



Rotary Australia World Community Service Limited Youth Protection Policy

Rotary Australia World Community Service Limited (RAWCS) strives to create and maintain a safe environment for all RAWCS activities where youth may participate. To the best of their ability Rotarians, and other volunteers must safeguard the children and young people they come into contact with and protect them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse.

This RAWCS Youth Protection Policy applies to those Rotarians and non-Rotarians who participate in RAWCS Programs that relate to children and young people. The policy is in accordance with rules and procedures set out by Rotary International and the expectations of our insurers. It also complies with legislative requirements common to all Australian States and Territories. Additional requirements might be necessary to conform with applicable in country legislation where an activity is undertaken overseas. These requirements apply to all adult persons working with young people entrusted to their care and must be adhered to.

Glossary

Child	A young person under the age of 18 years.
RI	Rotary International
Volunteer	An adult involved in a RAWCS Programs who has direct interaction either supervised or unsupervised with young people / students. A volunteer might host or drive youth / students for activities, outings, events or functions
Responsible Adult	A responsible adult is any adult who, in a family or group situation for a short period of time, is responsible for caring for a youth/students. This person shall be in a position to offer the youth / student an educational, cultural, or recreational experience.
Youth	Any individual who is participating in a RAWCS Program regardless of whether he or she is of legal age of majority, also referred to in this document as young people, children, child, youth, student or young person.
WWC	The terminology used for a criminal history check in NSW, Vic, WA & Qld. Other States and Territories have similar checks under different names

General Requirements

All Rotarians will bear in mind paedophiles often appear as respectable, conscientious, hardworking people.

- For insurance purposes, it is a requirement that all Rotarians and non-Rotarians involved in a RAWCS project or activity, must provide current National Police Records Check or a Working With Children Card.
- Where an adult involved in a RAWCS program is defined as a **Volunteer** (see above) in a project or activity with direct interaction either supervised or unsupervised with young people / students, the **Volunteers** who could be alone with a young person for a period of time, being such time that might

allow grooming or abuse to occur, are required to:

- complete a Rotary Youth Volunteer Information and Declaration (**see attached Form**)
- provide three referees
- have a Working With Children Check (WWC or their state equivalent) Only after a candidate is found to be a suitable person will they be allowed to work alone with a young person.

- All other Rotarians and non-Rotarians involved in a RAWCS project or activity, may be defined as a **“Responsible Adult”**

A **responsible adult** is any adult who, in a **family or group situation** for a short period of time, is responsible for caring for a youth/students.

The adult shall be in a position to offer the youth/student assistance, guidance or an educational, cultural or recreational experience.

- This adult will have had a current National Police Records Check or a Working With Children Card checked because the experience or contact is such that there is virtually no opportunity for misconduct to occur.
- Wherever possible, it is desirable to have two or more **Responsible Adults** together with a young person at any one time.
- All states require that any Rotarian responsible for storing documents which contain people’s personal information such as medical records, even though they may not have direct contact alone with young people, be assessed in the same way as a **Volunteer** who is alone with a child.
- Where RAWCS is assisting in a youth program which is under the control of another organisation such as a school, the protection requirements set out in this document still apply together with any additional requirement the other organisation may require.
- Declaration forms must be securely stored in accordance with RAWCS policy and made available only to people who are required to see them.
- Should a Rotarian know or have a strong suspicion that a child has been abused, harassed, mistreated or neglected it is their legal obligation to notify all appropriate authorities.

Requirements Relating to Allegations of Abuse

Young people who have been abused might be mentally traumatised and find it very difficult to talk of their experience. If they are to make a full disclosure, it is critical for those they may approach to treat them with care and compassion.

- All adults who RAWCS recommends a young person may contact if abused will be briefed and given the RI list of common-sense responses to follow should this happen.
- The process following the advice of an allegation shall be:
 - Ensure the safety of the young person
 - Persuade them to go promptly (so forensic evidence if available is not lost) with them to the police
 - Remove the accused person from contact with youth
 - Avoid gossip and blame
 - Notify the responsible RAWCS Activity Manager of the allegation whom will report the incident to RI within 72 hours

- In all matters where the police are involved, RAWCS will allow them to investigate and report.
- Where the police do not wish to investigate, the relevant RAWCS Activity Manager will conduct a thorough investigation using experts outside RAWCS as necessary or as requested by the victim or the victim’s legal guardians.

