



# **Leadership, Governance and Culture**

**Child Safe Standard 1**



## Introduction

Standard 1 is about creating an organisational culture where upholding the rights, safety, and wellbeing of children and young people is a shared responsibility and a visible priority. When organisations take steps to become child safe, they put the best interests of children and young people at the forefront and consider their day-to-day business in the context of harm prevention and continuous improvement.

### What is a child safe culture?

A child safe culture is one where every child and young person knows adults in the organisation:

- Have put practices in place to reduce risks to their rights, safety, and wellbeing
- Care about their views and opinions
- Will listen and take proactive steps to address their concerns.

When services care deeply about children and young people's rights, safety, and wellbeing, and back that up with clear systems and visible everyday actions, children and young people develop trust in adults, and are more likely to speak up or seek help if they have concerns.

### What do you need to know?

Whether you work directly with children and young people, or provide back-of-house support functions, the way you speak, act, and make decisions communicates to children and young people (and their families/carers) how committed you are to being a safe adult. When this commitment to child safety is visible in what you do (and not just what you say), children and young people (and their families/carers) can see that you and your organisation is genuinely invested in preventing harm.

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



## Creating inclusive and equitable environments

Every person has a role in creating a culture where child safety is embedded in the organisation, not just written into policy. When that culture is strong, children and young people are more likely to trust the adults around them and to reach out when they need support.

Importantly, when children and young people feel valued, know their rights, and are empowered to communicate their views, they learn to trust their own judgment and make good choices, even when adults are not there to protect them.

Creating culturally safe, inclusive, and equitable environments is not only the responsibility of leadership. Your actions help shape the culture around you. By modelling anti-discriminatory, inclusive behaviour and speaking up when something does not feel right, you are helping to embed the Standards from the ground up.

There is no single set of prescriptive actions that mean you are being child safe. 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 *creating and maintaining a child safe culture*.



### What staff and volunteers can do

- Read, understand and follow your organisation's policies on child safe practices and code of conduct.
- Ensure you understand your organisation's commitment statement and what this means in practice.
- Seek clarification if you are not sure what the expectations are.
- Raise concerns with your supervisor if you are not sure that what you are seeing or hearing aligns with the organisation's child safe practices.
- Talk about child safety in team meetings to keep it visible as a priority.



**Click here to learn more about what staff and volunteers need to know.**