

Part 1: Social Media

Part 2: Media Relations

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| Name of Policy | Media Policy |
| Scope | This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Certified Supervisor, educators, staff, students on placement, parents/guardians, children, parent committee members and others attending the programs and activities of Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) |
| Authorisation | Authorised by the full board at the meeting held on 7/02/2017 |
| Review | This policy and procedure will be reviewed annually |
| Position responsible for review | EO (or other employees as nominated by the EO) |
| Useful website links | Institute of Community Directors communitydirectors.com.au |

Part 1: Social Media

INTRODUCTION

Social media such as Twitter, Facebook (including closed Facebook pages), Google+, YouTube and blogging represent a growing form of communication for not-for-profit organisations, allowing them to engage their members and the wider public more easily than ever before.

However, it is also an area in which rules and boundaries are constantly being tested. *Part 1: Social Media* acts in conjunction with *Part 2: Media Relations*, in order to maximise our social media reach while protecting our public reputation.

Prior to posting on Social Media please refer to the *Social Media Checklist* on the last page of this policy to ensure posts on Social Media are suitable and fall with-in the guidelines of this policy.

PURPOSE

Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) may choose to engage in social media such as:

- Twitter
- Facebook
- Google+
- WordPress/Blogger
- YouTube/Vimeo
- iTunes/Podcasting

Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) seeks to encourage information and link-sharing amongst its Board, staff, parents and guardians and seeks to utilise the expertise of its employees, parents and guardians in generating appropriate social media content.

At the same time, social media posts should be in keeping with the image that Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) wishes to present to the public and posts made through its social media channels should not damage the organisation's reputation in any way.

Due to the fast-moving nature of social media and the constant development of new social media programs, it is important that this policy and its procedures be reviewed at regular intervals.

CORE INTENT OF PART 1: SOCIAL MEDIA

Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc.'s (ECKA's) social media use shall be consistent with the following core values:

- **Integrity:** Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) will not knowingly post incorrect, defamatory or misleading information about its own work, the work of other organisations, or individuals. In addition, it will post in accordance with the organisation's Copyright and Privacy policies.
- **Professionalism:** Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc.'s social media represents the organisation as a whole and should seek to maintain a professional and uniform tone. Staff, Parents and Guardians may, from time to time and as appropriate, post on behalf of Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. using its online profiles, but the impression should remain one of a singular organisation rather than a group of individuals.
- **Information Sharing:** Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. encourages the sharing and reposting of online information that is relevant, appropriate to its aims, and of interest to its members.

Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) should seek to grow its social media base and use this to engage with existing and potential members, donors and stakeholders. At the same time, a professional balance must be struck which avoids placing the organisation's reputation at risk.

Incorporated Kindergartens managed by the Approved Provider; Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) must abide by the Social Media component of the organisation's Media Policy and its procedures.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board shall nominate the CEO to co-ordinate Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc.'s social media management.

The CEO will oversee expansion of social media and help to develop the Social Media Strategy in line with the Media Relations component of the organisation's Media Policy.

Staff, Parents and Guardians may, from time to time and where appropriate, post on behalf of Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. using the organisation's online social media profiles. This is to be done only with the express knowledge and authorisation of the CEO.

The CEO has ultimate responsibility for:

- Ensuring that all posts are in keeping with Eureka Community Kindergarten Association's core Social Media component of the organisation's Media Policy.
- Ensuring appropriate and timely action is taken to correct or remove inappropriate posts (including defamatory and/or illegal content) and in minimising the risk of a repeat incident.
- Ensuring that appropriate and timely action is taken in repairing relations with any persons or organisations offended by an inappropriate post.
- Moderating and monitoring public response to social media, such as blog comments and Facebook replies, to ensure that trolling and spamming does not occur, to remove offensive or inappropriate replies, or caution offensive posters, and to reply to any further requests for information generated by the post topic.

It is important to maintain the balance between encouraging discussion and information sharing, and maintaining a professional and appropriate online presence.

Delegation

Social media is often a 24/7 occupation; as such, such responsibilities as outlined above may be delegated by the CEO to another appropriate staff member/volunteer.

PROCESSES

Posting to social media

Before social media posts are made, Board members, staff, parents/guardians, students on placement and others attending the programs and activities of ECKA should ask themselves the following questions:

- Is the information I am posting, or reposting, likely to be of interest to Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc.'s members and stakeholders?
- Is the information in keeping with the interests of the organisation and its constituted aims?
- Could the post be construed as an attack on another individual, organisation or project?
- Would Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc.'s donors be happy to read the post?

