



# Safeguarding Children in RDA

## Code of Behaviour

### Our Commitment

**RDA seeks to provide a safe, fair and inclusive environment for everyone involved in our organisation, programs and activities.** This includes children, young people and vulnerable adults in our care, ensuring that they feel and are safe. To that end we have developed these Codes of Behaviour to identify and prevent behaviour that may be harmful to the children, young people and vulnerable adults in our sport.

We consider a failure to observe these guidelines as misconduct, and will take appropriate disciplinary action. In addition to any internal disciplinary proceedings, we will report to the police all instances in which a breach of the law has or may have occurred.

There may be exceptional situations where these guidelines do not apply, for example, in an emergency situation. However, it is crucial that, where possible, you seek management authorisation prior to taking action that contravenes these guidelines or that you advise management as soon possible after any incident in which these guidelines are breached.

**Staff and volunteers will be required to sign their understanding and commitment to the RDA Codes of Behaviour when registering for participation.**

### Key Requirements

We require certain standards of behaviour for **all persons involved** in our organisation and in our sport. Our codes of behaviour are underpinned by the following core values:

- To act within the rules and spirit of our sport.
- To display respect and courtesy towards everyone involved in RDA and have proper regard for their dignity, rights and obligation, preventing **discrimination** and harassment.
- To prioritise the safety and well-being of children, young people and the vulnerable adults involved in our activities.
- To report any behaviour which is breach of this code to help prevent the **abuse** of children, young people and vulnerable adults in our activities.
- To encourage and support opportunities for participation in all aspects of our activities.

### Keeping children and young people 'safe'

When we talk about safety in RDA we think about protection from injuries that may occur from horse related sports. The Safeguarding Children Framework seeks to expand considerations of 'safe' to be any situation which may be frightening, confusing or harmful to a child or young person's physical, emotional and/or mental wellbeing. RDA activities involve people with disabilities including vulnerable adults. This framework includes a culture that is safe and respectful to our vulnerable adults as well as the children and young people involved in our activities as participants and volunteers. The framework is designed to provide clear guidelines to RDA staff and volunteers about appropriate behaviours; behaviours that are outside of professional role boundaries; are inappropriate and may be misconduct.

A failure to observe these guidelines will be considered misconduct, with appropriate disciplinary actions including reporting to the police where a breach of the law may also have occurred.



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<b>Positive Guidance (Discipline)</b>	
<p><i>RDA recognises that children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in our activities may have challenges with managing their behaviour. We strive to ensure that participants and their parents/carers are aware of acceptable limits of behaviour so that we can provide a positive experience to participants. However, there are times when personnel may be required to use appropriate techniques and behaviour management strategies to ensure the safety and/or wellbeing of other staff, volunteers and participants.</i></p>	
<b>Meets Code of Behaviour</b>	<b>Breaches Code of Behaviour</b>
<p>Utilise strategies that are fair, respectful and appropriate to the developmental age of the child/young person/vulnerable adult.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide clear directions for improving behaviour or redirect their misbehaviour in a positive way</li> <li>- Remember that some participants will require additional time to prepare for any change in their activities</li> <li>- Consult and debrief with parent/carer/participant on strategies for future positive behaviours</li> </ul>	<p><b>Under no circumstances</b> will actions involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Physical punishment</li> <li>- Any form of treatment that is degrading, cruel, frightening, or humiliating</li> </ul>
<b>Use of Language and Tone of Voice</b>	
<p><i>Language and tone of voice is important to the enjoyment and positive experience of participants in sporting and recreational activities.</i></p>	
<b>Meets Code of Behaviour</b>	<b>Breaches Code of Behaviour</b>
<p>Language and tone of voice should encourage and affirm a child/young person/vulnerable adult and boost their confidence.</p>	<p>Language and tone of voice should NOT be harmful (e.g. discriminatory, derogatory, threatening, profane or sexual).</p>
<b>Physical Contact with Children and Young People</b>	
<p><i>Any physical contact must be appropriate to the delivery of safe equestrian activities.</i></p>	
<b>Meets Code of Behaviour</b>	<b>Breaches Code of Behaviour</b>
<p>Physical contact must be necessary and appropriate to the delivery of RDA equestrian programs and activities.</p> <p>Physical restraint should be a last resort but may be necessary to prevent injury to the child/young person or to others (e.g. emergency dismount). In this case the level of force must be appropriate to the circumstances and aimed solely to prevent harm and the incident must be reported immediately following Incident Reporting procedures (notify Centre/State management).</p>	<p><b>Physical contact must NOT:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Involve touching genitals, breasts or buttocks</li> <li>- Have a sexual connotation</li> <li>- Be intended to cause pain or distress</li> <li>- Be overly physical play (e.g. wrestling, tickling)</li> <li>- Be unnecessary</li> <li>- Be initiated against the wishes of the participant</li> </ul>



