

Youth of the Year Child Protection Procedure

MULTIPLE DISTRICT 201 OF LIONS CLUBS INTERNATIONAL YOUTH OF THE YEAR CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURE

1. MISSION STATEMENT

Lions Australia is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and/or young people who are under 18 years of age and who are participants in any Lions youth project or program. We will take steps to ensure a child safe environment is maintained at all times.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1. Children and young people have a right to grow up in healthy communities.
- 2.2. Lions Australia and its clubs have a responsibility to promote the safety and welfare of every child and young person having contact with the organisation and to work in a coordinated and co-operative manner to ensure protection and timely intervention where children and young people are at risk of harm.
- 2.3. Lions Australia, in operating its programs for young people, aims to protect children and young people from situations that pose harm or risk of harm.
- 2.4. In all actions and decisions concerning a child or young person, the safety, welfare and wellbeing of the child or young person must be the paramount consideration.
- 2.5. Wherever a child or young person is able to form his or her own views on a matter concerning his or her welfare, he or she must be given an opportunity to express those views freely and those views are to be given due weight in accordance with the developmental capacity of the child or young person and the circumstances.
- 2.6. In all decisions relating to children or young people, account must be taken of the culture, developmental capacity, language, religion and sexuality of the child or young person and, if relevant, those with parental responsibility for the child or young person.
- 2.7. In deciding what action it is necessary to take (whether by legal or administrative process) in order to protect a child or young person from harm, the course to be followed must be the least intrusive intervention in the life of the child or young person and his or her family that is consistent with the paramount concern to protect the child or young person from harm and promote the child or young person's development.

3. PROCEDURE

- 3.1. This procedure cannot cover every potential child protection risk. Each Club and District participating in the Youth of the Year program must conduct an annual child protection risk review prior to commencement of the program. This should be documented as part of the normal Lions Club/cabinet minutes.
- 3.2. This procedure applies at each level of the program; Club, Zone, District, State and National. The "Youth of the Year Chairperson" is that Lion who holds the position at the relevant level.

3.3. The Youth of the Year Interview

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- 3.3.1. Interviews must be conducted by more than one individual and both genders should be represented.
- 3.3.2. Interviews must be normally conducted in a room with the door open.
- 3.3.3. Participants may invite a support person during the interview, noting that support person may not speak or comment to the participant or judges during the interview.
- 3.4. Communication with participants
 - 3.4.1. All e-mail communication to be issued according to any official template issued by the Youth of the Year Program.
 - 3.4.2. Parents must be copied into all emails to contestants.
 - 3.4.3. The contact details of participants is held by the Youth of the Year Chairperson privately and only provided to Lions appointed to oversee the program at the various levels.
 - 3.4.4. The Youth of the Year Chairperson destroys/deletes the contact information at the end of each program year except where expressly allowed by the participant. Note: Where contact details are retained, the Youth of the Year program must advise the purpose for which those details are maintained, how they will be stored and used.
- 3.5. Public Speaking program activities
 - 3.5.1. One Lions chaperone of each gender will be present in the soundproof room used during the public speaking program.
 - 3.5.2. Participants may bring a support person of their choosing to stay with them in the soundproof room.
 - 3.5.3. No individual Lions may be left alone with participants.
 - 3.5.4. All program activities to be conducted in public venues.
 - 3.5.5. No participants may be left unsupervised.
- 3.6. Transitions
 - 3.6.1. Transitions between program activities and other activities to include handover: Parents/teachers to escort children to program and Lions to escort children back to parents/teachers after program, unless parents/teacher agree to alternative arrangements in writing.
- 3.7. Other
 - 3.7.1. Child protection risks occur between children and young adult participants. Special care to be taken where program includes young adults (18yrs or over), with children (under 18)
 - 3.7.2. Any incident reported to any Lion involved with the Program must be reported to the police.
 - 3.7.3. Program organisers review Lions insurance each year. Program participants are made aware of any optional insurances to cover risks.
 - 3.7.4. Prior to every Youth of the Year project activity, organisations conduct a risk assessment walk-through to identify and eliminate any hazards.

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4. THE WORKING WITH CHILDREN'S CHECK

- 4.1. Arrangements for the Working with Children's Check vary in each state. **Lions operating the program must appraise themselves of the legislation in their state and ensure compliance.**
- 4.2. In most states a Working with Children's check is only required for longer term work with young people. Each participating club must assess the need to obtain and manage the Working with Children's Check before they participate in the program. **It is highly desirable to eliminate all risks to young people participating in the program rather than rely on a Working with Children's check. Note the procedures above.**
- 4.3. **The District Youth of the Year Program Chairperson, is responsible for determining the Youth of the Year approach to working with Children's Check's in their District consistent with State legislation, and communicating that to participating clubs. The approach to the Working with Children's check must be endorsed by the District Cabinet, by resolution.** The specific approach by that District is to be advised, in writing to the MD201 Youth of the Year Chairperson by 31 August each year.
- 4.4. If a Working with Children's Check is required by the District, the District must satisfy compliance requirements. In cases, such as NSW, where an 'employer' must verify working with children's checks, that role should be taken by **the District Youth of the Year Program Chairperson.**
- 4.5. **The District Youth of the Year Chairperson must confirm compliance with the State Youth of the Year Chairperson on 31 July 2016 and 31 January each year.**
- 4.6. **The State Youth of the Year Chairperson will advise the National Youth of the Year Chairperson of compliance with Working with Children's legislation on 31 July 2016 and 31 January each year.**
- 4.7. The **'Working with Children's Check register** must contain the name, date of birth, registration number and expiration date. If third party verification is required, as in NSW, the date and outcome of that verification should be indicated
- 4.8. The **MD201 Youth and Community Projects Coordinator** is the responsible officer in the Multiple District for MD201 Child Protection compliance. They will obtain and verify Working with Children's checks for all members of the MD201 Youth of the Year Committee and the 19 District Youth of the Year Chairpersons.

5. SUMMARY

- 5.1. Is a Working with Children's check required for Lions participating in Youth of the Year at a Club level?

Not normally since this participation, (subject to the procedures above), is short term and limited.

- 5.2. Who determines if a 'Working with Children's check is required?

The District Youth of the Year Chairperson following a review of the requirements in their state. See 4.3 above.

- 5.3. Are there any mandatory Lions positions requiring a 'Working with Children's Check'?

Lions has determined that because of their intensive and longer-term involvement in the program, a 'Working with Children's check is required for the MD201 Youth of the Year Committee and every District Youth of the Year Chairperson. This check is carried out by the MD201 Youth and Community Projects Coordinator.

- 5.4. Why do we have to advise others about our District approach?

It is important that the Multiple District can confidently state that its child protection procedures are being adhered to.

- 5.5. Who keeps the Working with Children's check register?

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The person responsible for compliance keeps the register. This will be the District Youth of the Year Chairperson in most cases, or the MD201 Youth and Community Projects Coordinator with respect to MD Committee and District Chairpersons.

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