

Victoria's Child Safe Standards



Plain language guide



What are the Child Safe Standards?

- The Child Safe Standards (the Standards) began in Victoria in January 2016.
- The Standards help keep children safe from abuse and harm.
- There are 11 Child Safe Standards.
- As an organisation working with children, WEP must **comply** with the Standards and have things in place to show that we follow and meet each standard.

This document is a summary of the Child Safe Standards. It has words and pictures that are easy to understand to help explain the Standards. It does not include the full wording of the Standards or all the things that must be done to comply. You can read the full text of the Standards and more information about our compliance on our [website](#).

WEP makes sure that Aboriginal children feel culturally safe. We respect and value the identity and experiences of each child.

WELCOME

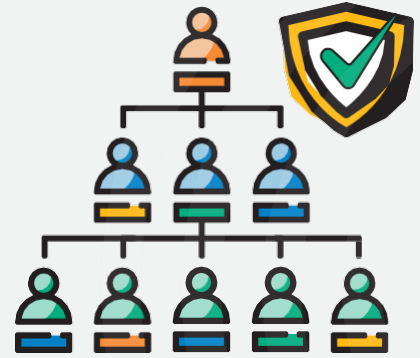
Our organisation, staff, volunteers and host families must:

- welcome Aboriginal people, their culture, and their rights
- understand how this helps Aboriginal children to feel safe and well
- not allow racism and have rules and actions to deal with racism
- assist Aboriginal children to express their diverse identities, customs, beliefs, and languages
- help Aboriginal children and their families to be involved in your organisation
- make sure they feel culturally safe
- have policies and systems that show you have done these things.



Child Safe Standard 2

WEP's leaders focus on keeping children safe and well. We have processes to find, avoid, and stop risks of child abuse or harm.



Our organisation must:

- make a **public commitment** to child safety. This means that we let the broader community know that child safety is important to our organisation
- have a **Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy**. This is a document that explains how WEP keeps children safe
- make sure that everyone in our organisation promotes child safety
- have a written **Code of Conduct** for staff, volunteers and host families, that explains how to behave around children and what is not OK
- document about how we find, avoid, and stop risks to children
- make sure that staff understand how to share information and keep records about child safety.

Child Safe Standard 3

Children know about their rights, are taken seriously, and take part in decisions that affect them.



Our organisation must:

- tell children about their rights to:
 - safety
 - information
 - take part in decisions about them
- understand and encourage the importance of friendships. This helps children to feel safe
- offer programs and/or information to children about how to prevent sexual abuse
- ensure that staff, volunteers and host families can:
 - identify signs of child abuse and harm in children
 - help children to talk openly and to talk about things that worry them
- help children to be involved in our organisation
- act on what children tell us so that they feel safe and want to stay involved in our organisation.

Child Safe Standard 4

WEP tell families and the broader community about how they keep children safe from abuse and harm. We encourage them to be involved in keeping children safe from abuse and harm.



Our organisation must:

- help families to take part in decisions that affect their child
- tell families and the broader community about how our organisation keeps children safe from abuse and harm
- make sure families and the broader community can easily find and understand this information
- make sure families and the broader community have a say in our organisation's policies and practices
- tell families and the broader community about our organisation and how it works.

Child Safe Standard 5

WEP understands that every child is different. We consider the individual needs of each child to give them the care and support they need.



Our organisation must:

- understand that every child is different and that some children may need more support
- help and consider the needs of children who:
 - have disability
 - are from different cultures
 - speak different languages
 - are unable to live at home
- are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, non-binary, gender diverse, or intersex
- make sure children can easily get the information and help they need. This must be culturally safe and easy to understand
- make sure it is easy for children to make a complaint and understand the process
- consider the needs of Aboriginal children and make sure they always feel culturally safe

Child Safe Standard 6

WEP makes sure that people working with children are suitable. Staff are supported and know what to do to keep children safe from abuse and harm.



