

Technology, Devices and Internet Use

1. Overview

1.1. Purpose

To ensure children are protected from the increasing reliance on information technology devices and the prevalence of digital interactions in their lives. We make conscious choices during program delivery to maximise development and social interaction. In addition, this policies aim to provide for the safety and wellbeing of all children and Junior Adventures Group (JAG) People when using devices or the internet.

1.2. Scope

All JAG People are required to comply with the provisions set out in this policy, their contract of employment and all other relevant policies, procedures and legislation.

1.3. Legislative Requirements

Under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, JAG is required to have policies and procedures in place to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of the children in care.

2. Policy Statement

Junior Adventures Group recognises the use of technology and the internet is a necessary part of everyday life, shaping the way we work, and the way children learn, communicate and play. * To maximise the educational benefits and achieve the learning outcomes outlined in the/ National Quality Framework, our planning and program delivery will minimise the use of information technology in the weekly program. JAG is committed to providing as many activities as possible that encourage face-to-face interaction and build social capital.

3. Principles

3.1. Duty of Care

JAG people have a duty of care to all children attending the program and will ensure that all children are protected from inappropriate use of multimedia and electronic devices.

3.2. Educational Program

JAG recognises that creating a stimulating and engaging environment enhances children's learning and development. The development of life skills and relationships can be strengthened in the Service environment by minimising access to information technology.

Children will be encouraged to:

- engage in meaningful face-to-face connections and interactions with others
- develop relationships that are positive and respectful
- focus on group activities in addition to independent activities
- participate in a wide variety of activities, including outdoor and active play, creative, dramatic and imaginative play and social experiences
- connect with the natural environment and develop a sensibility based on holistic and sustainable principles
- develop an awareness of their physical and emotional wellbeing in an environment that is not dominated by/is largely free of technology

- enjoy respite from the external stimuli associated with digital technology.

3.3. Partnership with Families

Families are encouraged to respect JAG's intention by ensuring expectations around the use of phones, devices and TV are clear for the children. JAG families are also encouraged to role model and promote behaviour within the JAG environment consistent with this policy.

3.4. JAG Devices and Access

If services or team members are issued with or have access to a device owned by JAG, it always remains the property of the organisation.

JAG People must ensure the safety and security of equipment by storing devices in a safe place to prevent unauthorised access, damage or theft.

Where team members are issued with or informed of a password or other information that allows access to our equipment, software, hardware, information, or data, they must ensure it is kept safe and not shared.

The use of personal devices to access JAG systems, email or data is only permitted where access to company-issued equipment is not available.

At any time, management can access internet usage, data or email should it be necessary to ensure the adherence and security of our systems, equipment and information.

3.5. Video, Radio and Television

The role of video, radio, TV and multimedia games is given thoughtful consideration and will not form part of the daily program. From time to time, the program may incorporate technology. However, it is not a core component of the education and care program.

Movies may be screened during some school holiday programs; they will be G and PG rated and monitored by JAG People. Parents will be informed of any movie viewing, which will be relayed through the displayed program information.

Where excursions include viewing a movie, they will be G and PG rated.

Parents can access additional information about films being scheduled on the program by visiting the Children and Media Australia media website: <https://childrenandmedia.org.au/>

3.6. Social Media

All JAG People must ensure the reputation of the organisation, its employees and stakeholders are not harmed during the use of any technology or sharing platforms such as social media.

Images, videos or recordings of children, families, or Team Members in uniform are not permitted to be sent, used, posted or shared on social media platforms or other online forums.

The personal information, including names of children and families obtained during work, remain the organisation's property, are deemed confidential and must not be shared.

Access to personal accounts, such as email, social media or other non-work-related websites, is not permitted during work hours.

JAG People must ensure when they are using social media or online platforms, their views are not seen as the views of the organisation and are not demeaning, derogatory, inflammatory, misrepresentative, harassing or discriminatory of the organisation or any employee.

