

Applying Standard 1 to support LGBTIQ+ children and young people

Embedding child safety and wellbeing in organisational leadership, governance, and culture



Leaders set clear expectations, champion a child-safe culture, and ensure that policies, procedures, and everyday practices prioritise the safety and wellbeing of LGBTIQ+ children and young people.

How to use this factsheet


This factsheet can be used alongside Focus Area 1 of the Child Safe Standards Self-Assessment Tool, which supports organisations to reflect on how leadership, governance, culture, and the organisation's environment contribute to child rights, safety, and wellbeing. This factsheet provides additional context for how organisations can apply Standard 1 in ways that recognise and support the safety of LGBTIQ+ children and young people.

Applying Standard 1 for inclusive organisations

Leadership and organisational culture play an important role in creating environments where LGBTIQ+ children and young people feel safe, respected, and included.

Some ways that organisations can embed child rights, safety, and wellbeing in their approach to leadership, governance, and culture include:

- Leaders clearly communicating that discrimination based on gender identity, sexuality, or sex characteristics is not acceptable within the organisation
- Having governance structures that include responsibility for monitoring child safety and inclusion, for example through board oversight, reporting processes, or inclusion commitments in strategic plans

- 
- Ensuring that organisational policies explicitly recognise the importance of safety and inclusion for LGBTIQ+ children and young people, as well as clear expectations for staff and volunteers at all levels
 - Supporting staff and volunteers to challenge discriminatory behaviour and promote respectful and inclusive practice. Leadership also influences how staff respond when discrimination or exclusion occurs
 - Providing visible signals that LGBTIQ+ children and young people are welcome and supported. This may include inclusive language in organisational materials, visible inclusion symbols, or information on websites and policies that communicate support for diverse identities. Visible signals of inclusion can help children and young people decide whether a service or organisation feels safe.

“Small symbols of pride help... could just be a small flag on the website or door”

(Young person, AGA consultation, 2026)

Why this matters

For LGBTIQ+ children and young people, leadership commitment to inclusion can be a strong indicator of whether an organisation feels safe. When leaders clearly communicate expectations about respect, non-discrimination, and inclusion, it signals that identity-based harm will not be ignored or tolerated.

For transgender, gender diverse, and intersex children and young people, leadership commitment can also influence how organisations address issues such as:

- Gendered participation in activities
- Privacy and confidentiality
- Recognition of names, pronouns and identity.

Leadership that visibly supports inclusion helps ensure LGBTIQ+ children and young people feel like they belong and will be taken seriously if they raise concerns.

“... a welcoming community that you can just relax in”

(Young person, AGA consultation, 2026)



Impact on LGBTIQ+ children and young people

If leadership and organisational culture do not clearly support inclusion and child safety, LGBTIQ+ children and young people may feel:

- Invisible or excluded
- Unsure whether adults will support them
- Concerned discrimination will be ignored or tolerated
- Reluctant to participate or seek support.

Tangible actions for organisations

Organisations can strengthen leadership and governance by:

- **Communicating a clear commitment to child safety and LGBTIQ+ inclusion.** This may include public statements in organisational policies, websites, or communications that clearly express the organisation's commitment to safe and inclusive environments.
- **Ensuring governance and strategic planning recognise the safety and inclusion of LGBTIQ+ children and young people.** For example, strategic plans, governance frameworks, or reporting processes may include responsibility for monitoring child safety and inclusion.
- **Developing policies that protect the rights, privacy, and wellbeing of LGBTIQ+ children and young people.** Policies should provide clear and explicit expectations for all staff and volunteers and should be reinforced through regular discussions within teams.
- **Considering how gender inclusion is addressed in organisational programs and activities.** For example, reviewing how gender is considered in activities such as sport, accommodation, uniforms, or gender-segregated programs.
- **Supporting leaders and managers to model inclusive language and respectful behaviour in everyday interactions.** Examples may include introducing themselves with their name and pronouns, including pronouns in email signatures, and/or using inclusive language when referring to children and young people.
- **Establishing ways for children and young people and staff to provide feedback about organisational culture and safety.** There should also be processes to inform children, young people, and staff about how their feedback has influenced change.



Organisations may wish to consider:

- What signals do our leaders send about LGBTIQ+ inclusion and safety?
- How do our governance structures actively monitor child safety and inclusion?
- How are leadership commitments reflected in policies, decisions, and everyday practice?
- How would a child or young person know from our environment and leadership behaviours that they are safe here?

“Stop/take action against sexist or racist people”

(Young person, AGA consultation, 2026)



Remember:

Upholding the rights, safety, and wellbeing of LGBTIQ+ children and young people is a shared responsibility.

Find out more

Click here to learn more about the **Child Safe Standards**.
For information, education, and training visit **genderrights.org.au**

