

Child Safe Standards

New Child Safe Standards to strengthen child safety commenced in Victoria on 1 July 2022

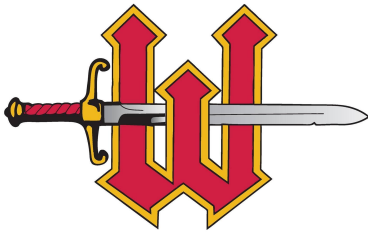
The new Standards set out minimum requirements and outline the actions our organisation must take to keep children and young people safe. They provide more clarity for organisations and are more consistent with Standards in the rest of Australia.

What will be different?

Key changes include new requirements:

- to involve families and communities in organisations' efforts to keep children and young people safe
- for a greater focus on safety for Aboriginal children and young people
- to manage the risk of child abuse in online environments
- in relation to governance, systems and processes to keep children and young people safe.

What are the new Child Safe Standards?



There are eleven new Child Safe Standards:

Victoria's Child Safe Standards

Plain language summary

1 Your organisation welcomes Aboriginal children. You support them to express their culture and to enjoy their rights. You don't allow racism.

2 Child safety is important to everyone at all levels in your organisation. You document how you find, avoid, and stop risks of child abuse or harm.

3 Your organisation supports children to know their rights to be safe from abuse, informed, and involved. You help them to talk openly and take part in decisions that affect them.

4 Your organisation tells families and the community about what you do, and how you keep children safe from harm and abuse. You help families to have a say and to take part in decisions that affect their child.

5 Your organisation understands that every child is different and has different needs. You make sure that they can get the information and help that they need.

6 Staff know what they must do to keep children safe from abuse and harm. They record, report, and share information about child safety when they should. Staff who work with children have had the background checks they need.

7 Children and their families know how to make a complaint and what happens when a complaint is made. Your staff know how to respond properly to complaints.

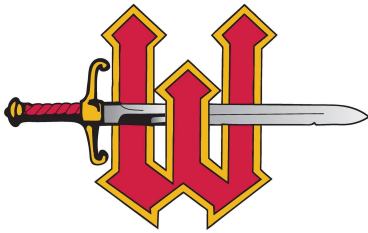
8 Your organisation trains and supports staff to keep children safe from abuse and harm. Your staff know the signs of child abuse and harm and what to do if there are issues of abuse and harm.

9 Your organisation makes sure children are safe when they use your services, settings, and activities. This includes when children are online.

10 Your organisation checks and improves the ways you keep children safe from abuse and harm.

11 Your organisation has written policies about how you keep children safe from abuse and harm. They are easy to understand, and all staff follow them.

For more information, contact the Commission for Children and Young People
www.ccp.vic.gov.au

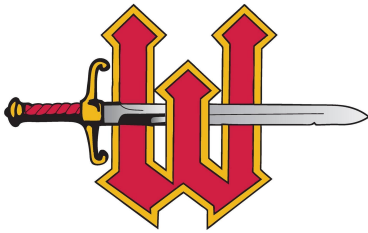


Child Safe Standard 1 – Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued In complying with Child Safe Standard 1, an organisation must, at a minimum, ensure:

- 1.1 A child’s ability to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights is encouraged and actively supported.
- 1.2 Strategies are embedded within the organisation which equip all members to acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal culture and understand its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children and young people.
- 1.3 Measures are adopted by the organisation to ensure racism within the organisation is identified, confronted and not tolerated. Any instances of racism are addressed with appropriate consequences.
- 1.4 The organisation actively supports and facilitates participation and inclusion within it by Aboriginal children, young people and their families.
- 1.5 All of the organisation’s policies, procedures, systems and processes together create a culturally safe and inclusive environment and meet the needs of Aboriginal children, young people and their families.

Child Safe Standard 2 – Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture In complying with Child Safe Standard 2, an organisation must, at a minimum, ensure:

- 2.1 The organisation makes a public commitment to child safety. 2.2 A child safe culture is championed and modelled at all levels of the organisation from the top down and bottom up.
- 2.3 Governance arrangements facilitate implementation of the child safety and wellbeing policy at all levels.
- 2.4 A Code of Conduct provides guidelines for staff and volunteers on expected behavioural standards and responsibilities.
- 2.5 Risk management strategies focus on preventing, identifying and mitigating risks to children and young people.
- 2.6 Staff and volunteers understand their obligations on information sharing and recordkeeping.