3.7. Photography and Videos

JAG People are not permitted to record, video or photograph other JAG People unless prior permissions have been sought.

Photographs or videos of children must not be distributed or used in marketing materials unless prior written authorisations are sought.

Children are not permitted to photograph or video other children or JAG People unless prior communications and authorisations are sought for the purposes of the educational program.

3.8. Computers and Gaming Devices

The use of computers, phones, hand-held electronic games and PlayStation and Xbox consoles is discouraged except for:

- access to a dedicated computer for homework, research or other supervised tasks/activities
- themed days or events specifically planned to allow children access to and interact with such games (e.g., during holiday programs). Use of these devices at such times will be carefully monitored and supervised by staff.

3.9. Staff's Personal Devices

Team Members are not permitted to access personal devices whilst children are in attendance. Personal electronic devices should be stored in a secure location, not on the person.

Personal Devices are only used in essential or emergency situations, and only if an appropriate JAG device is not available, the limited use of a personal device is permitted, if authorisation from a member of the senior leadership team is given in writing.

Essential purposes for which use and/or possession of a personal device may include:

- communication in an emergency situation involving a lost child, injury to child or staff member, or other
- serious incident, or in the case of a lockdown or evacuation of the service premises
- personal health requirements, e.g. heart or blood sugar level monitoring
- disability, e.g. where a personal electronic device is an essential means of communication for an educator or other staff member
- family necessity, e.g. a worker with an ill or dying family member
- technology failure, e.g. when a temporary outage of service-issued electronic devices has occurred
- local emergency event occurring, to receive emergency notifications through government warning systems, for example, bushfire evacuation text notification.

3.10. Children's Devices

Children are not permitted access to phones or other devices at any time during sessions of care.

The only exceptions to this provision is via prior arrangement between the Service Leader and families for the purposes of a programmed activity, incursion or club facilitated by the Service.

Where the use of phones or other devices is permitted, a *Technology Agreement* must be signed by the child and their parent/guardian. Where access is allowed, staff will carefully monitor the use of mobile phones in children's possession. Guidelines in relation to this will be followed in accordance with school policy. Educators can provide storage for mobile phones if required.

Children will only have access to technology, devices or the internet whilst under the direct supervision of JAG Team Members.

JAG, its services, and its people cannot be held responsible for the loss, theft or damage of any devices children bring to the Service.

3.11. Restricted Use and Supervision

Where there is access to the above devices, it will be supervised by staff.

Children will have limited access to technology, devices or the internet to ensure they have opportunities for meaningful engagement, imagination and exploration.

3.12. Recording Devices

Children and visitors are not permitted to film or record anything while on site unless there is specific authorisation from the Service Leader on site. No personal recording devices are authorised to be used in Service. If recording or photography is required, this should be achieved with a JAG device, and with prior authorisation.

3.13. Lost Equipment

We strongly discourage children from bringing valuables to the program; this includes electronic and technology devices. We will not be responsible or liable should they be lost while attending the program.

3.14. eSafety for Children and Young People

JAG recognises every child's right to feel safe and supported, including when using online platforms and technology.

JAG is committed to being proactive in the prevention and protection of children from the effects of cyberbullying, image-based abuse and illegal or restricted content.

Any harmful or unlawful content or behaviour involving devices, technology or the internet will be documented in an incident report and treated in accordance with the *Incident Management Policy and Procedures*.

All JAG People are mandatory reporters. In accordance with the *Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy*, safeguarding concerns or instances of child-related misconduct must be communicated to management, the regulatory authority and state-based child protection reporting authorities.

3.15. Performance and Breaches

Any conduct believed to contravene this policy may result in disciplinary action in line with our *Managing for Performance Policy and Procedures*.

To promote and maintain expected standards of conduct, it is important that all JAG People are able to raise a concern about the conduct of another employee freely and without intimidation. JAG will ensure:

- all reports of non-compliance will be taken seriously and investigated as a matter of priority
- all reasonable steps are taken to protect JAG People who make a complaint in good faith from being disadvantaged, victimised or discriminated against for reporting a breach
- false reports made vexatiously or in bad faith are investigated and actioned in accordance with *Managing for Performance Policies and Procedures*.