- If there is a link attached to the post, does the link work and have I read the information it links to and judged it to be an appropriate source?
- If reposting information, is the original poster an individual or organisation that Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. would be happy to associate itself with?
- Are the tone and the content of the post in keeping with other posts made by Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. Does it maintain the organisation's overall tone?

If you are at all uncertain about whether the post is suitable, do not post it until you have discussed it with the CEO or an ECKA staff delegate. A few moments spent checking can will ensure appropriate posts are made.

Damage limitation

In the event of a damaging or misleading post being made, the CEO should be notified as soon as possible, and the following actions should occur:

- The offending post should be removed.
- Where necessary an apology should be issued, either publicly or to the individual or organisation involved.
- The origin of the offending post should be explored and steps taken to prevent a similar incident occurring in the future.

If the mistake seems set to grow, or to cause significant damage to the organisation's reputation, revert to the Media Relations component of the Media Policy and [Appendix 1](#) of the Media Policy, [What to do in a Media Crisis](#).

Moderating social media

The reputation of Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. is first and foremost, and this involves maintaining a safe and friendly environment for its members.

From time to time social media forums may be hijacked by trolls or spammers, or attract people who attack other posters or the organisation aggressively. In order to maintain a pleasant environment for everybody, these posts need to be moderated.

Freedom of speech is to be encouraged, but if posts contain one or more of the following, it is time to act:

- Excessive or inappropriate use of swearing.
- Defamatory, slanderous or aggressive attacks on Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc., other individuals, organisations, projects or public figures.
- Breach of copyrighted material not within reasonable use, in the public domain, or available under Creative Commons license.
- Breach of data protection or privacy laws.
- Repetitive advertisements.
- Topics which fall outside the realms of interest to members and stakeholders, and which do not appear to be within the context of a legitimate discussion or enquiry.

If a post appears only once:

- Remove the post as soon as possible
- If possible/appropriate, contact the poster privately to explain why you have removed the post and highlighting Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc.'s posting guidelines.

If a poster continues to post inappropriate content, or if the post can be considered spam:

- Remove the post as soon as possible
- Ban or block the poster to prevent them from posting again.

Banning and blocking should be used as a last resort only, and only when it is clear that the poster intends to continue to contribute inappropriate content. However, if that is the case, action must be taken swiftly to maintain the welfare of other social media users.

The decision to block, ban and remove posts ultimately lies with the CEO, but may, at their discretion, be delegated to responsible staff and volunteers.

Copyright Laws

Production of copyright material

At law, material created by employees of Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) in the course of their employment, irrespective of whether it is created using Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) facilities or materials, or during normal working hours, will belong to Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA). What constitutes the course of employment will be determined by the employee's position description and usual duties.

An employee's employment contract may vary the default position of when copyright belongs to Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA). The employment contract overrides the default position that exists at law. Employees may be required to sign additional documents vesting or assigning copyright to Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) where that material was created by the employee using Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) resources and during paid working hours. One example of when this may be necessary is if the employee is required to engage in a project or duties that are outside of their normal employment duties.

If any material was created using Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) resources, or during paid working hours, then the onus is on the employee to demonstrate that it was not created in the course of employment. Employees should be aware that performing unauthorised non-work tasks during work hours may subject them to disciplinary proceedings. Where any uncertainty exists, staff are encouraged to discuss this with their supervisors.

Works by independent contractors and volunteers shall be owned in accordance with the written contract under which the work was created. Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) shall ensure that there is a written contract for work by an independent contractor or volunteer specifying ownership. At law, unless a written contract specifies otherwise then independent contractors and volunteers will own copyright in everything that they create.

Any dispute between Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) and its staff, contractors or volunteers, or between staff, or between contractors or between volunteers, on issues of copyright ownership shall be determined by the organisation's dispute

resolution procedures. Such determination will be subject to the judgement of any court or tribunal.

Copyright notice

Staff and volunteers (i.e parents/guardians, parent and friends group and parent committee members) of Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) should ensure that every publication of Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA), including any books, newsletters, brochures, forms, reports and computer software contains the following statement:

© Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA), Australia, [Year of creation of material]

This statement should not be included in normal business letters, invoices, receipts.

Use of copyright material

Staff and volunteers (i.e parents/guardians, parent and friends group and parent committee members) of Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) are required to observe all applicable copyright laws and regulations.