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<p>Physical contact that meets specific needs of the child/young person such as assisting or comforting a distressed young person.</p> <p>RDA recommends appropriate forms of greeting as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hi 5's</li> <li>• Handshakes</li> <li>• Wave</li> </ul>	<p>Physical contact must be based solely on the needs of the participant, not on the needs of RDA personnel.</p>
<h3>Sexual Misconduct</h3>	
<p><i><b>Under no circumstances</b> is any form of 'sexual behaviour' to occur between, with, or in the presence of, children or young people.</i></p>	
<h4>Meets Code of Behaviour</h4>	<h4>Breaches Code of Behaviour</h4>
<p>Engaging in sexual behaviour while participating in RDA activities is <b>prohibited</b> even if the young persons involved may be above the legal age of consent.</p>	<p>Includes (but is not limited to any sexual behaviour):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sexual intercourse, kissing, fondling, sexual penetration</li> <li>- exploiting a child</li> <li>- flirting, sexual innuendo, inappropriate text messaging,</li> <li>- inappropriate photography</li> <li>- exposure to pornography or nudity.</li> </ul>
<h3>Adhering to Professional Role Boundaries</h3>	
<p><i>All persons must act within the confines of their specified duties.</i></p>	
<h4>Meets Code of Behaviour</h4>	<h4>Breaches Code of Behaviour</h4>
<p>Our role at RDA is to provide opportunities for participants to enjoy horse related activities.</p> <p>Be aware of your position, role and responsibilities and act within the confines of those duties. Position descriptions are available in RDA resources such as the Volunteer Information Booklet and Coach training manuals.</p> <p>Where you become aware of a situation in which a child, young person or vulnerable adult requires assistance that is beyond the confines of your role you should seek advice from management, contact the child's parent/guardian and/or refer the person/matter to the appropriate support agency.</p>	<p>Activities outside of RDA professional role boundaries include (but are not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide unauthorised transportation</li> <li>- Assisting with personal care, toileting or dressing</li> <li>- Assisting with or administering medication (other than according to First Aid training or under instruction by a paramedic/medical professional)</li> <li>- Engage in activities with children/young people or vulnerable adults that are our clients outside of RDA activities.</li> <li>- Provide any form of support to a child or young person or their family, unrelated to our activities, (for example babysitting or moving house)</li> <li>- Accept an invitation to attend any private social function at the request of the child or young person participating in (current or former client) – or at the request of their family.</li> </ul>



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<b>Supervision</b>	
<i>All persons are required to avoid one-to-one unsupervised situations with children, young people and vulnerable adults to whom we provide services to.</i>	
<b>Meets Code of Behaviour</b>	<b>Breaches Code of Behaviour</b>
<p>Conduct all activities and/or discussions with participants in view of other personnel.</p> <p>Report instances to a Coach, Committee Member or State Office where an unavoidable incident of unsupervised activity occurs. For example, if a young volunteer is not picked up at closing time at the Centre and you are waiting behind for a parent to arrive.</p>	<p>Must NOT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Create or seek to create situations for private or unsupervised activities with a child, young person or vulnerable adult.</li> </ul>
<b>Giving Gifts</b>	
<i>Giving of personal gifts to children and young people who participate in our activities is subject to specific conditions and prior approval.</i>	
<b>Meets Code of Behaviour</b>	<b>Breaches Code of Behaviour</b>
<p><b>Giving of gifts</b> including rewards, prizes, treats or secondhand equipment must be managed in a manner that is fair, transparent and related to our activities.</p> <p>Perceived favouring of individual children or young people can create an environment where other children do not feel valued. There must be clear communication about the criteria for awarding of gifts, prizes and equipment, all participants have access to the opportunity and the Centre Management and/or State/National Office is aware of the criteria.</p> <p><b>Gifts to RDA</b> personnel should be of a form that can be shared with all volunteers/ personnel of the Centre/service provider.</p>	<p>Gifts must NOT be given:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Without prior approval</li> <li>- Where the gift may be perceived to include/exclude other participants</li> <li>- Where a conflict may occur</li> </ul>
<b>Wearing Uniforms and ID Badges</b>	
<i>All persons should wear their uniform only while involved in RDA service delivery or as required by our organisation when representing RDA at designated functions, to and from work/RDA activities.</i>	
<b>Meets Code of Behaviour</b>	<b>Breaches Code of Behaviour</b>
<p>You should use your RDA uniform and/or RDA identification badge during RDA activities (where issued) or where approved by the Centre Committee/State Office to identify yourself for activities related to RDA (e.g. fundraising or collecting donated goods).</p>	<p>Must NOT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use your role/identity as an RDA member for your own purposes or to mislead members of the public regarding your representation of RDA.</li> </ul>



