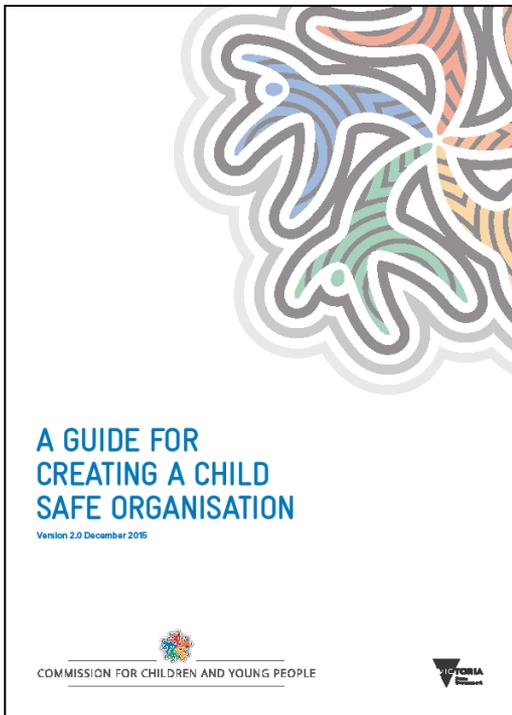




COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE



Creating a child safe organisation

Understanding the safety of young people in international education settings

10 April 2017

ISANA Professional Development Session





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About the Commission

Liana Buchanan - Principal
Commissioner of Children and Young
People

Andrew Jackomos - Commissioner for
Aboriginal Children and Young People

- Independent statutory body
- Advocacy
- Oversight of government services for vulnerable children and young people
- Regulator of Child Safe Standards and Reportable Conduct Scheme

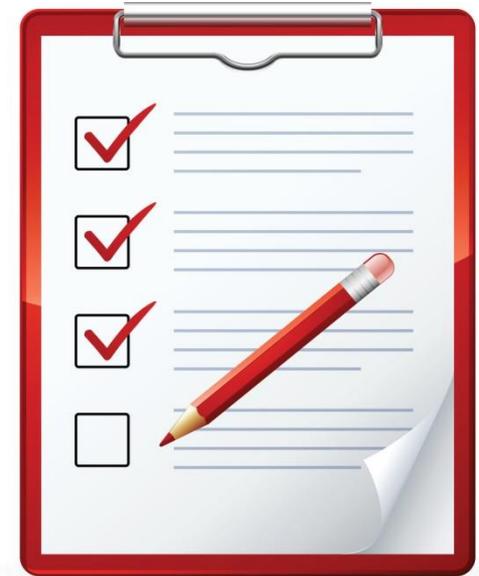




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In this workshop we will cover...

- the origins of Child Safe Standards and why we need them
- what the Child Safe Standards cover
- how to apply the standards in your workplace
- what you can do to help promote child safety in your workplace



We will use discussion based activities to share ideas and reflect on learnings



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The origins of the standards and why we need them

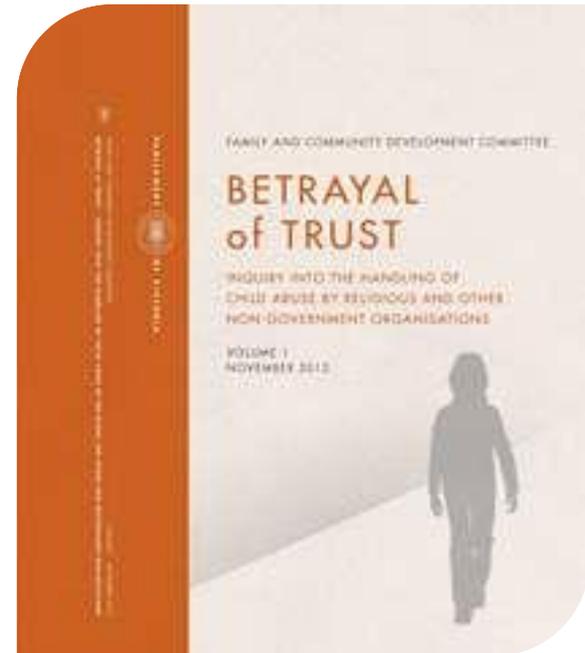
The problems

- Poor practices
- Unhealthy culture
- Failure to respond



The lifelong consequences

- Relationships
- Employment
- Mental health
- Substance abuse



Royal Commission
into Institutional Responses
to Child Sexual Abuse



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From a young person's perspective, what do you think they might see, hear and feel in a place that is safe for young people?



