

## **Phoenix Adventures Canberra**

### **Child Safe Organisation Policies**

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#### **1. Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy**

##### **1.1 Commitment to Child Safety**

Phoenix Adventures Canberra is committed to the safety, wellbeing, and inclusion of all children. We actively create an environment where children feel safe, respected, and supported to participate in ways that work for them.

We have zero tolerance for child abuse, harm, or neglect.

##### **1.2 Scope**

This policy applies to all adults involved in the program, including facilitators, substitute adults, and volunteers.

##### **1.3 Our Service**

- Ages: 5–14
- Group size: Maximum 20 children
- Ratio: 1 adult to 10 children
- Location: Hall with enclosed outdoor space
- Drop-off program (parents off-site during sessions)

##### **1.4 How We Keep Children Safe**

We:

- Maintain active supervision at all times (children in line of sight)
  - Ensure safe physical environments (enclosed space, controlled access)
  - Use structured activities with clear expectations
  - Provide a quiet/regulation space with sensory supports
  - Require additional support for children with higher needs where necessary
  - Ensure all adults hold valid Working With Vulnerable People Checks (WWVP) unless they are exempt as per ACT Government Regulations
  - See link: <https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/business-and-work/working-with-vulnerable-people/working-with-vulnerable-people-scheme>
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#### **2. Code of Conduct**

##### **2.1 All adults must:**

- Treat children with respect, kindness, and dignity

- Listen to children and take their concerns seriously
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries
- Ensure interactions are observable by others wherever possible
- Use calm, supportive, and non-shaming communication

## **2.2 Adults must not:**

- Engage in physical punishment or coercion
- Use threatening, shaming, or harsh language
- Engage in unnecessary or inappropriate physical contact
- Isolate or favour children

## **2.3 Children are supported to:**

- Be kind and respectful
  - Keep their bodies safe
  - Respect equipment and shared spaces
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## **3. Supervision and Staffing Policy**

### **3.1 Staffing**

- Minimum ratio: 1:10
- Children must remain within supervised areas at all times.
- At least two adults present wherever possible
- If a facilitator is unavailable:
  - A known, trusted adult with WWVP may step in, OR
  - The session will be cancelled

### **3.2 Substitute Adults**

All substitute adults must:

- Hold a valid WWVP
  - Be personally known to the facilitators
  - Receive a clear briefing on expectations, supervision, and child safety before the session
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## **4. Behaviour Support Policy**

### **4.1 Philosophy**

We use a neuroaffirming, relational approach focused on safety, regulation, and respect. Behaviour is understood as communication.

#### **4.2 Expectations**

- Be kind to others
- Respect equipment and the environment

#### **4.3 Support Strategies**

- Clear expectations set at the beginning of each session
- Access to a quiet/regulation space
- Sensory supports (headphones, fidgets, soft furnishings)
- Option to step away while remaining supervised

#### **4.4 Participation**

Children:

- Children are encouraged to observe before opting out of an activity, where possible
- May opt out, but must remain nearby and engage in a safe, non-disruptive activity

Children are supported to:

- Express preferences and needs
- Make choices about participation
- Feel heard and respected within the group

#### **4.5 Responding to Dysregulation**

- Reduce demands and provide space
- Offer co-regulation and calm support
- Ensure safety of all children
- Maintain supervision at all times

#### **4.6 Follow-up**

- Significant concerns are discussed with parents at pick-up
- Collaborative plans are made for future sessions where needed

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### **5. Participation, Safety and Program Suitability**

#### **5.1 Aims**

Phoenix Adventures Canberra aims to provide a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment for all children. We recognise that we are a small program with specific supervision ratios and capacity limits.

## **5.2 Commitment**

We will make reasonable adjustments where possible to support children to participate safely and successfully.

## **5.3 When Needs May Not Be Able to Be Met**

In some situations, it may become evident that:

- A child's support needs exceed what can be safely provided within our staffing ratios and environment, OR
- A child's behaviour presents an ongoing risk to themselves, other children, or facilitators, and cannot be managed safely within our setting

## **5.4 Process**

Where concerns arise, we will:

1. Communicate openly with the parent/guardian
2. Share observations and specific examples
3. Work collaboratively to trial strategies or adjustments
4. Consider whether additional support (e.g. support worker) would enable continued participation

## **5.5 Exclusion from the Program**

If, after reasonable adjustments and discussion, it is determined that:

- The child's needs cannot be safely met, or
- The safety and wellbeing of others cannot be maintained

Phoenix Adventures Canberra reserves the right to:

- Pause or discontinue the child's participation in the program
- If the decision is made to discontinue the child's participation in the middle of a cycle, no refund will be given

This decision will be:

- Made with care and consideration
- Clearly communicated to the family
- Focused on the safety and wellbeing of all children and facilitators

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## **6. Devices and Personal Items**

### **6.1 Policy**

- Children are not permitted to bring electronic devices to the program. This includes phones, tablets, and gaming devices.