Staff and volunteers (i.e parents/guardians, parent and friends group and parent committee members) of Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) may use copyright material belonging to or licensed to Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) only for the purposes of their work for Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA). Where the material is used by Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) under licence, staff and volunteers must act in accordance with that licence.

Staff and volunteers (i.e parents/guardians, parent and friends group and parent committee members) of Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) may not reproduce, publish, distribute or adapt third party copyright material in the course of their work for Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) without the authorisation of the copyright owner. Staff and volunteers may not download or reproduce text, photographs or illustrations found on the internet without authorisation of the copyright owner. This includes for use in internal or external newsletters, reports or presentations. All non-generic images and illustration should be sourced from and with the consent of the creator. Generic images may be obtained from a stock image supplier (eg Shutterstock or iStockphoto).

When reproducing or otherwise using third party copyright material, it cannot be assumed that just because something is on the internet that it is free for everybody to copy and use. This includes images on Facebook or photo sharing websites such as Flickr. Acknowledgement of source of the material does not overcome the need for authorisation; actual authorisation is still required.

The [nominated officer] is required to institute procedures that will ensure:

- a) that all uses of third party copyright materials are recorded, and
- b) that all compensable uses of copyright material are appropriately processed.

Copyright on Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) materials

All materials produced by or on behalf of Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) are subject to copyright. Permission to reproduce such materials depends on the category into which they fall.

All materials produced by or on behalf of Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) will be classified by the CEO into one of the following classes:

1. Those materials that are copyright and that cannot be reproduced by any process other than for the purposes of and subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act and any licensing agreement between the user and Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA).
2. Those materials that are copyright and that may nonetheless be circulated and/or reproduced as long as any reproduction features specified credits and disclaimers.
3. Those materials that are copyright and that may nonetheless be reproduced without conditions.
4. Those materials that are not copyright.

The copyright policies of Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) are binding on all staff, whether paid or voluntary. The copyright policies of Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA), as amended from time to time, shall be deemed to be a part of the conditions of employment of every employee and shall be included in the orientation material given to every volunteer.

Moral rights

Where it is reasonable to do so, staff and volunteers of Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) should ensure that:

- a) When reproducing any written material, photograph or illustration, the creator should be acknowledged where it is appropriate to do so. It is generally appropriate to acknowledge the author of a report or article in a newsletter, but it is not appropriate to acknowledge the creator of a marketing brochure or promotional flyer, or where it is desirable for operational reasons that correspondence be sent out in the name of somebody else (such as in the name of a director, executive or manager).
- b) When reproducing any written material, photograph or illustration, a person should not be falsely attributed as the creator unless it is reasonable to do so. For example some correspondence may need to go out in the name of a director, executive or manager even though it was written by somebody else.

Part 2: Media Relations

INTRODUCTION

Local, state and national media are vital partners in achieving the goals of Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA). In order to maximise the advantages of media presentation and minimise the risks of media misrepresentation it is necessary to establish guidelines for how media contacts will be conducted.

It is not the intention of the Media Relations component of the Media Policy to curb freedom of speech or to enforce strict rules and regulations. Rather, the intention is to establish a framework for achieving an effective working relationship with the media. The organisation welcomes the opportunity to talk to the media and, through them, to debate issues in the public arena.

In dealing with the media, staff, Board members and Parent Committee members should be conscious that they may be seen as representatives of the organisation and should therefore avoid making comments or participating in photo opportunities that may damage the long-term reputation of Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA).

PURPOSE

Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) works with the media in order to

- advocate for the goals of the organisation
- promote the work of the organisation
- inform the public of the details of the organisation
- assist in fundraising for the organisation

In order to ensure that these purposes can be fulfilled, the Media Relations component of the Media Policy regulates the choice of people entitled to speak for Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA).

The media themselves have a vital role to play on behalf of the community in holding Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) to account for its policies and actions. It is important that they have access to officers and members and to background information to assist them in this role.

To balance this, Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) must have the capacity to defend itself from any unfounded criticism, and will ensure that the public are properly informed of all the relevant facts (if necessary using other channels of communication).

It is the responsibility of all staff, board members, parents/guardians, parent and friends group and parent committee members to ensure that effective media relations are maintained in order to achieve the aims of Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA). Naturally, in doing this, certain legal constraints might apply (e.g. not making comment on current court cases, especially those before a jury).

This policy deals with the day-to-day relationship between Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) and the media and does not address how the organisation will work with the media in a crisis, for which separate guidelines are available as an Our Community Helpsheets on [What to do in a Media Crisis](#).

