



## Therapeutic Engagement Support Services Association Inc.

### Child Safe Policy

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| Policy Category<br>Policy Number     | Therapeutic Engagement Support Services Association Inc. Board<br>TESSA Inc. B Pol 8   |
| Drafted by                           | D Lebek Child Safe Officer; V Triggs, Chief Executive Officer  |
| Date Authorised by the Board         | 1 July 2022  |
| Implementation Responsibility        | Chairperson, CEO, Program Managers, Directors, Members   |
| Scheduled review date                | July 2024  |
| Version                              | Version 2, June 2022   |
| Related Documents                    | TESSA Inc. Values (The Code), Actions and Behaviours<br>TESSA Inc. Manager Position Descriptions<br>TESSA Inc. Child Safe Officer Position Description   |
| Related Standard Operating Procedure | TESSA Inc. Child Safe Code of Conduct<br>TESSA Inc. Child Safe Procedures<br>TESSA Inc. Child Safe Commitment Form (annual)  |
| Related Forms                        |  |
| Related Standards and Legislation    | Implementing The Child Safe Standards: Ministerial Order 1359<br>The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child<br>Working with Children Act 2005 (Victoria)<br>Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Victoria)<br>Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Victoria)<br>Education & Training Reform Regulation 25, 2017; Department of Education & Training: Restraint and Seclusion, June 2022<br>Disability Standards for Education, 2005 (Commonwealth)<br>Worker Screening Act, 2020<br>The Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Victoria)<br>Crimes Act 1958 (Victoria) |

### 1. Introduction

The Therapeutic Engagement Support Services Association (TESSA) Inc. is committed to promoting and protecting the physical and emotional safety of children. We will create and maintain a child safe organisation in accordance with the Victorian Child Safe Standards, Ministerial Order 1359.

We owe a duty to take reasonable care to prevent the sexual or psychological abuse of a child by an individual associated with TESSA Inc. We will create and maintain a protective environment that minimizes the risk of abuse.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all TESSA Inc. Directors, staff (employees, sub-contractors, placement students) and volunteers. It is applicable to all physical and online environments in which TESSA Inc. programs and services are delivered.

Everyone associated with TESSA Inc. is responsible for the care and protection of children and reporting information about any suspected child abuse.

### 3. Principles

In complying with the Standards, TESSA Inc. adheres to the following principles:

- to work in partnership with schools, community agencies and families in efforts to keep children and young people safe

- to respect the diversity of children and young people, recognising their skills, strengths and experiences
- to give particular attention to child safety needs of:
  - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (Aboriginal) children and young people
  - those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
  - those unable to live at home
  - those with disabilities
  - those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+)
  - those studying in Australia as international students
  - those experiencing risk or other vulnerability
- to manage the risk of child abuse in physical and online environments.

#### 4. The Standards

1. Organisations\* establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued
2. Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational\* leadership, governance and culture
3. Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
4. Families and communities are informed, and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing
5. Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice
6. People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice
7. Processes for complaints and concerns are child focused
8. Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training
9. Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed
10. Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved
11. Policies and procedures document how the organisation\* is safe for children and young people.

\*Organisation is Therapeutic Engagement Support Services Association Incorporated (TESSA Inc)

#### Authorisation

This policy was approved by the Therapeutic Engagement Support Services Association Board of Directors on 1 July 2022.

Natalie Deacon  
Chairperson

Jane Weston  
Company Secretary