- If a child requires a phone for communication, it may be left with a staff member for safekeeping.
  - Children are discouraged from bringing personal items from home. We cannot guarantee that personal items will not be lost or damaged.
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## **7. Health, First Aid and Incident Response**

### **7.1 First Aid**

- A fully stocked first aid kit is available onsite
- At least one facilitator must have a current first aid certificate and be on premises at all times

### **7.2 Responding to Injury or Illness**

- Minor injuries are treated onsite
- Parents are contacted for:
  - Head injuries
  - Ongoing distress
  - Any injury requiring further care
- Emergency services are contacted when required

### **7.3 Administration of medication**

- Parents providing medication need to do so in their original container
- Parent needs to give consent for child to self-administer medication during the program
- In an Emergency, a child's own EpiPen or Asthma inhaler can be used without parent consent. Written notification will be provided to the parent as soon as practical after the incident.

### **7.4 Incident Documentation**

All incidents must be recorded using the Phoenix Adventures Canberra Incident Report Form (see Appendix A).

Incidents include (but are not limited to):

- Injuries
- Behaviour incidents involving safety concerns
- Significant dysregulation requiring ongoing support
- Any situation that may impact a child's wellbeing

Reports must include:

- Date and time

- Child/children involved
- Description of what occurred
- Actions taken
- Outcome and follow-up required

## **7.5 Communication with Families**

- Parents will be informed on the same day for:
  - Injuries
  - Behaviour incidents impacting safety
  - Significant distress
- Where appropriate, this will occur:
  - At pick-up (in person), and/or
  - Via phone/message during the session if urgent

Written documentation may be provided where needed.

Records are stored securely.

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## **8. Toileting and Personal Care**

### **8.1 Policy**

- No toileting support is provided
  - Children must be independently toileting
  - If support is required, a parent or support worker must remain onsite
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## **9. Risk Management**

### **9.1 Identified Risks and Controls**

- Outdoor tap: monitored and turned off if accessed inappropriately
  - Carpark: front doors closed after drop-off
  - Cooking/science activities: closely supervised
  - Water use: minimal and controlled
  - Glass doors: doors are either fully opened or fully closed to minimise risk of impact. Doors have visual stickers for safety.
  - Children do not leave the premises under any circumstances unless signed out by a parent or in an an emergency
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## **10. Complaints and Concerns**

### **10.1 Aims**

We aim to create a culture where concerns can be raised safely and respectfully.

### **10.2 How to Raise a Concern**

Parents can raise concerns via:

- Email: phoenixcarecanberra@gmail.com
- SMS: Ilaria - 0404255321
- Phone call: Ilaria - 0404255321
- In person at pick-up

### **10.3 How We Respond**

- Concerns are acknowledged within 48 hours
- Both facilitators will usually discuss and agree on a response
- A plan will be made and communicated to the parent

### **10.4 If the Complaint Involves a Facilitator**

- The other facilitator will take the lead
- The concern will be handled fairly and without bias

### **10.5 If the Concern Involves Both Facilitators**

Parents can:

- Request a written response via email
- Nominate a support person to be present in discussions
- Escalate the concern externally (see below)

### **10.6 Escalation Options**

If a parent is not satisfied with the response, or feels unable to raise the concern directly with facilitators, they may contact:

- **ACT Child and Youth Protection Services (CYPS)**
  - Phone: 1300 556 729
  - For concerns relating to child safety, abuse, or neglect
- **ACT Human Rights Commission**
  - Phone: (02) 6205 2222
  - Website: [www.hrc.act.gov.au](http://www.hrc.act.gov.au)
  - For complaints about services, fairness, or rights

Parents may also seek independent advice or advocacy support.

### **10.7 Timeframes**

- Initial acknowledgement: within 48 hours
- Follow-up: as soon as reasonably possible depending on the concern

All complaints are documented.

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## **11. Responding to Disclosures and Mandatory Reporting**

### **11.1 If a Child Discloses Harm**

Adults will follow the Phoenix Adventures Canberra Disclosure Cheat Sheet (Appendix B).

Adults will:

- Stay calm and listen
- Allow the child to speak freely
- Avoid asking leading questions
- Reassure the child they have done the right thing
- Not promise confidentiality

### **11.2 Recording**

- Record the child's words as soon as possible
- Include date, time, and context
- Complete an Incident Report Form where appropriate

### **11.3 Reporting (ACT)**

Where there are concerns about abuse or neglect, a report will be made to ACT Child and Youth Protection Services.

