



Commissioner for Children and Young People
Western Australia



Child Safe Organisations WA: In brief

April 2016



The Commissioner for Children and Young People WA has created a range of resources to support organisations to develop child safe strategies including:

- *Child Safe Organisations WA: Guidelines*
- *Child Safe Organisations WA: Self-assessment and review tool*
- *Child Safe Organisations WA: Seminars*

All resources are available at www.ccyp.wa.gov.au

Contact us

Commissioner for Children and Young People WA

Ground Floor, 1 Alvan Street, Subiaco WA 6008

Telephone: (08) 6213 2297

Facsimile: (08) 6213 2220

Freecall: 1800 072 444

Email: info@ccyp.wa.gov.au

Web: www.ccyp.wa.gov.au



What is a child safe organisation?

A child safe and friendly organisation values children and understands safety doesn't just happen. A commitment to protecting children is embedded in the organisation's culture and is understood and accepted by everyone.

The organisation proactively implements a range of strategies across **nine domains** to enhance the overall experiences of children they engage with, balancing the focus on child safety with continued positive interactions and environments that contribute to healthy development.

Nine domains of child safe organisations





What can organisations do?

Creating and maintaining a safe and friendly organisation is the responsibility of everyone – board members, managers, administrative staff, frontline staff and volunteers. It is dynamic and requires ongoing learning and review.

Organisations can implement child safe strategies to:

- reduce the likelihood of harm occurring
- increase the likelihood of any harm being discovered
- respond appropriately to any disclosures, allegations or suspicions of harm.¹

Organisations can be proactive by:

- determining how to begin and designating who will lead
- assessing the whole organisation, identifying areas of strength and what can be done better
- taking action and improving child safe strategies
- monitoring and reviewing progress over time.

