

The Child Safe Standards



STANDARD 1

Child safety is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture



STANDARD 3

Families and communities are informed and involved



STANDARD 4

Equity is upheld and diverse needs are taken into account

STANDARD 2

Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously



STANDARD 6

Processes to respond to complaints of child abuse are child focused

STANDARD 5

People working with children are suitable and supported



STANDARD 7

Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training



STANDARD 8

Physical and online environments minimise the opportunity for abuse to occur



STANDARD 9

Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is continuously reviewed and improved



STANDARD 10

Policies and procedures document how the organisation is child safe



Office of the
Children's Guardian

For more information on the Child Safe Standards or to arrange an information session please visit ocg.nsw.gov.au, email childsafe@ocg.nsw.gov.au or phone 02 9286 7225

The Child Safe Standards recommended by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse provide a framework so organisations can create cultures and adopt strategies to keep children safe from harm.

They:

- help drive cultural change in organisations
- are principle-based and outcome-focused
- are flexible enough that they can be adapted by organisations of varying sizes and characteristics
- avoid placing undue burden on organisations
- help organisations address multiple risks
- balance caution and caring
- are a benchmark against which organisations can assess their child safe capability and set performance targets
- are of equal importance and are interrelated



Standard 1



Child safety is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture

- The organisation publicly commits to child safety and leaders champion a child safe culture
- Child safety is a shared responsibility at all levels of the organisation
- Risk management strategies focus on preventing, identifying and mitigating risks to children
- Staff and volunteers comply with a code of conduct that sets clear behavioural standards towards children
- Staff and volunteers understand their obligations on information sharing and record keeping

Standard 2



Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously

- Children are able to express their views and are provided opportunities to participate in decisions that affect their lives
- The importance of friendships is recognised and support from peers is encouraged, helping children feel safe and be less isolated
- Children can access abuse prevention programs and information
- Staff and volunteers are attuned to signs of harm and facilitate child-friendly ways for children to communicate and raise their concerns



Standard 3

Families and communities are informed and involved

- Families have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of their child and participate in decisions affecting their child
- The organisation engages in open, two-way communication with families and communities about its child safety approach and relevant information is accessible
- Families and communities have a say in the organisation's policies and practices
- Families and communities are informed about the organisation's operations and governance



Standard 4

Equity is upheld and diverse needs are taken into account

- The organisation actively anticipates children's diverse circumstances and responds effectively to those with additional vulnerabilities
- All children have access to information, support and complaints processes
- The organisation pays particular attention to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with disability, and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds



Standard 5

People working with children are suitable and supported

- Recruitment, including advertising and screening, emphasises child safety
- Relevant staff and volunteers have Working With Children Checks
- All staff and volunteers receive an appropriate induction and are aware of their child safety responsibilities, including reporting obligations
- Supervision and people management have a child safety focus



Standard 6

Processes to respond to complaints of child sexual abuse are child focused

- The organisation has a child-focused complaint-handling system that is understood by children, staff, volunteers and families
- The organisation has an effective complaint-handling policy and procedure which clearly outline roles and responsibilities, approaches to dealing with different types of complaints and obligations to act and report
- Complaints are taken seriously, responded to promptly and thoroughly, and reporting, privacy and employment law obligations are met



Standard 7



Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training

- Relevant staff and volunteers receive training on the nature and indicators of child maltreatment, particularly organisational child abuse
- Staff and volunteers receive training on the organisation's child safe practices and child protection
- Relevant staff and volunteers are supported to develop practical skills in protecting children and responding to disclosures

Standard 8



Physical and online environments minimise the opportunity for abuse to occur

- Risks in the online and physical environments are identified and mitigated without compromising a child's right to privacy and healthy development
- The online environment is used in accordance with the organisation's code of conduct and relevant policies



Standard 9



Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is continuously reviewed and improved

- The organisation regularly reviews and improves child safe practices
- The organisation analyses complaints to identify causes and systemic failures to inform continuous improvement



Standard 10



Policies and procedures document how the organisation is child safe

- Policies and procedures address all Child Safe Standards
- Policies and procedures are accessible and easy to understand
- Best practice models and stakeholder consultation inform the development of policies and procedures
- Leaders champion and model compliance with policies and procedures
- Staff understand and implement the policies and procedures