Overarching principles

- The cultural safety of Aboriginal children and young people
- The cultural safety of children and young people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- The safety of children and young people with a disability

Cultural safety for Aboriginal children

By Sheel, Child Safe Organisations

Ensuring our children and young people supported to their communities is essential to their wellbeing and their sense of belonging.

It is the right of every Aboriginal child to be respected in their culture. The right to culture which includes the inherent right to learn, connect to, participate in and identify with it and respects upon the enjoyment of every other human right. It is about connections, relationships and experiences and it is the primary source of resilience for Aboriginal children. Section 19 of the Charter of Human Rights states that Aboriginal people hold distinct rights and must not be denied the right to enjoy their identity and culture to maintain their lands and to maintain their distinctive spiritual, material and economic relationship with the land and waters with which they have connection under traditional laws and customs.

For Aboriginal people, culture is about family networks, stories and traditions, it is about languages, languages, dance, ceremony and heritage. Culture is about spiritual connection to our lands and waters, it is the way we pass on stories and knowledge to our babies and children, it is how we greet each other and how we connect, it is about all the parts that hold us together. (Ludman, 2010)

What is cultural safety?

Cultural safety is "an environment that is safe for people where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their identity, of who they are and what they need. It is about shared respect, shared meaning, shared knowledge and experience, of learning, being and working together with dignity and truly listening" (O'Connell, S. 2005).

For Aboriginal people, 'cultural safety and security requires the creation of:

- Environments of cultural inclusion within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- Cultural competency for those who engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities" (CSCIC Social Justice Report 2015)

Every Aboriginal person, every Aboriginal child, needs to feel that their sense of self and their identity is valued in some way by the people and environments that surround them." (VACCA 2016)

Childhood competencies to be incorporated by all organisations and practitioners that take care for each other, including the responsibility to incorporate the needs of all children and young people.

Organisations can demonstrate that they value diversity by assessing, measuring and addressing the differences between and within cultures. Such initiatives recognise and acknowledge differences between cultures, but does not value one over another.



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Safety of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

By Sheel, Child Safe Organisations

Victoria is a culturally diverse community made up of many different backgrounds, cultures, languages and religious groups.

In Victoria, mandatory child safe standards have been introduced to help protect children from abuse in organisations, in complying with the standards, organisations must promote the cultural safety of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Take other aspects of child safety, creating and maintaining an organisation in which the cultural safety of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds is first and foremost effort.

Steps to increase cultural safety include sharing knowledge, using common sense, developing understanding that leads to cultural sensitivity and family, cultural competence. The ongoing and dynamic process leads to sustainable approaches and values within an organisation that promotes cultural safety for children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and benefits of children, families, staff and managers.

Childhood competencies to be incorporated by all organisations and practitioners that take care for each other, including the responsibility to incorporate the needs of all children and young people.

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Safety of children with a disability

By Sheel, Child Safe Organisations

All children are vulnerable but some children need special care and protection to ensure they are safe - children with a disability have an increased risk of being abused.

It is vital to determine against children with a disability and like all children, children with a disability have the right to participate in decision-making that affects them.

In Victoria, mandatory child safe standards have been introduced to help protect children from abuse in organisations, in complying with the standards, organisations must ensure the safety of children with a disability. It is your responsibility to uphold the age and human rights of children with a disability to ensure they are safe when in your care.

Children with a disability are more vulnerable to harm and abuse such as harassment, bullying, humiliation, physical and sexual abuse. This can be due to:

- social isolation
- limited provision of developmentally appropriate social and relationship information
- a lack of expectation held about their capacity to identify and report concerns
- increased pathways to abuse, coercion and compliance
- communication difficulties
- personal care needs requiring the involvement of different people and various levels of supervision
- signs of abuse being viewed as being related to the child's disability

Each child is different and will experience their disability and the world differently - it is important not to stereotype or make assumptions, it can be hard for a child with a disability to make themselves heard or understood.

What you can do to help keep children with a disability safe in your organisation:

- Ensure your organisation has child safe culture in which abuse and harm is not tolerated and always welcomed.
- Pre-empt unsafe situations via your risk assessment processes
- Ensure you have sound recruitment and screening processes in place for staff and volunteers.
- Ensure your code of conduct for staff and volunteers clearly outlines boundaries about staff and volunteer interaction with children with a disability, including personal care assistance.
- Have a robust complaint process, encourage feedback and be responsive if problems arise.
- Engage children with a disability by wanting them to build their self-esteem and confidence.

