homestay families;
- Respect the privacy of children.
- Inform child's appropriate welfare providers (e.g. college) and FHS on any situation that are outside the boundaries of this Code, but need to be safely managed – for example:
 - If there is no adult supervision at your home overnight for any time (this is part of your Homestay Guideline)
 - If under-18 student wishes to stay overnight at another location – college/ welfare provider approval is required by written confirmation.
 - If an under-18 student is to spend any extended time alone with adults outside of normal homestay context, e.g. holidays.
- Comply with all relevant Australian (Federal and State) legislation and our child safe policies and procedures.

5. I must not... (i.e. Unacceptable behaviours)

- Condone or participate in any behaviour that is abuse:
 - Please see our **Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy** for definition of abuse;
 - Failing to report abuse (e.g. when observed by family member, or when child discloses it) – see Section 7.
 - Including reporting to police if I know of child abuse;
- Engage in physical abuse:
 - Engage in rough physical games;
 - Hitting/ striking/ kicking/ slapping a child, or seriously inappropriate contact;
- Engage in sexual abuse or grooming:
 - Inappropriate touching, especially under the pretence of friendliness/ assistance/ cultural norms.
 - Exposing child to any sexually-explicit or indecent material (including photos, videos, social media content, printed words);
 - Not respecting child's private activities e.g. bathroom, changing;
 - Including recording of a child when they are doing those activities;
 - Commenting on, or communicating with, child about romantic, intimate, or sexual feelings (including inappropriate references to their appearance or demeanour);
 - Use of sexual language or gestures in presence of child;
 - Requesting or giving favour to child in exchange for sexual activities;
- Engage in emotional abuse:
 - Persistent teasing, discrediting, or criticism of a child, without attempting to take more constructive steps or get assistance (e.g. us, or educational institution.)
 - Yelling at, bullying, or consistently making denigrating comments towards a child, such that a climate of fear is created;
 - Comments or actions that puts down or demeans a child based on their characteristics, e.g. cultural, racial, ethnic, sexual orientation, gender;

- Making a child feel worthless, alone, isolated, or frightened – including preventing child from forming friendships;
- Disciplining or correcting child in seriously inappropriate manner;
- Engage in serious neglect:
 - Depriving child of necessities, e.g. grossly inadequate/ inappropriate living arrangement, food, critical medical care, or shelter;
 - Exposing child to harmful environment (e.g. illicit drugs, family violence, tobacco, alcohol);
 - Failing to adequately supervise child, including failing to report safety breaches (e.g. curfew breach, critical incidents), resulting in injury/ harm to child;
 - Making excessive and/or degrading demands of a child.

6. Concerning behaviours

- a. These behaviours, in isolation, do not breach the Code or relevant laws; but when taken together may form a pattern indicating increased risk of abuse/harm.
- b. I understand that the following behaviour may be of concern:
 - i. Encouraging a child to communicate in private setting with me, including private social media, or telecommunication.
 - ii. Attempting to isolate a child from their peers/ family/ other social networks.
 - iii. Spending time alone with a child excessively and/or without good reason.

7. Criminal offences for not acting to protect/ reporting abuse

- a. We are obligated to report certain breaches to other authorities, e.g., Police or child protection authorities of the respective State³.
- b. Please see our **Complaints Handling Policy** for more details on our external reporting obligations. This is available on our website and by request.
- c. If any person in a position of authority becomes aware of substantial risk that a child may be victim of a sexual offence committed by an adult covered under the scope of this policy (Section 3), and this person has the power and responsibility to reduce/remove the risk, then the person must take all responsible steps to do so. **Person in position of authority who negligently fails to appropriately address such risks may be criminally liable for failing to protect.**
- d. Any adult who reasonably believes a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under 16, they must report it to Police. **Failure to disclose may be a criminal offence⁴.**

8. Breach

- a. This Policy forms part of any agreement of engagement with persons under the scope of our **Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy**.
- b. FHS may address potential breaches by means of investigation, restriction of duties, suspension, or termination of engagement, or other appropriate corrective action.

9. Recording-keeping and reporting procedures

- a. They are outlined in our **Complaint Handling Policy**.

³ NSW: Office of Children's Guardian; Victoria: Commission for Children and Young People.

⁴ *Crimes Act 1900* (NSW) s316A; *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic) s327

- b. To make a complaint or raise concerns, contact Alex Li – Manager – office@familyhomestay.com.au.

10. Supporting documents

- a. Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- b. Child Safety Code of Conduct
- c. Complaint handling policy
- d. Child Safety Risk Management Plan
- e. Homestay Guideline

Acknowledgement and signature

I have read this Code and agree to abide by it and its terms.

Name (print)	Signature
Date:	
Office use:	
<i>Last review</i>	<i>Next review</i>
<i>Responsible officer (print)</i>	<i>Responsible officer (sign)</i>