

# Child safety is everyone's responsibility

## Creating a child safe culture



Creating a child safe culture starts at the top. Leaders play a critical role in making sure the safety of children and young people is **a priority for everyone** through their personal actions and by modelling behaviours that demonstrate a commitment to child safety.

A child safe culture is where:

- all children and young people feel **welcome, happy and safe**
- children and young people are **encouraged** and enabled to **participate and speak up** about concerns and decisions that affect them
- child safety is discussed openly and often
- the mistreatment of children and young people in any way is **not tolerated** and any concern, complaint or disclosure of abuse is responded to **quickly and appropriately**.

Embedding child safety means making sure the wellbeing and best interests of children and young people are considered in everything an organisation does.

If you think a child is  
at immediate risk of  
harm dial

**000**

For non-urgent  
inquiries dial

**131 444**

## Child safety is everyone's responsibility

# Children have rights

Children and young people have the same rights as adults and some that are specific to them including a right to:

- live **safely and happily** and grow up healthy
- be aware of, and understand, information that affects them
- **participate and be heard.**

Involving children and young people in decisions that affect them is important. It protects their rights to be happy, safe and informed and allows their voices to be heard.

A child safe organisation will:

- put child safety and wellbeing at the **centre of all work**
- educate children, young people and staff on children's rights
- create environments where children and young people are helped, and feel safe and encouraged, to raise concerns
- **value the involvement of children and young people** in ways that are accessible and respectful.



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# Everyone's involved



Family and community members often know what is best for their children and young people. Making sure they are **well-informed and involved** is the most effective way to ensure that the best interests of children and young people are promoted.

Involving family and community can:

- help an organisation to be **open and transparent**
- make sure that everyone is aware of organisational policies and procedures
- create environments where it is **difficult for child abuse to occur**.

It is important that organisations engage with families and the community to improve child safety.

They should discuss incidents involving children and young people so they can be informed and **act to protect** them if necessary.

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# All types of safety

Every child and young person deserves the opportunity to participate, no matter their background and how, or where, they live. **Safety doesn't just mean physical safety** but can include safety with respect to sexuality, gender, culture, religion and disability. Keeping children and young people safe means **addressing all aspects** of their safety.

Recognising the diversity of children and young people is important and can help an organisation find the best way to meet their needs.

Children and young people with diverse needs can face extra barriers to their safety and wellbeing including:

discrimination and exclusion

- **fear and distrust** of authority
- lack of **cultural safety**
- difficulty accessing information.

A child safe organisation will:

- **champion attitudes and behaviours** that celebrate diversity
- provide regular training and resources to staff, children, young people and their families to **recognise and understand diversity**
- ensure information is **accessible and inclusive**, regularly reviewed and improved.

Contact your local government for more information on child safe resources.



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# Right person for the job

Organisations are responsible for performing thorough recruitment and screening and **employing the right person for the job**.

They also need to make sure their employees and volunteers have the **training, information and support** they need to keep children and young people safe.

Everyone who works with children in WA needs:

- a Working with Children Check (if applicable)
- to understand their role in keeping children safe
- to know where to go if they need more information.

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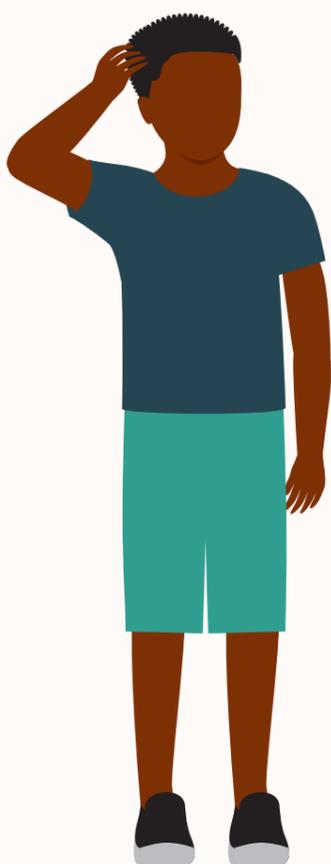
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# Child friendly complaints

Children and young people should be **supported and encouraged** to give feedback or make complaints about their experiences. They have the **right to feel safe and respected** and to speak up if they are unhappy with the way they are being treated.

Child safe organisations make sure that:

- children and young people are **supported, taken seriously, and know about their right to speak up**
- complaints systems are visible, accessible, and developed with input from children, young people, their families and the community
- staff are trained to know how to **manage and respond** to complaints when they receive them
- complaints are followed up and **appropriate action is taken.**



A child's willingness or ability to make a complaint can be influenced by:

- their cultural, religious and socio-economic background
- their **gender and sexual identity**
- whether they **live with disability**
- if they have **experience of trauma**
- whether they have someone they trust to talk to.

