

Document Title	CHILD SAFETY POLICY		
Document No.	C06-PO	Drafted by	Susan Strong / Jason Hazell
Next Review	Sep-2028	Responsible Dept (Owner)	Personnel
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All policies apply to both SIM Australia and SIMaid Limited unless specifically mentioned otherwise.			
Version number	Approval Date	Comments/Reason for Change	Approved By
1.0	January 2011	Initially issue as approved document (as C02 in Policy Ring Folder), but later re-numbered	
2.0	September 2021	Re-Issue as C06 and simplified, together with suite of other Child Safety Program Documents	Board
3.0	6 Sept 2025	Completely revised – put into new format – along with revision of other Child Safety program documents	Board

1 INTRODUCTION

The vision of SIM Australia is to see:

- a witness to Christ's love where He is least known;
- disciples of Jesus expressing God's love in their communities; and
- Christ-centred churches among all peoples.

This vision includes caring for and showing God's love to the vulnerable. God cares for and calls others to care for those who cannot often care for themselves, the vulnerable (Psalm 68:5).

We believe that all people are valuable and worthy of respect and care because they are made in the image of God. We believe that God is the Defender of the vulnerable and that the Lord Jesus cares for and values all children. SIM Australia recognises that children and young people are an integral part of God's kingdom and of the church.

SIM Australia is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

2 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to give effect to the above commitment by:

- setting out the systems and procedures in place in SIM Australia to reduce the risk of harm to children who participate in the services and activities of SIM Australia and to reduce the risk of misconduct towards children by SIM Australia personnel; and

- describe how SIM Australia works with partners to ensure the safety of vulnerable people (including children) overseas.

This policy sits alongside the **SIM Australia Child Safety Code of Conduct**, **SIM Australia Reporting Procedure** and the **SIM Australia Complaint Handling Procedure**

This policy applies to all SIM Australia personnel in Australia and overseas

SIM Australia acknowledges that not all SIM Australia personnel are engaged in work directly with children. SIM Australia will ensure that copies of this policy are made available to SIM Australia personnel and are easily accessible.

Please see **Schedule A** for definitions used in this policy.

If you believe a child is in immediate danger, please contact the Police immediately on 000 and:

- report the information;
- follow any instructions given by the Police;
- address any immediate safety needs of others present; and
- organise support for the person who had disclosed the complaint or information (if required)

Please contact the SIM Australia Child Safety Advocate if you have a concern about:

- the behaviour of an adult towards a child or vulnerable person;
- the safety and welfare of a child; or
- the harm or neglect of a child.

All correspondence and documentation will be handled confidentially by our Child Safety Advocate, and only passed on where specific reporting is required by law, or where the involvement of the National Director is required.

Susan Strong, SIM Australia Child Safety Advocate

Mobile: 0458 632 844

Email: australia.childsafety@sim.org

3 OVERVIEW OF APPROACH

SIM Australia implements the following:

- recruitment and screening procedures to ensure SIM Australia personnel are suitable and supported to work with children, including by providing induction and training which specifically addresses child safety;
- a Code of Conduct to provide clear expectations of standards of behaviour of SIM Australia personnel;
- guidelines for reporting concerns related to child safety to SIM Australia or its partners; and

- a procedure for complaint handling and responding to child safety concerns, disclosures or allegations.

4 BACKGROUND

SIM International

SIM Australia operates in Australia and is a signatory member to the mission agreement with SIM International

The SIM International Child Safety Program is an outworking of the SIM Mission policy that sets the expectations for child safety approaches across all SIM Entities internationally.

Each SIM Entity is to develop its own local policy approach that complies and integrates with the SIM International Child Safety Program, while also being relevant to the specific jurisdictional requirements. This policy sets out SIM Australia's approach.

SIM Australia personnel are expected to comply with both the International Child Safety Program and this SIM Australia Child Safety policy wherever they are serving.

Although SIM Australia workers are subject to both criminal and civil law in the countries in which they live and work, SIM Australia may need to take action of its own if standards have been breached.

Parental Responsibility

SIM Australia acknowledges that SIM Australia personnel may be engaged by an overseas SIM Entity. As a result, the children of SIM Australia personnel may be present at ministry activities and programs facilitated by a SIM Entity other than SIM Australia.

This policy and the **SIM International Child Safety Awareness Booklet** (on SIM International Sharepoint site) set out to equip SIM Australia personnel with knowledge about child safety. These documents do not diminish in any way the responsibility of parents for their children and their wellbeing and safety in the locations they serve (wherever they are present in the world).

5 SCREENING

SIM Australia has adopted appropriate screening processes to reduce the risk of harm to children by prospective, new and existing SIM Australia personnel.

This screening must take place prior to approval of a person as SIM Australia personnel and before their engagement with children in a ministry or an employment, volunteer or service context, and may include:

- conducting criminal background checks (as part of the recruitment process, with checks updated on a regular basis during engagement with SIM Australia);

- requiring SIM Australia personnel to obtain or show evidence of a current Working with Children Check (**WWCC**) or equivalent (if required by law);
- incorporating into the interview questions for prospective SIM Australia personnel a series of child safety-oriented questions related to prior conduct and experience with children;
- requesting that prospective SIM Australia personnel self-disclose whether they have ever been investigated for child safety concerns (whether by another organisation or by government authorities such as the Police);
- requiring SIM Australia personnel to acknowledge receipt of and agree to be bound by the **SIM Australia Child Safety Code of Conduct**; and
- conducting reference checks, with referees asked to comment on the suitability of prospective SIM Australia personnel to work in ministry and with children.