Our organisation must:

- focus on child safety and wellbeing when hiring new staff and volunteers, as well as selecting host families. This can involve processes such as advertising, referee checks, and screening
- make sure that staff, volunteers and host families have the right background checks
- make sure that new staff, volunteers and host families know what they must do to keep children safe from abuse and harm. This includes:
 - keeping good records
 - knowing when to share information
 - knowing when and how to make a report
- make sure managers help staff to focus on child safety.

Child Safe Standard 7

Processes for complaints and concerns are child focused



Our organisation must:

- have a complaints policy. This policy must:
 - be easy to find and read
 - be child focused
 - explain:
 - what managers, staff, and volunteers must do
 - how to manage different types of complaints
 - what to do if policies or the Code of Conduct are not followed
 - when our organisation needs to make a report to authorities, like the police
- make sure that children, families, staff, and volunteers all understand how our organisation manages complaints
- handle complaints properly and in a culturally safe way
- take all complaints seriously and respond quickly
- have policies and procedures about:
 - how to report complaints to our organisation
 - who to report to
 - when to make a report
 - how to report complaints to, and work with, police and other authorities
- follow all laws about reporting, privacy, and employment.

Child Safe Standard 8

WEP provides education and training to staff, volunteers and host families to keep children safe from abuse and harm.



Our organisation must:

- follow WEP's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- know the signs of child abuse and harm. This includes abuse and harm caused by other children
- respond to issues of child safety and wellbeing
- help other staff, volunteers, host families and peers when they are dealing with a child safety issue
- understand how to make children feel more culturally safe.

Child Safe Standard 9

WEP makes sure children are safe when they use our services, programs, settings, and activities. This includes when children are online.



Our organisation must:

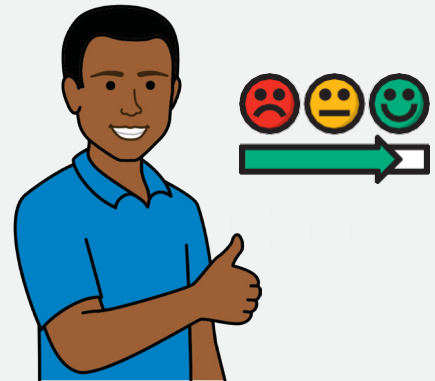
- make sure that staff, volunteers and host families can find and stop risks. When doing this they must still protect a child's right to
 - privacy
 - information
 - have friends and not feel alone
 - learn
- make sure that staff, volunteers and host families understand online safety. When they are online, they must meet our organisation's
 - Code of Conduct
 - Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- write **risk management plans**. These are plans for how we will deal with risks that may come from our settings, programs, activities, and environment
- protect the safety of children when our WEP uses the facilities or services of other organisations.

Child Safe Standard 10

WEP checks and improves, in an ongoing manner, the ways we keep children safe from abuse and harm.

Our organisation must:

- keep checking and improving what we do to keep children and young people safe
- look into complaints, concerns, and safety incidents to find out how they happened. This will help us to improve what we do
- tell staff, volunteers, families, and children about what we have found.



Child Safe Standard 11

WEP has written documents about how we keep children safe from abuse and harm.

Our organisation must:

- have written policies and procedures that:
 - cover all Child Safe Standards
 - are easy to find and understand
- work with **stakeholders** to develop our policies and procedures. These are people with an interest in our organisation. This can be:
 - staff, volunteers and host families
 - children and family members
 - other organisations that WEP work with
- look at good policies and procedures from other organisations
- make sure that our leaders and managers support the policies and procedures
- make sure that staff, volunteers and host families understand and follow the policies and procedures.



Where to get help

Child Safe Standards regulators, including the Victorian Regulations and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) can provide information and further support on the Standards.

You can find out about Child Safe Standards regulators [here](#).

You can contact WEP by:

Telephone: (03) 9598 4733

Email: info@wep.org.au

Website: www.wep.org