3.16. Child Safety

We safeguard children through our procedures and practices, with particular attention to del during our service. Policies and practices reflect the relevant legislation, including the National Principles for a Child Safe organisation. JAG provides policies and procedures to equip JAG people with the knowledge, skills, and awareness to keep children safe. Service Practice are continuously reviewed and improved to ensure current legislation is in effect throughout the business. JAG is passionate about minimising the opportunity for abuse to occur in physical and online environments.

4. Key Terms

Term	Definition
Children and Media Australia	Formerly the Australian Council on Children and Media, they were renamed in March 2022 and are the peak body representing children’s interests as digital and screen media users
Cyberbullying	Use of the internet to be cruel to a child or young person so they feel bad or upset (e.g., sending hurtful messages or creating fake accounts in their name)
Devices	Laptops, desktop computers, iPads, tablets, mobile phones, internet connection devices, printers/scanners, gaming devices, projectors and other associated hardware
Emergency	An emergency in relation to an education and care service means an incident, situation or event where there is an imminent or severe risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of a person at the Service (e.g., fire, flood, lockdown)
eSafety	eSafety refers to safeguarding children, young people and adults from online harm and promoting safer online experiences
Illegal or restricted content	Includes material that shows or encourages child sexual abuse, terrorism or other extreme violence, as well as content that should not be accessed by children, such as sexual activity, detailed nudity or violence
Image-based abuse	Images or videos shared without the consent of the person pictured; usually refers to images of an intimate nature
Information technology	Technology involving the use of computer systems, software and networks for processing, distribution and interaction with data
JAG Families	Parents, carers and children related to and including children attending the program.
Service Leader	Anyone who oversees the Service in one of the following roles:

Term	Definition
	1. The Approved Provider; if the approved provider is an individual, in other cases, a person with management or control of the Service 2. The Nominated Supervisor of the Service 3. A Responsible Person who has been placed in day-to-day charge of the Service in the absence of the Nominated Supervisor.
Team Member	JAG People who work directly with children.
Social capital	The positive product of human interaction providing tangible and intangible outcomes, such as gathering information, learning a new skill, innovative ideas and creating future opportunities

5. References

Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations
Australian Council on Children and the Media
Australian Government eSafety Commissioner
Children Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics (2016)
Educational and Care Services National Regulations
Framework for School Age Care
Guide to the National Law and National Regulations
National Quality Standards for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Care
United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
Other Relevant Legislation
Regulation 73 – Educational program
Regulation 74 – Documenting of child assessments or evaluations for delivery of educational program
Regulation 75 – Information about the educational program to be kept available
Regulation 76 – Information about educational to be given to parents
Regulation 84 – Awareness of child protection law
Regulation 98 – Telephone of other communication equipment
Regulation 122 – Educators must be working directly with children to be included in ratios
Regulation 165 – Offence to inadequately supervise children
Regulation 167 – Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
Regulation 168 – Education and care service must have policies and procedures
Regulation 170 – Policies and procedures to be followed
Regulation 171 – Policies and procedures to be kept available
Regulation 172 – Notification of change to policies or procedures
Regulation 181 – Confidentiality of records kept by approved provider
Regulation 183 – Storage of records and other documents
Online Safety Act – Cth
Privacy Act 1988 – Cth
Related Policies
Employee Conduct Policy
Incident Management Policy
Media policy
Managing for Performance Policy
Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy
Whistle-blower Policy
Related Procedures

01P001 Programming Guidelines
01P002 Holiday Program and Pupil Free Day Planning Procedures
Other
Quality Area 1, 5 & 6: Standards 1.1, 1.2, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1
Technology Agreement
OCG Guide to Child Safety Standards
National Model Code

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