A child's disability does not reduce their need for cultural respect and competence



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What the Child Safe Standards cover

1. Strategies to embed an organisational **culture of child safety**, including through effective leadership arrangements
2. A **child safe policy** or statement of commitment to child safety
3. A **code of conduct** that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children
4. Screening, supervision, training and other **human resources practices** that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel
5. Processes for **responding to and reporting** suspected child abuse
6. Strategies to **identify and reduce or remove risks** of child abuse
7. Strategies to promote the **participation and empowerment of children.**

Risk based approach that is flexible



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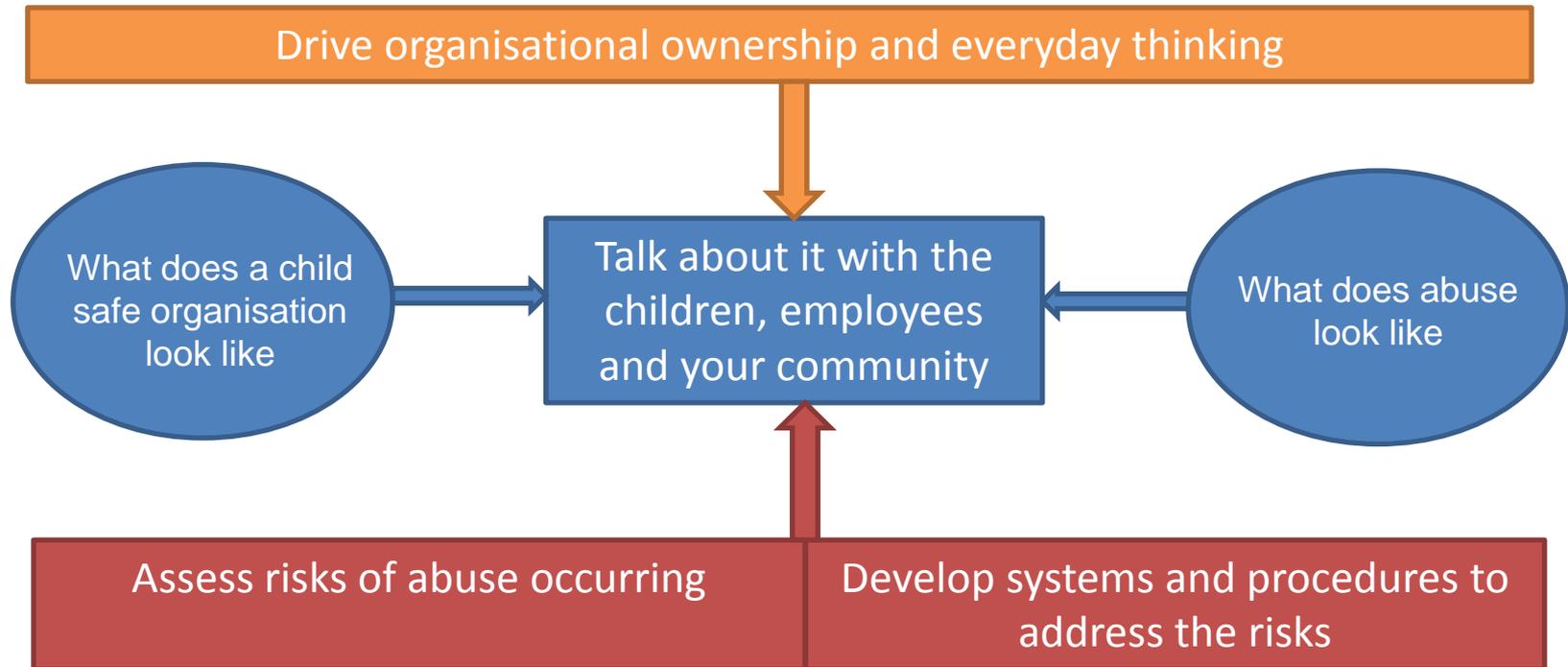


Thinking about your work place and the services you provide, what are some of the things you do that make it safe for young people?



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How to approach the standards in your workplace





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Take a risk management approach to child safety

- Identify the risks
- Assess and evaluate the risks
- Manage and treat the risks
- Monitor, review and continually improve your approach.





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Be proactive and preventative (Standard 6)

- Start conversations about child safety
- Have a look around
- Have a look at existing policies and processes
- Look at previous incidents and how these were handled
- Understand social and cultural factors.





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Involve children and young people in what you do (Standard 7)



- Support young people to understand their rights and to raise concerns.
 - Actively promote and encourage young people's participation in planning and decision making.
 - Value and respect young people's opinions.
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- Seek young people's views about what makes them feel safe and unsafe, including cultural safety.
 - Establish an environment of trust and inclusion that enables young people to ask questions and speak up if they are worried or feeling unsafe.



