

CHOOSE MATHS = MENTORING

AN **AMSI** SCHOOLS PROJECT

DELIVERED BY



SUPPORTED BY

BHP Foundation

CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT

MAY 2019

AMSI is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. We recognise the importance of, and a responsibility for, ensuring our organisation is a safe, supportive and enriching environment that respects and fosters the dignity and self-esteem of children and young people, and enables them to thrive in their learning and development.

A Child Safety Code of Conduct lists behaviours that are acceptable and those that are unacceptable. It provides a high-level statement of professional boundaries, ethical behaviour and acceptable and unacceptable relationships.

This Code of Conduct aims to protect children and reduce any opportunities for child abuse or harm to occur. It also assists in understanding how to avoid or better manage risky behaviours and situations. It applies to all CHOOSEMATHS mentors in all mentoring situations (including on Zoom and in person) and in any contact with schools or their students. Where a mentor breaches the code, AMSI may take disciplinary action, including, in the case of serious breaches, removal from the program.

The CHOOSEMATHS Mentoring coordinator will support the implementation and monitoring of the Code of Conduct. The AMSI Schools team will also provide information and support to enable the Code of Conduct to operate effectively. The Code will be reviewed annually and will next be due for review in May 2020.

CONTACT INFORMATION

CHOOSEMATHS Mentoring Coordinator (Julia Collins):
Julia.Collins@amsi.org.au, 03 8344 6500 or 0479036314
(for less urgent queries, use mentoring@amsi.org.au)

CHOOSEMATHS main office:
choosemaths@amsi.org.au, 03 8344 1777

AMSI SCHOOLS PROGRAM MANAGER (Janine Sprakel):
janine@amsi.org.au, 03 8344 1790

Communications will be treated confidentially on a 'need to know basis'.

DO

- Uphold AMSI's statement of commitment to child safety at all times.
- Behave as a positive role model to students.
- Use positive and affirming language toward students.
- Treat all students with respect.
- Help provide an open, safe and supportive environment for all students to interact and socialise.
- Encourage students to 'have a say' and then listen to them with respect.
- Stick to conversation topics relevant to CHOOSEMATHS Mentoring.
- Maintain professional boundaries with students.
- Respect cultural, religious and political differences.
- Promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of students.
- Promote the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability.
- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of linguistically and culturally diverse students.
- Be vigilant and proactive with regard to student safety and child protection issues.
- Intervene when students are engaging in inappropriate bullying behaviour towards others or acting in a humiliating or vilifying way.
- Listen and respond to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child.
- Where an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the student involved is safe.
- Report any breaches of this Child Safety Code of Conduct to the Mentoring Coordinator as soon as you can.
- Report concerns about child safety to the Mentoring Coordinator, the student's school teacher, or a member of the AMSI Schools team.
- Ensure that your legal obligations to report allegations externally are met (see below).
- Respect the privacy of students and their families and only disclose information to people who have a need to know.
- Call the Police on 000 if you have immediate concerns for a student's safety.

Legal obligations

(links given are for Victoria only)

Failure to disclose: (This applies to all adults, not just professionals who work with children.) Any adult who holds a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under 16 must report that belief to police, unless they have a reasonable excuse for not reporting. A reasonable excuse includes a fear for safety or a belief that the information has already been disclosed. See <https://bit.ly/2KJepNH> for further information.

Failure to protect: This applies to people within organisations who knew of a risk of child sexual abuse by someone in the organisation and had the authority to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently failed to do so. See <https://bit.ly/1DT2q3w> for further information.

Grooming offence: A grooming offence is now in effect to target individuals who communicate with a child or their parents with the intent of committing child sexual abuse. See <https://bit.ly/2wmerYR> for further information.

DON'T

- Ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse.
- Promise confidentiality for any disclosures. Instead, tell the student that it is your responsibility to keep them safe.
- Fail to disclose a concern because you worry that you may be wrong. Most of the time your instincts are correct.
- Exhibit behaviours or engage in activities with students which may be interpreted as abusive and not justified by the educational or mentoring context.
- Ignore behaviours by other adults, including other mentors, towards students when they appear to be overly familiar or inappropriate.
- Develop 'special' relationships with students that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific students).
- Discuss content of an intimate nature or engage in any form of sexual conduct with a student, including making sexually suggestive comments and sharing sexually suggestive material.
- Express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of students or treat a child unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity.
- Communicate directly with a student through personal or private contact channels outside Zoom (including by social media, email, instant messaging, texting etc) except where that communication is reasonable in all the circumstances or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter. If a student contacts you outside official channels, politely decline their request, explain your commitment to the Code of Conduct, and inform the Mentoring Coordinator.
- Use your mentoring Zoom meeting room outside the allocated mentoring times. If you wish to test Zoom before the session, you can use the meeting ID 291 206 1294 or contact the Mentoring Coordinator.
- Share resources on Zoom, including screen sharing, websites or videos, without being 100% sure they are appropriate.
- Ask students for any personal information, including surnames, home address, phone number, email address or private messaging details.
- Engage in undisclosed private meetings with a student.
- Photograph or video a child in a school environment except in accordance with school policy or where required for duty of care purposes. This includes not recording any Zoom sessions.
- While speaking to students on Zoom, or in the school environment or at other school events where students are present, consume alcohol or take illicit drugs under any circumstances.
- Post online or otherwise share any information about a student that may identify them such as their: full name; age; email address; telephone number; residence; school; or details of a club or group they may attend.