Facilitators will:

- Make a report directly when required
  - Seek advice if unsure, but prioritise child safety
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## **12. Inclusion and Equity**

### **12.1 Aims**

We welcome children of all:

- Abilities and disabilities
- Neurotypes (including autistic and ADHD children)

- Cultural backgrounds
- Family structures

We aim to make reasonable adjustments to support participation while maintaining safety for all.

### **13. Photography and Online Safety**

#### **13.1 Policy**

- Written consent is obtained for photography
- Photos are shared only with relevant families unless additional consent is given
- Images used for marketing only with explicit permission
- Children’s privacy is respected at all times

### **14. Review and Continuous Improvement**

#### **14.1 Regular Reviews**

These policies are reviewed regularly and updated based on:

- Family feedback
- Incidents or concerns
- Changes in legislation or best practice

### **15. Record Storage and Privacy**

#### **15.1 Aims**

- All incident reports, complaints, and sensitive records are stored securely (digital files password-protected and/or physical copies kept in a secure location)
- Access is limited to facilitators only
- Information is shared only when required for child safety, legal obligations, or with parent consent
- Records are retained only as long as necessary and handled confidentially at all times

### **Appendix A: Incident Report Template**

<b>Phoenix Adventures Canberra Incident Report</b>			
<b>Date of report</b>		<b>Time of report</b>	

<b>Date of incident</b>		<b>Time of incident</b>	
<b>Location</b>			
<b>Child Involved</b>			
<b>Adult Completing Report</b>			
<b>Description of Incident (what happened):</b>			
<b>Action Taken (first aid, support, behaviour response):</b>			
<b>Outcome:</b>			
<b>Parent/Guardian Informed?</b>		<b>When/How?</b>	<b>Follow up required?</b>
<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>		

**Appendix B: Disclosure Cheat Sheet**

**If a child discloses harm:**

**DO:**

- Stay calm
- Listen without interrupting
- Believe the child
- Use simple responses like:
  - “Thank you for telling me”
  - “You’ve done the right thing”
- Let them use their own words

**DO NOT:**

- Ask leading questions (e.g. “Did they do X?”)
- Investigate or push for more details
- Promise to keep secrets

**NEXT STEPS:**

1. Ensure the child is safe
2. Write down exactly what was said (as soon as possible)
3. Include date, time, and context
4. Contact ACT Child and Youth Protection Services if required
5. Seek support/advice if unsure, but prioritise safety

**IMPORTANT:**

- You are not responsible for investigating
  - Your role is to listen, document, and report
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**Phoenix Adventures Canberra Child Safety – Easy Read**

**We keep children safe**

At Phoenix Adventures:

- Children are safe
- Children are respected
- Children are supported

We do not allow unsafe or harmful behaviour.

**The program**

- For children aged 5 to 14
- Up to 23 children
- 1 adult for every 10 children
- This is a drop-off program
- Held in a hall with a fenced outdoor space
- Children stay in this space
- Adults supervise children at all times

### **Supporting children**

All children are welcome.

This includes:

- autistic children
- ADHD children
- children with disability

We:

- explain what is happening
- give children time to adjust
- offer a quiet space
- provide headphones and fidgets

Children can take a break when they need.

### **Activities**

Children do not have to join every activity.

Children must:

- stay near an adult unless in a supervised quiet space
- choose a safe activity
- not disturb others

### **Behaviour**

We focus on safety.

Children need to:

- be kind
- keep their bodies safe
- respect people and equipment

If a child is upset, we:

- stay calm
- give space
- support them

We will talk with you if needed.

### **Toileting**

Children must use the toilet on their own.

If your child needs help:

- you must stay, or
- a support worker must stay

### **Health and incidents**

We have first aid training.

If something happens:

- we help your child
- we tell you the same day
- we write down what happened

We contact you during the session if needed.

### **Communication**

We talk with you by:

- email
- SMS
- Phone call
- in person

### **Concerns**

You can tell us if you are worried.

You can:

- email us
- send a message
- talk to us

We will:

- listen

- take it seriously
- respond within 2 days

If your concern is about one of us:

- the other person will manage it

If your concern is about both of us:

- you can ask for a written response
- you can bring a support person
- you can contact an outside service

### **Child safety**

If a child tells us something important:

We will:

- listen
- write it down
- follow ACT child safety laws

### **Photos**

We ask permission to take photos.

We only share photos as agreed.

### **When the program may not be the right fit**

We try to support all children.

Sometimes we cannot do this safely.

If this happens, we will:

- talk with you
- try supports

If safety is still a problem:

- your child may need to stop attending

We will explain this clearly.

### **Our goal**

We want children to:

- feel safe
- feel accepted
- be themselves

- learn and connect

### **Questions**

You can contact us anytime.

Contact Ilaria on 0404 255 321 or on [phoenixcarecanberra@gmail.com](mailto:phoenixcarecanberra@gmail.com)

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