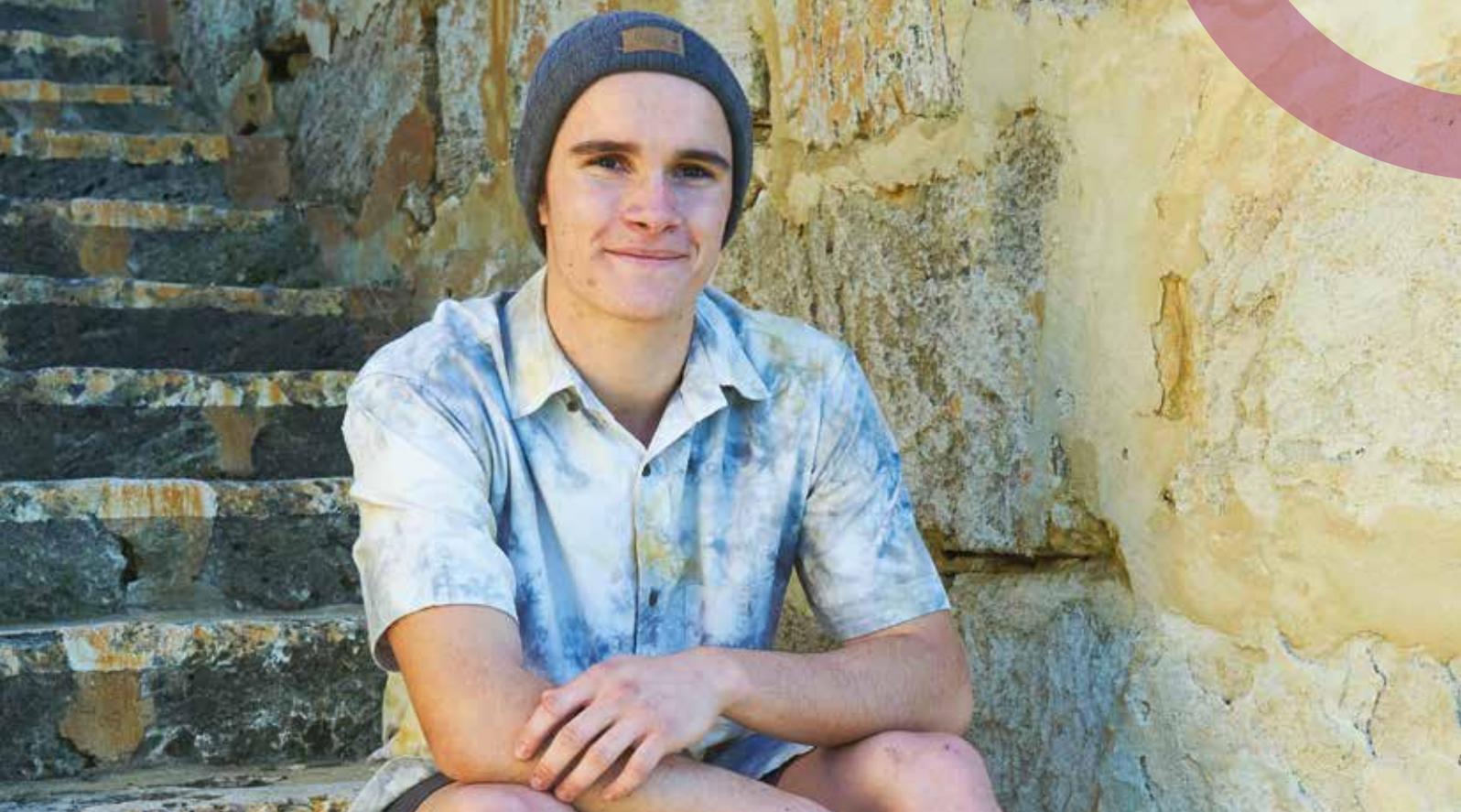


Continuous improvement cycle

The following continuous improvement cycle is recommended for organisations in their work to establish and maintain the highest quality child safe and friendly environments.



1. Australian Children's Commissioners and Guardians 2013, *Principles for Child Safety in Organisations*, <<http://www.ccp.wa.gov.au>>, p.2.



Child safe strategies

Implementation of the nine domains will increase the ability of organisations to be safe and friendly for all children and young people.

1. Leadership, governance and culture

Leaders are responsible for prioritising safety and ensuring everyone across the organisation understands and enacts child safe principles. Everyone in an organisation feels confident to raise any concerns or worries and knows how they can do this.

2. Empowering children to participate

Children and young people have opportunities to provide feedback and actively participate in decision making. When children and young people feel actively involved and supported within an organisation they are more likely to speak up about any concerns.

3. Involving family and community

Organisations value the diversity of family cultures, backgrounds and structures. Inclusive practice is essential for children and young people and the significant adults in their lives to feel welcome, respected and safe.

4. Child safe and friendly policies

Child safe and friendly policies outline a commitment to safety and how things should happen in an organisation – attitudes, behaviours, responsibilities and procedures. Policies must be understood, implemented and actioned every day to prevent harm.

5. Managing staff and volunteers

Identifying suitable staff and volunteers to work with children and young people requires a transparent and robust recruitment and selection process. Staff and volunteers are further supported by induction, training, ongoing support and supervision.

6. Safe environments – physical and online

Buildings, homes, off-site locations and online spaces used by organisations can be designed or adjusted to increase child safety whilst also supporting healthy development and positive interactions. Natural surveillance, for example, decreases the opportunity and likelihood of harmful behaviour.

7. Child friendly complaint process and reporting

Children and young people of all ages and abilities need to feel empowered and supported to raise any concerns they have, and feel confident that staff and volunteers will do something about their concerns. Oversight of informal and formal concerns from all stakeholders includes analysis of issues and actions to address these.

8. Education and development

Staff and volunteers require ongoing professional development or training to ensure they have the knowledge and information needed to understand their responsibilities and perform all aspects of their roles effectively. A lack of understanding and knowledge of child abuse contributes to a culture of complacency and even denial.

9. Continuous improvement

An ongoing cycle of assessment, action and reflection assists organisations to be vigilant as they regularly review, update and refine policies and practices to assess their effectiveness and strive for excellence. Involving children and young people and their families in reviews will build confidence of all involved in the organisation in the child safety approach.





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Not all children and young people in this publication took part in this project. They are all Western Australian children and young people who have provided permission for the Commissioner to use the images.