CORE INTENT OF PART 2: MEDIA RELATIONS

Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) operates on the values of

- **Honesty:** The organisation will never knowingly mislead the public, media or staff on an issue or news story.
- **Transparency:** The organisation will promote openness and accessibility in our dealings with the media, whilst complying with the law and maintaining confidentiality when appropriate.
- **Clarity:** All communications with the media will be written in plain English
- **Balance:** Information provided to the media by Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) will as far as humanly possible be objective, balanced, accurate, informative and timely.

Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) should seek to establish and maintain a good and open relationship with the media. It is important that the organisation works with the media to communicate important public information messages about its work and its goals.

However, contact concerning any significant matter in the name of or on behalf of Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) should only be made by staff, Board members, parents/guardians, parent and friends group and parent committee members where:

- They have consulted the CEO
- They have the required expertise to speak on the issue under discussion
- They have some experience in media relations.

Where any of these criteria do not apply, staff, Board members, parents/guardians, parent and friends group and parent committee members and parent committee members are recommended to exercise extreme caution and to seek guidance from the most senior staff or Board member available.

Media Relations Procedures

RESPONSIBILITIES

The CEO of Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) will coordinate relationships with the media.

The CEO and the Board Chairman are both authorised to speak on behalf of Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA).

Other staff, Board members, parents/guardians, parent and friends group and parent committee members are advised to ensure they are properly briefed and guided by the CEO or Board Chairman before talking to the media on any issue related to Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA).

Where information or public comment is requested or required, the CEO shall determine the most appropriate person to respond.

Staff, Board members, parents/guardians, parent and friends group and parent committee members and third parties, are encouraged to deliver public presentations that discuss Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA)'s work and its goals, provided that they make it clear where such presentations are or are not authorised by the organisation.

All staff, Board members, parents/guardians, parent and friends group and parent committee members must observe Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA)'s Privacy Policy in relation to client records.

PROCESSES

Significant statements on behalf of Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) shall be made as authorised by the CEO or Board Chairman as detailed above.

It should always be made absolutely clear whether the views put forward regarding any issue relating to Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) are those of the organisation or of an individual. At all times, consideration should be given as to how the correspondence may affect the reputation of Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA).

The CEO is responsible for:

- Producing and updating a list of key contacts for distribution to local press and radio and TV stations. The CEO can also be contacted for preliminary discussions on any story or if a journalist or researcher is unsure who to approach for a comment.
- Authorising all media releases from Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA), and for mounting them on the organisation's website. All media releases must also be checked and approved by staff in charge of the relevant area before distribution.
- Being involved in any approaches to the media to feature Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA)'s work.
- Receiving and coordinating a response to all approaches from all national press, radio or TV stations or specialist press.

All staff, Board members, parents/guardians, parent and friends group and parent committee members are responsible for:

- Providing advice (preferably before the issue becomes public knowledge) to the CEO on any issues that are likely to be complex or contentious or to be sustained for any length of time. In such a situation, the CEO will work with the relevant staff and Board members to produce a communications plan which will ensure that balanced, timely information is provided to keep all parties informed.
- Ensuring that no photos of employees, parents or children shall be released to the public via advertising, news media, or internet, or by any other means, without the approval of the CEO, who shall satisfy themselves that the organisation's Privacy Policy has been observed.
- Notifying the CEO of any contact made in the name of Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) to the media and providing the name of the reporter or writer and the media outlet they represent.

Any significant media contacts with Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA)'s staff on any issue likely to prove contentious shall, where possible, be videotaped.

Any filming or taping on Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA)'s property or of the organisation's proceedings by the media is subject to prior permission of the CEO or Board Chairman.

Every effort should be made to assist the media in their inquiries. Where media queries involve requests for information that will require substantial staff work to produce, such work must be authorised by the CEO. It will usually be necessary to provide information in addition to that which is requested in order to set the facts and figures in context. Requests for detailed information of this nature, whether from the local or national media, should be referred to the CEO.

Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA) reserves the right to withhold certain sensitive information concerning, say, commercial transactions or governmental negotiations. Any such information will be clearly labelled and clearly notified to relevant staff.

If any unauthorised releases of confidential information do occur, an investigation will take place to establish who was responsible and appropriate action will be taken.

APPENDIX

Appendix 1: What to do in a Media Crisis.

Appendix 2: Summary and Social Media checklist

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Privacy Policy
- Board Confidentiality Policy

Review: December 2017

Appendix 1.