6 TRAINING

All SIM Australia personnel must undergo child safety training regardless of whether their ministries will directly involve activities involving children. This training must occur prior to the commencement of employment, service or placement overseas and **prior to** undertaking activities involving children.

SIM Australia will ensure that SIM Australia personnel develop the knowledge and skills to create safe spaces for everyone, particularly children and young people, including by ensuring SIM Australia personnel have access to information about creating and maintaining safe spaces and have adequate resources to enable them to create, maintain and promote safe spaces.

It is required that all SIM Australia personnel undergo initial induction training by:

- attending training workshops administered by SIM Australia;
- reading material provided by SIM Australia (including various policy and procedure documents as amended from time to time); and
- undertaking an online self-guided course.

Training undertaken may include topics such as:

- instruction on general child safety principles and risks;
- expectations of SIM Australia personnel;
- region-specific child safety issues and risks; and
- legal reporting requirements.

It is required that all SIM Australia personnel undergo refresher training within three years of having undergone induction training.

7 SUPERVISION

All SIM Australia personnel are regularly monitored and supervised by SIM Australia.

As part of this supervision, SIM Australia personnel may be asked a series of questions relating to their adherence to child safety practices.

8 CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT

SIM Australia has adopted the **SIM Australia Child Safety Code of Conduct** which outlines the standard for behaviour of all SIM Australia personnel. All SIM Australia personnel are expected to act in accordance with the SIM Australia Child Safety Code of Conduct.

Non-compliance with the SIM Australia Child Safety Code of Conduct may lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or service with SIM Australia or the relevant SIM Entity.

9 REPORTING

SIM Australia will make reports in accordance with the **SIM Australia Reporting Procedure**.

Reports of any form of alleged abuse or harm to children are very serious and must be handled with care and sensitivity.

All SIM Australia personnel must inform SIM Australia of any child safety concerns relating to SIM Australia personnel or children connected to SIM Australia (for example, the children of SIM Australia personnel, or children who attend ministries coordinated or undertaken by SIM Australia personnel).

The SIM Australia Child Safety Advocate is available to provide advice in relation to whether a report needs to be made and can assist you in making that report. Please see the SIM Australia Reporting Procedure.

10 COMPLAINT HANDLING

All complaints and reports of child safety concerns or breaches of the **SIM Australia Child Safety Code of Conduct** are to be directed to the SIM Australia Child Safety Advocate and to a supervisor on the relevant field (where applicable).

All complaints will be handled in accordance with the **SIM Australia Complaint Handling Procedure**.

11 RISK MANAGEMENT

SIM Australia personnel will ensure that risks to the safety and wellbeing of children are actively mitigated and will ensure appropriate and reasonable precautions are adopted to address risks to the safety of children connected to their ministry and activities (including to their own children). Appropriate and reasonable precautions may include:

- undertaking risk assessment for activities and programs, including in relation to the physical environment in which programs and activities take place;
- consideration of whether any partner ministries and their activities and programs have appropriate child protection practices in place; and
- consideration of the likelihood of an incident occurring, the seriousness of the consequences and the difficulty of avoiding the risk.

12 RECORD KEEPING

SIM Australia will retain all written records related to child safety for a minimum of 45 years, or as required by law or best practice, in hard copy and/or electronically in a secure manner.

Where records contain, or may contain, sensitive information, they will be kept in a manner that protects confidentiality and will only be accessed by authorised persons.

Where records are kept in hard copy, they will be held in a secure location with proper consideration of access, and physical conditions.

Where records are kept electronically, they will be monitored to ensure security and ongoing accessibility.

Records to which this item applies includes, but is not limited to:

- any risk assessments undertaken by SIM Australia or SIM Australia personnel;
- records relating to the supervision of SIM Australia personnel;
- screening undertaken in relation to prospective, new and existing SIM Australia personnel, including notes relating to referee checks;
- any information in relation to a WWCC held by SIM Australia personnel; and
- evidence of participation in and completion of induction or refresher training.

Please see also the **SIM Australia Privacy Policy – P01**

13 REVIEW AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Board will be responsible for the oversight and implementation of this policy.

This Policy will be reviewed every three years.

SCHEDULE A – DEFINITIONS

Child means a person under 18 years of age.

Child safety concerns include:

- any disclosures by children of harm (including harm as a result of neglect);
- any concerns for the safety of a child;
- any unusual or concerning sexual behaviour of a child;
- any allegations or concerns that SIM Australia personnel have harmed a child;
- any report that current or past SIM Australia personnel has been charged with and/or convicted of an offense involving a child;
- any conduct which breaches the Child Safety Code of Conduct; and
- inappropriate relationships developing between SIM Australia personnel and children.

SIM Australia means SIM Australia (ABN 46 002 679 441).

SIM Australia Child Safety Advocate means the person appointed to facilitate and monitor the SIM Australia Child Safety Policy.

SIM International means the association of SIM Entities.

SIM Entity means a SIM entity which is bound by the SIM Mission Agreement and embodied in the SIM Global Assembly.

SIM Australia personnel means any person who is appointed, engaged or employed by SIM Australia, including:

- volunteers of SIM Australia or a SIM Entity while they serve or are present in Australia;
- employees of SIM Australia;
- spiritual appointees;
- interns and trainees;
- people seconded to SIM Australia from partner organisations; and
- those accepted for service by the Board of SIM Australia (whether long term, open-ended or under an Associate Agreement)