

Child Safe Standards

WHAT DOES A CHILD SAFE ORGANISATION LOOK LIKE?

From 1 January 2017, the Child Safe Standards (the Standards) will apply to all sporting organisations that operate and provide sporting services to children within Victoria.

By meeting the Standards, organisations that are Child Safe will display most of the following characteristics:

Standard 1:

Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements

- The organisation has made public their commitment to child safety
- All board members, staff and volunteers are aware of the organisation's commitment to child safety and their duty of care requirements
- Child safety is a core part of public and internal messaging
- Policies and practices prioritise child safety and promote shared responsibility, not just at a leadership level, by outlining all staff and volunteer responsibilities
- There are clear and transparent arrangements for leadership to be made aware of child safety issues
- A culture exists where staff, volunteers, children and families feel comfortable and supported when talking about any child safety concerns
- A culture exists of supporting cultural safety for Aboriginal children, and the organisations working in partnership with Aboriginal peoples and Aboriginal community controlled organisations to improve safety for Aboriginal children
- A culture exists of supporting cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- A culture exists of supporting safety for children with a disability

Standard 2:

A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety

- The organisation has a child safe policy or statement of commitment
- All staff, volunteers and members can easily access and understand the organisation's commitment to child safety
- The Child Safe Policy or Statement of Commitment to Child Safety promotes the:
 - Cultural safety of Aboriginal children
 - Cultural safety of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
 - Safety of children with a disability

Standard 3:

A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children

- The organisation Code of Conduct is well known and clearly communicated throughout the organisation and members
- Appropriate behaviour with children is clearly defined, accessible and understood by staff, volunteers, families and children through the Code of Conduct
- The organisations complaint process is clearly understood and accessible to all members
- The steps staff, volunteers and parents should take if they identify child safety risks are clearly outlined

Standard 4:

Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel

- The organisation as a whole accepts it is everyone's role to protect children involved in their sport
- The organisation provides training (or access to training) for its staff, volunteers and members on child abuse recognition and prevention
- The organisation has human resource policies in place addressing:
 - Recruitment processes, including skills and qualifications required
 - Background checks and screening is undertaken for staff and volunteers
- The organisation utilises a number of methods to screen individuals such as:
 - Interviews
 - Police record checks (including identity checks)
 - Reference checks
 - Working with Children Checks

Standard 5:

Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse

- There is a clear processes for reporting and acting on disclosures or concerns about child safety
- All legal requirements for reporting suspected child abuse are complied with
- All policies and procedures are readily accessible to staff and volunteers
- Staff and volunteers are aware of actions they should take in the event of an incident or allegation, including the type of contact that should be reported, who is responsible for reporting and to whom the report should be made
- Culturally safe practices are applied if an Aboriginal child is involved in an allegation of abuse
- If an allegation of abuse involves a child from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse background, the required steps are taken to ensure the child and child's family are supported to understand the situation, including the use of an interpreter if required
- Where an allegation of abuse involves a child with a disability, steps are taken to ensure the child and their family understand the situation and are supported

Standard 6:

Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse

- The organisation has a Risk Management Plan that is appropriate for its size and complexity
- Steps are put in place to reduce risks where possible
- Risk management approaches are regularly reflected on and improved
- Risks specific to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and the safety of children with a disability considered within this plan
- Policies are in place to minimise risk involved in one-to-one situations with children

Standard 7:

Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children.

- Children are informed of their rights and how to raise concerns in an age appropriate way
- Children understand how to report an allegation of abuse or concern for their safety to the organisation, a trusted adult and external bodies (for example, the police)
- Reporting procedures for when a child feels unsafe are accessible for all children
- Children feel safe, empowered and taken seriously if they raise concerns
- All adults involved in the organisation, especially those who readily interact with children do so in an age appropriate and respectful way

Further Information

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This document was developed utilising and adapting content from:

Commission for Children and Young People (2015), Tip Sheet: What to look for in a child safe organisation

State Government of Victoria, Department of Health & Human Services (2015) An overview of the Victorian child safe standards