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Define acceptable and unacceptable behaviours (Standard 3)



- Provide clear written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour.
 - Detail acceptable and unacceptable behaviours relating to the specific context of your organisation.
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- Educate your organisational community about what's okay and not okay.
 - Act on concerns or allegations of non-adherence to your Code of Conduct.



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Make a firm commitment to child safety (Standard 2)



- Affirm your organisation's commitment to child safety in a child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety.
 - Make your commitment to child safety easy to understand and visible.
 - Communicate broadly to staff, young people and your organisational community.
-
- Require all staff to uphold this approach.



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Screen, supervise and support your workforce (Standard 4)

- Communicate your commitment to child safety in job advertisements.
- Have clear duty statements.
- Have robust pre-employment background screening, including thorough referee checks.
- Provide high quality supervision and professional development.

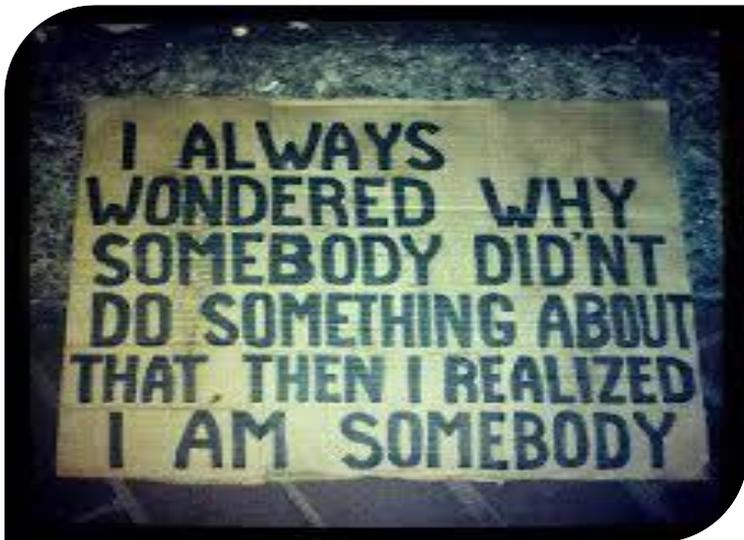




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Support people in your organisational community to take action (Standard 5)

- Have a clear and easy to understand procedure for reporting concerns and allegations.
- Encourage young people to report if they feel unsafe or concerned.



- Make people within your organisation aware of their duty of care and legal responsibilities, and what to do to respond appropriately.
- Appropriately act upon concerns and complaints.
- Keep accurate records and store them securely.



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Lead by example (Standard 1)

- Make child safety a top priority in your organisation's operations.
- Take a zero tolerance approach to child abuse.

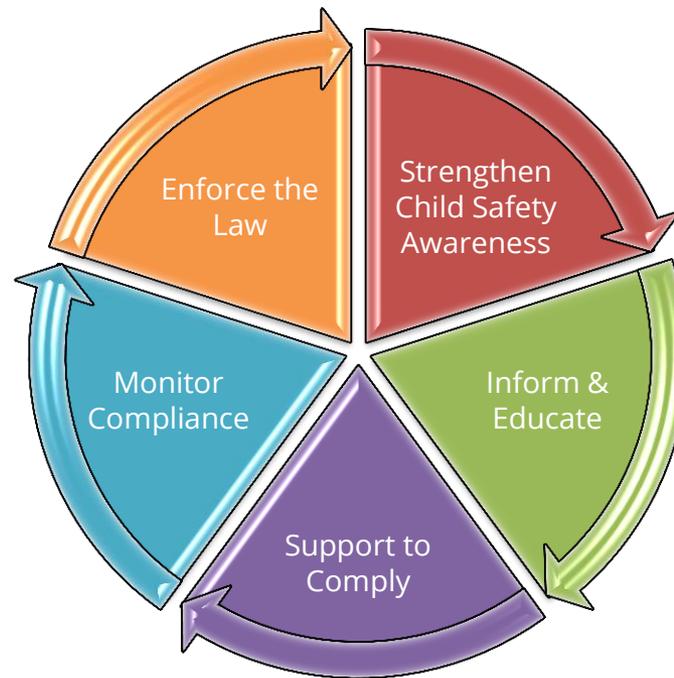


- Lead from the top down to embed a culture that makes child safety paramount.
- Apply strong governance arrangements, documenting how duty of care responsibilities to children will be met.
- Respect, embrace and support the diversity of young people.



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What does compliance look like?





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Where can we get further assistance?

Resources and tools available

 ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards

 (03) 8601 5281

 childsafestandards@ccyp.vic.gov.au

Register on our website for updates



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Child Safe Standards

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