Organisations should take time to understand the barriers that children and young people can face in raising concerns or making a complaint.

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# Child safe training



Organisations are responsible for making sure that staff and volunteers have the **support and knowledge** they need to promote child safety including how to **identify and respond to abuse**.

All staff and volunteers need to be trained in, and aware of, their organisation's child safety policies and procedures. A child safe organisation has the responsibility to provide:

- a comprehensive induction
- information on **risks and indicators of child abuse and harm** and how to respond to them appropriately
- ongoing training on child safety and wellbeing
- training and education resources with up-to-date evidence and practice.

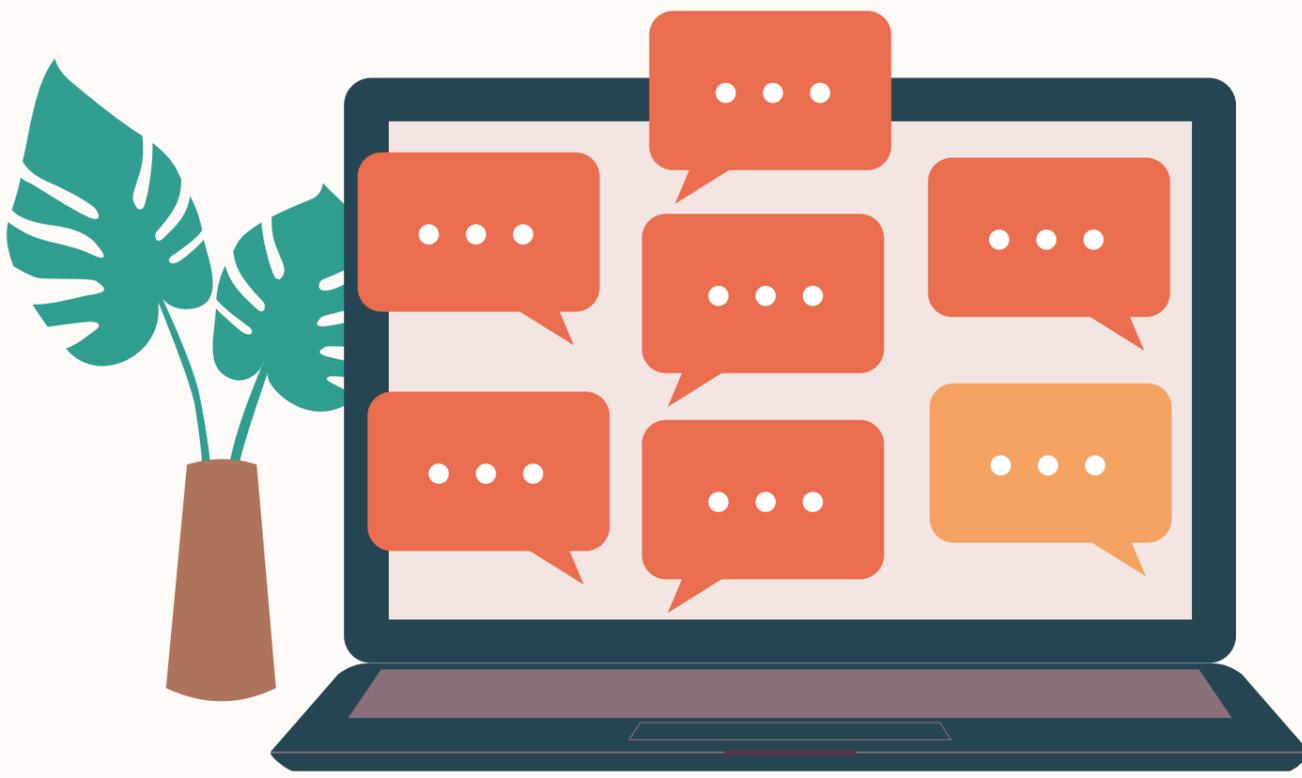
A child safe culture needs staff and volunteers to have the knowledge and resources to support children and young people to be **happy and safe**.

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# Safe online and offline



Physical and online environments provide both **opportunities and risks** to children's safety and wellbeing. Online environments can be particularly unsafe for children and young people. A child safe organisation is one that:

- **uses tools to protect children online**, including internet filters and Bring Your Own Device policies
- takes **action to prevent online abuse** and exposure to inappropriate material
- responds to concerns **quickly and appropriately**.

Organisations need to find a balance between managing risk and a child's right to privacy and healthy development. Setting and communicating expectations with children and young people **early and openly** can reduce the likelihood of harm.

Contact your local government for more information on resources to create safe environments.

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