

ELIGIBILITY POLICY - MENTORING

PURPOSE

This policy will provide guidelines for:

- eligibility criteria for volunteer mentor and young person participation in the program
- ensuring each participant meets the defined eligibility criteria
- ensuring Mentoring staff are knowledgeable of and understand all eligibility criteria

POLICY STATEMENT

VALUES

Sparkways is committed to:

- the provision of quality services to vulnerable young people and children in a safe environment
- reviewing each young person referral and volunteer mentor application to determine whether the initial eligibility criteria has been met
- ensuring that volunteer mentors and young people satisfactorily complete the screening process (*refer Screening Policy*) which forms part of the eligibility criteria
- advising volunteer mentors and referral agencies by phone and/or email, in a timely manner, when the volunteer mentor or young person does not meet the eligibility criteria

SCOPE

This policy applies to all Volunteer Mentors, young people, parents/guardians (where applicable) and Sparkways Mentoring Staff

REQUIREMENTS

Mentor eligibility requirements include:

- be at least 20 years of age
- willingness to mentor a young person in the designated service areas of the Mentoring program.
- Complete the screening process successfully within a reasonable time frame (*refer Screening Policy*)

- Demonstrate a desire to participate in the program and be willing to abide by all program policies
- Commit to spending time with a young person as per program requirements
- Be willing to communicate regularly with the young person, parent/guardian (where applicable) and the Sparkways Program Coordinator

Note: Sparkways staff members are NOT eligible to be a mentor whilst employed by Sparkways

Young Person eligibility requirements include:

- Be between 7 & 20 years of age
- Reside within the designated service areas of the Mentoring program
- Have past or current involvement with DFFH Child Protection
- Demonstrate a desire to participate in the program and be willing to abide by all program policies and procedures
- Be able to obtain parental/guardian permission and ongoing support for participation in the program
- Be willing to communicate regularly with the mentor and the Sparkways Program Coordinator
- Complete the screening process successfully within a reasonable time frame (refer Screening Policy)

RESPONSIBILITIES	Sparkways Mentoring Staff	Volunteer Mentor	Young Person	Parent/Guardian
Reviewing each young person referral and volunteer mentor application to ensure the eligibility requirements are followed in accordance with this policy	X			
Ensuring that the screening process is satisfactorily completed by volunteer mentors and young people (<i>refer Screening Policy</i>) which forms part of the eligibility criteria.	X			
Advising volunteer mentors and referral agencies by phone and/or email, when the volunteer mentor or young person does not meet the eligibility criteria	X			
Advising Sparkways of any changes in circumstances that alter the volunteer mentor or young person's eligibility to participate in the program		X	X	X
Providing all required information in accordance with the Eligibility and Screening Policies		X	X	X



BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- Privacy Act 1988(Cth)
- Information Privacy Act 2000(Vic)
- Public Records Act 1973 (Vic)
- Victorian Child Safe Standards
- Victorian Human Services Standards

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation: www.legislation.gov.au



SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

RELATED POLICIES

- Child Safety Policy
- Screening Policy



EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, Sparkways will:

- seek feedback from people affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required



AUTHORISATION

This policy was confirmed by Sparkways on 12/02/2024

REVIEW DUE: February 2025