Child Safe Standard 3 – Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously. In complying with Child Safe Standard 3, an organisation must, at a minimum, ensure:

- 3.1 Children and young people are informed about all of their rights, including to safety, information and participation.
- 3.2 The importance of friendships is recognised and support from peers is encouraged, to help children and young people feel safe and be less isolated.
- 3.3 Where relevant to the setting or context, children and young people are offered access to sexual abuse prevention programs and to relevant related information in an age appropriate way.
- 3.4 Staff and volunteers are attuned to signs of harm and facilitate child-friendly ways for children and young people to express their views, participate in decision-making and raise their concerns.
- 3.5 Organisations have strategies in place to develop a culture that facilitates participation and is responsive to the input of children and young people.
- 3.6 Organisations provide opportunities for children and young people to participate and are responsive to their contributions, thereby strengthening confidence and engagement.

Child Safe Standard 4 – Families and communities are informed, and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing. In complying with Child Safe Standard 4, an organisation must, at a minimum, ensure:

- 4.1 Families participate in decisions affecting their child.
- 4.2 The organisation engages and openly communicates with families and the community about its child safe approach and relevant information is accessible.
- 4.3 Families and communities have a say in the development and review of the organisation's policies and practices.
- 4.4 Families, carers and the community are informed about the organisation's operations and governance.



Child Safe Standard 5 – Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice. In complying with Child Safe Standard 5, an organisation must, at a minimum, ensure:

- 5.1 The organisation, including staff and volunteers, understands children and young people’s diverse circumstances, and provides support and responds to those who are vulnerable.
- 5.2 Children and young people have access to information, support and complaints processes in ways that are culturally safe, accessible and easy to understand.
- 5.3 The organisation pays particular attention to the needs of children and young people with disability, children and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who are unable to live at home, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children and young people.
- 5.4 The organisation pays particular attention to the needs of Aboriginal children and young people and provides/promotes a culturally safe environment for them.

Child Safe Standard 6 – People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice. In complying with Child Safe Standard 6, an organisation must, at a minimum, ensure:

- 6.1 Recruitment, including advertising, referee checks and staff and volunteer pre employment screening, emphasise child safety and wellbeing.
- 6.2 Relevant staff and volunteers have current working with children checks or equivalent background checks.
- 6.3 All staff and volunteers receive an appropriate induction and are aware of their responsibilities to children and young people, including record keeping, information sharing and reporting obligations.
- 6.4 Ongoing supervision and people management is focused on child safety and wellbeing.



Child Safe Standard 7 – Processes for complaints and concerns are child focused. In complying with Child Safe Standard 7, an organisation must, at a minimum, ensure:

- 7.1 The organisation has an accessible, child focused complaint handling policy which clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of leadership, staff and volunteers, approaches to dealing with different types of complaints, breaches of relevant policies or the Code of Conduct and obligations to act and report.
- 7.2 Effective complaint handling processes are understood by children and young people, families, staff and volunteers, and are culturally safe.
- 7.3 Complaints are taken seriously, and responded to promptly and thoroughly.
- 7.4 The organisation has policies and procedures in place that address reporting of complaints and concerns to relevant authorities, whether or not the law requires reporting, and co-operates with law enforcement.
- 7.5 Reporting, privacy and employment law obligations are met.

Child Safe Standard 8 – Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training. In complying with Child Safe Standard 8, an organisation must, at a minimum, ensure:

- 8.1 Staff and volunteers are trained and supported to effectively implement the organisation's child safety and wellbeing policy.
- 8.2 Staff and volunteers receive training and information to recognise indicators of child harm including harm caused by other children and young people.
- 8.3 Staff and volunteers receive training and information to respond effectively to issues of child safety and wellbeing and support colleagues who disclose harm.
- 8.4 Staff and volunteers receive training and information on how to build culturally safe environments for children and young people.



Child Safe Standard 9 – Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed. In complying with Child Safe Standard 9, an organisation must, at a minimum, ensure:

- 9.1 Staff and volunteers identify and mitigate risks in the online and physical environments without compromising a child's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.
- 9.2 The online environment is used in accordance with the organisation's Code of Conduct and child safety and wellbeing policy and practices.
- 9.3 Risk management plans consider risks posed by organisational settings, activities, and the physical environment.
- 9.4 Organisations that contract facilities and services from third parties have procurement policies that ensure the safety of children and young people.

