

# Practical actions to support LGBTIQ+ children and young people

## Operationalising the Child Safe Standards



### Who is this factsheet for?

This factsheet includes information for organisations to support implementation of the Child Safe Standards (Standards) to better uphold the rights, safety, and wellbeing of LGBTIQ+ children and young people.

### About the Standards

The Standards are a set of ten interrelated principles that focus on changing institutional culture to support children and young people to *feel* safe and *be* safe. The preamble requires organisations to apply the Standards in a manner that is culturally safe and inclusive for all children and young people.

### Applying the Standards for inclusive organisations

Organisations working with children and young people vary in size, structure, setting, and capacity. While implementation may look different across contexts, all organisations share responsibility for implementing the Standards and ensuring that their environments are safe, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of LGBTIQ+ children and young people.

For transgender, gender diverse, and intersex children and young people, safety may be particularly influenced by how organisations manage privacy, gendered activities, identity recognition, and confidentiality.

Children and young people who identify as LGBTIQ+ have highlighted the importance of environments where they feel recognised and understood.

***“ I wish there were more spaces that get me ”***





## Small or volunteer led organisations

Small organisations may have limited resources or formal governance structures, but they can still create strong cultures of safety and inclusion through clear values and consistent everyday practices.



### Three actions to take right now

- Identify a child safety and inclusion contact person who children and young people can approach if they experience bullying, discrimination, or concerns about identity safety.
- Ensure volunteers understand expectations and use respectful language, including using preferred names and pronouns and responding to identity-based bullying or exclusion.
- Display visible signals that LGBTIQ+ children and young people are welcome, such as posters, inclusion statements, and how to raise concerns safely.

## Large organisations

Large organisations often operate across multiple teams, programs, or locations. Ensuring consistent implementation of child safe and inclusive practices across these environments is essential.



### Three actions to take right now

- Review child safety and behaviour policies to ensure they explicitly address identity-based discrimination, including homophobia, transphobia, and discrimination against people with intersex variations.
- Ensure organisational systems (such as enrolment forms, digital platforms, and records) allow children and young people to use their chosen name and pronouns where appropriate while maintaining privacy.
- Establish clear leadership accountability for monitoring the safety and inclusion of LGBTIQ+ children and young people across all sites and programs.



## Schools, sporting clubs, and youth programs

Schools, sporting clubs, and youth programs play an important role in children and young people's daily lives and can strongly influence whether LGBTIQ+ children and young people feel safe and included.

Transgender children and young people who wish to attend single-sex schools or participate in single-sex sporting teams may encounter complex challenges shaped by established gender practices or misconceptions about fairness, safety, and inclusion.

The design and management of physical environments can also influence whether LGBTIQ+ children and young people feel safe. This includes ensuring facilities are inclusive and can support diverse needs, with privacy-respecting options for bathrooms and changing areas.



### Three actions to take right now

- Ensure anti-bullying policies explicitly address identity-based harm, including homophobia, transphobia, and discrimination against people with intersex variations.
- Provide inclusive participation options for gendered activities, such as uniforms, sporting teams, and facilities, so transgender and gender diverse children and young people can participate safely.
- Identify trusted adults or support staff who children and young people can approach if they experience discrimination or need support.

***“Gender neutral bathrooms”***

***“Not require parents to sign off on pronouns and names for schools to respect them ”***



## Faith based or cultural services

Faith-based and culturally specific services often play important roles in supporting children, families, and communities. In these settings, it is important that child safety and wellbeing remain the primary consideration when supporting LGBTIQ+ children and young people.



### Three actions to take right now

- Ensure staff understand that child safety obligations and implementation of the Standards apply regardless of personal beliefs or doctrines.
- Provide guidance on responding respectfully when children and young people disclose their sexual orientation, gender identity, or intersex variation.
- Carefully manage confidentiality, recognising that disclosing a child's or young person's identity to family or community members without consent may place them at risk of harm.

## Sole traders and individual practitioners

Individual practitioners including counsellors, tutors, therapists, youth workers, or coaches hold significant responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of LGBTIQ+ children and young people. They should consider how they can apply the Standards in their own practice and in a manner that is proportionate to their service, while keeping children and young people's rights, safety, and wellbeing at the centre of decision making.



### Three actions to take right now

- Develop and communicate a clear child safety and inclusion statement outlining expectations around respect, confidentiality and identity safety.
- Ensure intake processes allow children and young people to safely share their chosen name, pronouns and identity where relevant.
- Identify referral pathways to LGBTIQ+ affirming services, particularly for transgender, gender diverse and intersex children and young people seeking additional support.



## Out-of-home care and residential settings

Children and young people in out-of-home care often experience heightened vulnerability and may have limited control over their living environments. For LGBTIQ+ children and young people, challenges may include identity recognition, privacy, and placement stability.

These challenges can be particularly complex for transgender children and young people due to interactions between family dynamics, statutory systems, and administrative processes. For example, a child or young person may have a preferred name that differs from official records, or carers may have limited authority to support access to gender-affirming healthcare.



### Three actions to take right now

- Ensure carers and staff understand how to respect a child's or young person's chosen name, pronouns, and gender identity, including when communicating with schools, health providers, and other services.
- Consider privacy and safety when managing bedrooms, bathrooms, clothing, and personal belongings, particularly for transgender or gender diverse children and young people.
- Support children and young people to access LGBTIQ+ affirming services, peer groups, and community connections where possible.

***“If they don't see you for who you are,  
it feels like you don't belong anywhere”***

## Find out more

To learn more about the Standards, visit [ACTChildSafe.act.gov.au](https://actchildsafe.act.gov.au)

For information, education, and training to support LGBTIQ+ children and young people, visit [genderrights.org.au](https://genderrights.org.au)