



Edmund Rice  
Camps

## Our Approach to Child Protection – children's care, safety and protection

Dear Parent/Guardian/Carer,

Edmund Rice Camps WA is passionate about providing a positive, safe and supportive environment for your child. Behind the fun and laughter of camp, we take safety very seriously and do have certain legal obligations that you should be aware of.

We are committed to providing a child safe environment when your child attends one of our camps or programs. Because of this, we make sure that all volunteer leaders and staff have a current Working With Children Check, and have undertaken and passed an assessment in Edmund Rice Foundational Child Protection Training. We also undertake risk audits of all locations and risk assessments of activities to make sure all settings and activities undertaken are appropriate to the age and developmental ability of a child.

It is important you know how we respond if we become aware of a concern relating to a child's care, safety and protection during one of our programs.

**We are required under Child Welfare Law and our Duty of Care to always act in the best interests of the child.** Because of this, we need to follow a process if we become aware of a concern relating to a child's care, safety and protection during one of our programs. We have to professionally check out the concern [which does not always mean there is a concern once we have checked it out] to make sure a child is not being harmed or at risk of harm. If volunteers or staff have a concern about the wellbeing of a child, they are trained to let a Reporting Officer (RO) know. The RO is not professionally qualified but a volunteer on the program who has undergone extra training in this area with us. Once the RO has been informed, they make sure they have the necessary basic information about the concern and then contact Pauline.

Pauline is a qualified social worker who works for all the Edmund Rice services throughout Australia and in other countries. She is a very experienced social worker and a mum of three adult boys. Pauline will check the information relating to the concern and work with the Manager of Community Engagement [MCE] at Edmund Rice Camps WA to make sure there are no safety concerns. It is important parents/guardians/carers are aware contact is made with the referring agency to help us to determine the safety or [in some cases] possible lack of safety of a child. If there are no safety concerns, the MCE or Pauline will talk to the parent/guardian/carers about what was raised and seek to assist where possible.

When a concern is raised in relation to alleged child sexual abuse, we have a responsibility under the WA Child Welfare Act to make a Mandatory Report to the Department of Child Protection and Family Services. As per our Child Protection and Reporting Protocol (Policy) we would also make a report where there were alleged concerns relating to physical abuse and neglect, or other matters considered serious. Where a report is made, parents/guardians/carers cannot be informed that we have made a report. We understand this process may be difficult for parents/guardians/carers however, we must always act in the best interest of the child. Because of this, if a concern has been raised we cannot speak to parents/guardians/carers until safety is established.

Should you have any questions relating to our approach to child protection please feel free to contact Pauline (Mob: 0438 917 505).

Sincerely

Kevin Knapp  
CEO

Edmund Rice Camps WA

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