What to do in a media crisis

Accidents happen and so do muck-ups, failures, gaffes, bungles, political controversies and many other embarrassments.

When the news breaks, you may find your group in the middle of a media flurry. What you want to avoid at all costs is this flurry turning into a full-blown media crisis that can cause long-term damage to your group and a loss of public confidence.

Whatever it is that has happened to your group – be it accident, muck-up, controversy or legal action – the first priority for your group is to fix it and to ensure there is no continuing danger or risk to the public or any chance of the same thing happening again. And you also need to deal with the media.

Prepare for the crisis

As well as preparing a risk management strategy it is a good idea for community groups to set up a "crisis communications plan". This will ensure that senior staff and volunteers and board members know exactly what should happen should your group be faced with a media crisis.

This plan will ensure that your group has:

- An appointed spokesperson/s.
- A process where everyone in the organisation knows who to call should a major incident or media crisis develop.
- An established process where senior staff can gather as much accurate information as quickly as possible.
- A process whereby accurate information can be provided to the media as soon as practicable.

So what happens when the media comes calling about something that has gone wrong and it involves your group?

Don't run. Don't hide.

The first reaction – and the worst – for most groups is to try to ignore the attention and hope the story will go away. Resist the temptation to circle the wagons or stick your head in the sand. It doesn't go away and as long as what's on display is your organisation's failings, you're risking the ongoing haemorrhaging of support for your group.

The reality is that your group will end up having to address the issue publicly. The longer it takes, the longer the media and the public believe you have something to hide.

The other reality is that the media will run a story. What you want as much as possible is to influence the nature of that story and ensure that what is run is accurate and fair. It is a bit rich to complain about not having your side of the story aired when you have refused to provide it.

The other theme that you want to stand out is that the incident is not acceptable and not normal and that your group is doing everything in its power to ensure that it's not repeated. Organisations that come out of a media crisis with their reputations intact are those that deal with the issue quickly, effectively, honestly – and just as importantly, are perceived to be doing exactly that.

So how does a small non-profit organisation with no money for public relations expertise deal with the situation?

- **Decide that there is a crisis.** The successful handling of a crisis can be decided in the first hours or days. By recognising early in the piece that you actually have a crisis on your hands, you can start to rectify it. The sooner you take action, the better your chances of coming out with your reputation intact.
- **Understand who the media represent.** While "the media" is chasing you for details, the people who are going to be most interested in reading or listening to your response will be "the public" – and that means your members, donors, supporters, businesses, sponsors, potential supporters etc. Frame your responses with the real audience in mind.
- **Decide who will be the spokesperson or public face.** Where possible ensure it is the highest-ranking person (CEO, Chairman) who has the important mix of authority and access to all the latest information. You also need to have someone who is accessible and available to journalists. You need to stay on top of a crisis, not create a vacuum where yours is the only voice not being heard.
- **Release as much as you can as quickly as you can.** Sometimes you will be responding to an incident, such as someone getting injured, or a fraud, or a complaint of wrongdoing by an employee, but other times there may be serious and unfounded allegations. The more information you can release that puts the incident in context and puts your side of the story across, the better. And the quicker the better. The sooner you respond and show that you are acting in a sincere, honest and reliable manner, the sooner your voice is listened to and trusted.
- **Avoid the Bart Simpson defence.** What you emphatically do not do is give the Bart Simpson defence – "I didn't do it, nobody saw me do it, you can't prove a thing."
- **Say only what you know to be true.** If you don't know the answer, don't guess at it. Be honest and stick to only confirmed information you know to be accurate and correct. If necessary, tell the reporter you don't know but will check it out and get back to them. Better to provide a correct answer than to flail around and guess incorrectly.
- **Remember that first impressions count.** No matter how much they try not to, the media will come with some sort of preconceived idea which normally boils down to whether you or your organisation are sinners or saints (in this particular incident or generally). Your attitude, openness and commitment to resolving the issue is important in ensuring they leave with a positive impression.
- **Work out what you can legally release.** If there are legal issues that come into play, be aware of where the line is drawn on what you can say. Also be aware that many legal advisers will advise you to say nothing at all and that is advice that should be challenged. You have to publicly address the issue, it is only the manner or amount of information that is up for discussion.

