



Involved and Informed Families and Communities

Child Safe Standard 3



Introduction

Children and young people feel safer when the people who care for them are welcomed, included, and informed. Families and communities play a vital role in building and maintaining child safe environments, and their involvement helps create strong, trusted partnerships that support children and young people to thrive.

Families as partners in safety

When services take the time to build respectful, reciprocal relationships with families, it strengthens the protective environment around children and young people. Engaging families also helps ensure practices are relevant, inclusive, and aligned with the needs and experiences of the children and young people who use the service.

Whether you work directly with children and young people, or in a back-of-house support role, the way you communicate with families, carers, kin, and community members can help create a culture of openness and shared responsibility for safety and wellbeing.

Recognising the value of community

Families and carers have deep knowledge of their children's strengths, needs, communication styles, and vulnerabilities. When families and carers are informed and involved, they are better able to recognise when something is not right, raise concerns, and act early. This standard also acknowledges the value of community, whether that is extended family, cultural groups, faith communities, or neighbourhood networks. Strong relationships with community can help children and young people feel safe, connected, and supported.

Children and young people are more likely to feel confident and secure in environments where the adults around them are working together to promote their rights, safety, and wellbeing. When families and carers see that your service is transparent, respectful, and responsive, they are more likely to trust your organisation and actively contribute to your child safe culture.

Embedding this Standard means recognising and valuing the strengths, knowledge, and perspectives of all families and communities, including those with lived experience of colonisation, disability, neurodivergence, migration, and marginalisation.

It includes demonstrating your commitment by taking active steps to engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities in culturally safe and meaningful ways. This may involve seeking guidance from local Elders or community leaders and being open to learning how to create a service that reflects and respects children and young people's culture, language, and identity.

When organisations include families and communities as genuine partners, it builds trust, increases accountability, and strengthens the safety and support systems around children and young people. No matter your role, your efforts to keep families and communities informed and involved contribute to a safer, more inclusive environment for everyone.

Being child safe isn't about following a single set of prescriptive actions. Every organisation is different, and staff and volunteers have varied roles and responsibilities. It is therefore important for you to consider actions you can take within *your* organisation that contribute to supporting *safe and meaningful engagement with families and communities*.



What staff and volunteers can do

- Provide families and carers with clear, accessible information about your organisation's child safe policies, including what to expect if they raise a concern.
- Display your code of conduct and complaints process in shared spaces and offer translated or visual versions where appropriate.
- Invite families and carers to give feedback on how your service communicates with them and act on their suggestions where possible.
- Listen respectfully when families and carers share concerns, ideas, or feedback, take these seriously, and act on them.
- Welcome families and carers into your service in ways that reflect their diverse cultures, backgrounds, and identities.
- Connect with community groups, local leaders, or Elders to strengthen trust and culturally safe practices.