For More information refer to the following resources:

- Rotary International – Rotary Youth Protection Guide
- RI Online training “Protecting Youth Program Participants”
- Rotary National Insurance Committee
- Aon Risk Solutions

Notes:

RAWCS requires a WWC or a National Police Records check for insurance purposes and also needs these documents so we can show that we have taken steps to ensure that we are not sending known child offenders on overseas RAWCS Projects. These steps are necessary to satisfy Australian Government Law that ratifies the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Where medical personnel and teachers who have a WWC (or the State equivalent) AND a Police Records Check as part of their employment registration process, they can be regarded as a volunteer for the purposes of the Youth Protection Policy where they are on RAWCS Projects or for Interplast trips.

The Youth Protection Declaration Form needs to state the expiry date that is not later than the earliest expiry date of the WWC or the Police Records check. The WWC and the Police Records Check documents must reference an expiry date for both the WWC and the Police Records Check documents.

Background Checks and Criminal Record Checks

Background Checks and Criminal Record Checks Background checks play a critical part in any youth protection policy because they deter potential offenders and deny known offenders access to the program.

Although many offenders have no criminal record and diligently avoid being caught by law enforcement, background checks may dissuade them from volunteering in a RAWCS Program.

Many youth-serving organizations require a criminal background check for all adult volunteers who work with youth, even for programs that don’t involve unsupervised access to youth.

Reference Checks

Reference Checks Simply requesting references in the application is not sufficient.

Contact each reference by phone or in person, and ask a standard set of questions, such as:

- How long have you known this individual?
- In what capacity?
- Do you think this person is well qualified to work with youth?
- Would you have any reservations about recommending this person to serve in a RAWCS Program?

Record the date of the interview and responses to each question and keep this information with the volunteer’s application.

Rotary Australia World Community Service Limited

Youth Protection Declaration

This Form is mandatory for Volunteers

**Responsible Adults are exempt
(Refer definitions)**

Personal Details

Name		DOB / /	Email
Phone	Work	Home	Mobile
Address			Period at this address (years)
Occupation	Employer		

Program involvement

Which RAWCS project number or Activity will you be involved with, and what will your role or roles be?	
Past involvement with youth	

Personal References (Only one referee may be a Rotarian and none may be family members)

1	Name	Email	
Phone	Work	Home	Mobile
2	Name	Email	
Phone	Work	Home	Mobile
3	Name	Email	
Phone	Work	Home	Mobile

Police Check and Criminal History

Working with Children Card Number		Expiry Date	
Have you ever been charged with or been found guilty of charges involving sexual, physical, or verbal abuse, including but not limited to domestic violence or intervention orders.			Yes ()
If yes, please explain. Also indicate date(s) of incident(s) and the Country and State in which each occurred (attach a separate sheet, if needed).			No ()
Charges that resulted in a diversion should be recorded, as should the final outcome of any intervention order applications that might have been made against you.			

I certify the following:

- All statements and information given on this form are true and correct.
- I have contacted my referees and all are happy for RAWCS to contact them
- I give my full permission for any of the referees listed above to be contacted by RAWCS to confirm my suitability as a RAWCS Volunteer.
- I agree to abide unreservedly by RAWCS's decision as to my suitability as a RAWCS Volunteer in RAWCS programs.
- I acknowledge that (copies of) this form and the results of RAWCS's enquires will be held by the manager of any program for which I volunteer.

I have read and understood the above declaration and sign this form voluntarily.

Applicant	Name	Signature	Date
Rotary Witness	Name	Signature	Date

Record of Referee contact by RAWCS Authorised Officer

1 Name Referee		Contact Date
Comments		

2 Name Referee		Contact Date
Comments		

3 Name Referee		Contact Date
Comments		

Name of Authorised RAWCS Officer	
I _____ Position _____ verify that	
_____ has satisfactorily completed this Declaration, Referees have been contacted and Working With Children card is current. I find the applicant to be a suitable Volunteer	
Signed: _____	Date _____
Authorised RAWCS Officer	
Phone _____	