

Overview of the Child Safe Standards

The Commission for Children and Young People

The Commission is an independent body that promotes the interests and safety of children and young people in Victoria. In relation to the Child Safe Standards, our role involves:

- providing information, advice and support to organisations to help build their capacity to comply with the Child Safe Standards and be child safe
- educating and providing advice to government funders and regulators to promote compliance with the standards
- making inquiries with organisations if we have concerns about whether they are child safe and, where necessary, taking enforcement action.

About the Child Safe Standards

From 1 January 2017, compulsory Child Safe Standards came into effect for all Victorian organisations that provide services or facilities for children or employ children. The *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (the Act) sets out those organisation that must comply with Child Safe Standards.

Child Safe Standards provide a framework to help organisations develop culture, systems and policies to build a child safe organisation and maintain a focus on child safety.

There are three overarching principles and seven standards to assist organisations to address key areas of risk.

This sheet provides some example first steps to help organisations begin implementing the Child Safe Standards. Organisations may need to take more action to be fully compliant.

What are the Child Safe Standards Principles?

Some children are more vulnerable to abuse, based on age, gender, cultural background, disability or prior abuse or neglect. Organisations must take steps to develop their child safe approach by considering the needs of children from diverse backgrounds. The standards help organisations focus their approach by providing three overarching principles:

- promoting the cultural safety of Aboriginal children
- promoting the cultural safety of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- promoting the safety of children with disabilities.

First steps to implement the principles include:

having a zero tolerance approach to discrimination	providing information in accessible formats for children with disabilities and from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
supporting staff, children, and families to be respectful of people from all backgrounds	acknowledge and respect times of importance to different cultures
creating a physical environment that displays positive images of people from a range of cultures and with a range of abilities	actively seeking out and talking to families about how they would like to be involved

What are the Child Safe Standards?

	The Standards	First step
Standard One	Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety	Appoint child safe 'champions' within your leadership teams that can talk about what the Child Safe policy means for staff and volunteers.
Standard Two	A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety	Develop a Child Safe policy or statement of commitment that works for your organisation and its activities.
Standard Three	A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children	Develop your code of conduct in consultation with staff, volunteers and children.
Standard Four	Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel	Review your human resource practices and take action to ensure a focus on child safety.
Standard Five	Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse	Ensure you have clear processes for concerns to be raised and communicate this widely both within the organisation as well as to families and children engaging with your organisation. If your organisation also has to comply with the Reportable Conduct Scheme, you should include this here.
Standard Six	Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse	Discuss and document what can go wrong in the activities or services you provide and take steps to reduce the risk.
Standard Seven	Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children	Find opportunities for children to share their views and ideas and be heard.

Where to get help

You can contact the Commission by:

- Telephone: (03) 8601 5281
- Email: contact@ccyp.vic.gov.au

You can also find more information on the Commission's website: www.ccyp.vic.gov.au

If you need an interpreter, please call the Translating and Interpreting Service on 13 14 50 and ask them to contact the Commission for Children and Young People on 03 8601 5281.