- **Avoid speculation or answering hypothetical questions.** Try to stick to the facts and what did happen, not what might have done. You can fend questions off by saying things such as "I don't want to speculate on that" or "I would prefer not to deal in hypotheticals. What we do know is"
- **Challenge information you know to be wrong.** Don't leave wrong facts out there. If something is running that's wrong, let others know before it becomes common knowledge. Let the media organisation know the information is wrong and let other organisations know so they don't repeat it. Wrong facts left unchallenged are often more damaging than the truth.
- **Show concern.** You are a community group. Your main mission is to care/service/support the community so you need to be mindful of the feelings as well as the issues. If someone has been badly affected or hurt, mentally or physically, by an action of your group, express your concern and demonstrate your compassion.
- **Don't bother blaming the media.** If there is something wrong, point it out. If you have a different view, point it out. But avoid personal slanging matches. If it is a serious issue you want to be seen to be treating it seriously and dealing with it, not wasting time blaming the media for bringing to light an incident involving your group.
- **Ban the words "no comment".** Forever. Even if you keep repeating the same information you have released. Say: "All I can say is ..." or say "I can't provide that information until I have all the details ..." or "I can't answer that until I have a full report" or "I am happy to try to answer those questions once I have spoken to the right people ..." You never see seasoned media performers respond "No comment". The reason is that it sounds as though you know the answer but don't want to provide it.
- **Don't run from the cameras.** The one piece of vision you are absolutely guaranteed to see on television that night is the vision of someone running from the media, or shielding their face, or slamming the door in their face. Again, it makes you look like someone who has something to hide. If you have nothing new to add, say that.
- **Stay calm.** It's important you stay calm under pressure or swap places with someone who can. Anger makes good vision for TV stations and bad news for community groups. Avoid it.
- **Consider bringing the media into your organisation.** Hold frequent media briefings rather than have reporters camped on the nature strip. It lets them show how you are dealing with the crisis and the difficulties and problems that you face. And that you're human. And that you have nothing to hide.
- **Talk in common, easily understood language.** Avoid jargon. Speak in a manner that ensures people can actually understand the message you are trying to portray.

What if the story is just plain wrong?

It makes it even more important to react when the story is wrong or malicious. And this does happen. It may not get into print, it may not get on TV but it may cause you some pain dealing with unfounded allegations.

The British Red Cross was recently tainted by allegations that it had overstated the sum raised for Iraqi Kurds in 1991. It hadn't, but that wasn't going to be enough. "We had to very rapidly clarify our position and committed ourselves to carrying out a thorough

investigation," the organisation said afterwards. "Our supporters are essential to us and it is vital that they remain confident in us."

And that is one of the most important aspects of a media crisis. Community groups rely on their credibility. That's what brings in donations, support, members. It is imperative to come out of any crisis with that credibility and standing intact.

Appendix 2.

Media Policy Summary

- ECKA seeks to encourage information and link-sharing and seeks to utilise the expertise of its employees, parents and guardians in generating appropriate social media content.
- Social Media content should reflect the core values of ECKA.
- Information Sharing and reposting of online information must be relevant, appropriate to its aims and of interest to its members.
- Freedom of speech is to be encouraged, but if posts contain inappropriate content or tone, as set out in the **Moderating social media**, it is time to act.
- The CEO and the Board Chairman are both authorised to speak on behalf of ECKA.
- Other staff, Board members, parents/guardians, parent and friends group and parent committee members are advised to ensure they are properly briefed and guided by the CEO or Board Chairman before talking to the media on any issue related to ECKA.
- Staff, Parents and Guardians may, from time to time and where appropriate, post on behalf of Eureka Community Kindergarten Association using the organisation's online social media profiles. This is to be done only with the express knowledge and authorisation of the CEO or ECKA staff delegate.

Social Media Checklist

Before social media posts are made, staff, parents and guardians should ask themselves the following questions:

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|---|--|
| Is the information I am posting, or reposting, likely to be of interest to Eureka Community Kindergarten Association's members and stakeholders? | |
| Is the information in keeping with the interests of the organisation and its constituted aims? | |
| Could the post be construed as an attack on another individual, organisation or project? | |
| Would Eureka Community Kindergarten Association's donors be happy to read the post? | |
| If there is a link attached to the post, does the link work, and have I read the information it links to and judged it to be an appropriate source? | |
| If reposting information, is the original poster an individual or organisation that Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. would be happy to associate itself with? | |
| Are the tone and the content of the post in keeping with other posts made by Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. Does it maintain the organisation's overall tone? | |

If you are at all uncertain about whether the post is suitable, do not post it until you have discussed it with the CEO or ECKA staff delegate. A few moments spent checking can save the organisation big problems in the future.