Child Safe Standard 10 – Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved. In complying with Child Safe Standard 10, an organisation must, at a minimum, ensure:

- 10.1 The organisation regularly reviews, evaluates and improves child safe practices.
- 10.2 Complaints, concerns and safety incidents are analysed to identify causes and systemic failures to inform continuous improvement.
- 10.3 The organisation reports on the findings of relevant reviews to staff and volunteers, community and families and children and young people.



Child Safe Standard 11 – Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people. In complying with Child Safe Standard 11, an organisation must, at a minimum, ensure:

- 11.1 Policies and procedures address all Child Safe Standards.
- 11.2 Policies and procedures are documented and easy to understand.
- 11.3 Best practice models and stakeholder consultation informs the development of policies and procedures.
- 11.4 Leaders champion and model compliance with policies and procedures.
- 11.5 Staff and volunteers understand and implement policies and procedures.

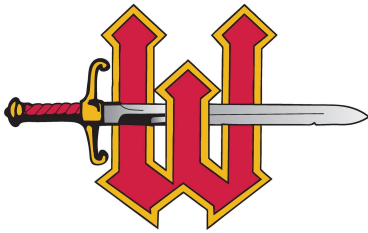
Examples of child safety concerns

Here are some examples of concerns about child safety that could indicate an organisation isn't complying with the Child Safe Standards:

- My child has been harmed or abused by another child at the organisation and when I told the manager they told me it was not their problem.
- A person engaged by an organisation has a proven history of inappropriate behaviour with children, but the organisation engaged them for a role with unsupervised access to children.
- I asked the organisation for their Child Safe policy and code of conduct and they said they did not know what I was talking about.
- An organisation has started a new service for children and young people however they have not thought about whether there are any risks of child abuse in the program and what strategies are required to reduce these risks.
- Children in an organisation are told to be quiet, obey the adults and have no way to speak up if they are worried.
- An allegation of grooming has been made about a volunteer, but the organisation has decided not to report it or investigate because the volunteer does such good work and has a good reputation.

Note that this may also be reportable conduct under the Reportable Conduct Scheme

- People in the organisation make racist jokes in front of the children, and make fun of one of the children's culture and language. When I tried to make a complaint, they told me that it was just a bit of fun and children from different cultures need to try to fit in. Note that this may also be reportable conduct under the Reportable Conduct Scheme



Raising concerns with the organisation

As part of the Child Safe Standards, organisations that work with children are required to have processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse. Organisations also have other obligations such as having a commitment to child safety and a code of conduct. Raising your child safety concerns by speaking with the organisation may be an appropriate starting point. The organisation may have a child safety officer, or another people who have the role of looking after child safety systems and being the contact point if there is an allegation of child abuse or inappropriate behaviour with children. You could also approach the head of the organisation who has the legal responsibility to ensure the organisation is complying with the Child safe Standards.

Organisations should make their policies and processes for reporting allegations of abuse available to staff and volunteers, parents and carers, children and young people and members of the community. If you don't believe an organisation has been responsive to your child safety concerns, this could be a sign they are not complying with the Child Safe Standards.

Report a concern about child safety to the Commission or to other regulators

If you are concerned that an organisation may not be complying with the Child Safe Standards, you can tell the Commission:

You can contact the Commission with questions or queries:

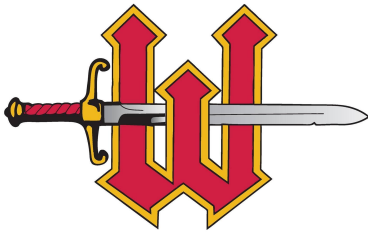
Telephone: 1300 782 978 or (03) 8601 5281

Email: contact@ccyp.vic.gov.au

Visit 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

Some organisations may be regulated for the Child Safe Standards by another agency as well as the Commission. You can find out more about the Commission's co-regulators for Child Safe Standards (also known as relevant authorities) on our pages Report a concern or allegation also Enforcing the Standards. If you are unsure about how to report your concerns, or who to report to, you are welcome to contact the Commission.



Child Safe Sport

Our club is committed to child safety and we...

- ✓ Have zero tolerance for child abuse
- ✓ Have systems in place to protect children
- ✓ Support and respect children with a disability and children from diverse cultures



VICSPORT



This resource is supported by the Victorian Government