# Safeguarding Children in RDA

Use of Electronic Communication	
<p><i>Electronic communication includes texts, emails, social networking sites, internet chat sites, gaming sites, or instant messaging.</i></p>	
Meets Code of Behaviour	Breaches Code of Behaviour
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Communication is restricted specifically to issues associated with delivering RDA activities such as advising that a scheduled event is cancelled.</li>   <li>- Wherever possible, email and text messages to a child, young person or vulnerable adult should be copied to their parent/guardian.</li>   <li>- Convey service-related messages in a polite, friendly manner.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Must NOT:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use electronic communication to promote unauthorised 'social' activity or arrange unauthorised contact.</li> <li>- Request a child or young person to keep a communication a secret from their parents.</li> <li>- Use internet chat rooms or similar forums such as social networking sites, games sites or instant messaging to communicate with children and young people.</li> <li>- Communicate anything that a reasonable observer could view as being of a sexual nature.</li> </ul>
Transportation and Overnight Stays	
<p><i>It is not generally within professional role boundaries for transportation of RDA participants or for supervision of overnight stays. These activities are subject to specific conditions and prior approval.</i></p>	
Meets Code of Behaviour	Breaches Code of Behaviour
<p>Overnight stays are to occur with the authorisation of Centre Committee/State Manager and of parents/guardians of the child, young person, or vulnerable adult. Approval needs to be prior written approval (email and SMS is acceptable).</p> <p>Practices and behaviour by <b>all persons involved</b> in an overnight stay must be consistent with the practices and behaviours expected during the delivery of RDA activities.</p> <p>Children have access to contact their parents if they wish.</p> <p>Transportation of participants requires prior written approval from Centre Committee/State Office and of parents/guardians of the child, young person, or vulnerable adult. Approval to include information about the proposed journey, form of transport, reason for journey, route to be followed including stops and other people present on the journey.</p>	<p><b>Must NOT:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Invade the privacy of participants when bathing and dressing</li> <li>- Expose children and young people to adult nudity</li> <li>- Expose participants to pornographic materials through movies, television, magazines or the internet.</li> <li>- Leave participants under supervision of unauthorised persons such as hotel staff or friends.</li> <li>- Sleeping arrangements must not compromise the safety of participants such as unsupervised sleeping arrangements or children or young people sleeping in the same bed as adults.</li> </ul>



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<b>Change room arrangements</b>	
<i>It is not generally a part of RDA activities for change rooms to be used as a part of our sport.</i>	
<b>Meets Code of Behaviour</b>	<b>Breaches Code of Behaviour</b>
<p>Where change rooms are available <b>all persons involved</b> are required to supervise children and young people in change rooms while balancing the child/young person’s right to privacy. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Avoiding one to one situations with a child or young person in change rooms</li> <li>- Not using change rooms (for example to undress) when children and young people are in the change room.</li> <li>- Providing adequate supervision when using ‘public’ change rooms.</li> <li>- Providing supervision at a level to prevent abuse by members of the public, adult service users, or general misbehaviour.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Female personnel are NOT permitted to enter male change rooms</li> <li>- Male personnel are NOT permitted to enter female change rooms.</li> <li>- All persons are not to use change rooms (for example to undress) when children and young people are in the change room.</li> </ul>
<b>Photographs of Children and Young People</b>	
<i>NOTE: it is a general rule that where sporting activities take place at a public venue (for example at an equestrian competition) it is legal for anyone to take photos without permission. (There are some exclusions in State and Territory law where the photo is deemed indecent or offensive).</i>	
<b>Meets Code of Behaviour</b>	<b>Breaches Code of Behaviour</b>
<p>On RDA premises, photography of participants will be taken according to written permission (as per RDA Consent to Participate form). The context of the photo will be directly related to our sport and the child will be appropriately dressed and posed and the image is taken in the presence of other personnel.</p> <p>Images of children will be stored securely and deleted on request or as soon as they are no longer required.</p> <p>Images will not be exhibited on RDA websites or publications (Annual Reports) without parental knowledge and consent (through a signed consent form). Captions or accompanying text will be checked so that it does not identify a child or young person if such identification is potentially detrimental.</p>	<p>Images will NOT be distributed to anyone outside of our organisation without management knowledge and approval.</p>



# Safeguarding Children in RDA

<b>Use of, possession or supply of alcohol or drugs</b>	
<i>Use of, possession or supply of alcohol or drugs to children and young people is strictly prohibited</i>	
<b>Meets Code of Behaviour</b>	<b>Breaches Code of Behaviour</b>
While on duty, all persons must be fit and capable to provide care for children, young people and vulnerable adults in our service, and their fitness is not impaired by drugs or alcohol.	Must NOT: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Use, possess or be under the influence of an illegal drug</li><li>- Use of be under the influence of alcohol</li><li>- Be incapacitated by any over-the-counter or prescription drug</li><li>- Supply alcohol or drugs (including tobacco) to children, young people or vulnerable adults</li></ul>

	Policy adopted – 26 February 2020
	Reference RDA National Member Protection Policy 1 Jan 2019