

Sector readiness

Progress update
July 2025

Background

Queensland's *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024* (the Act) introduces new legal obligations for many organisations that work with children.

Starting from 1 October 2025, organisations working with or for children or providing spaces or facilities for them will need to meet the Child Safe Standards—a set of 10 standards that guide how organisations should keep children safe. The Reportable Conduct Scheme will follow in a phased implementation beginning in July 2026.

The Queensland Family and Child Commission (the Commission) will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of these reforms, and is leading work with government, community and service sectors to prepare for the changes.

For more information on the Child Safe Organisations system, including who needs to comply and implementation timeframes, visit qfcc.qld.gov.au/childsafe.

Our work so far

Strong sector engagement

Over 30 engagement activities have taken place since May 2025 with government departments, peak bodies, schools, disability organisations, councils and faith-based groups. Many sectors are working with their peak bodies to understand the reforms and adapt their systems.

Practical tools released

- *Guidelines for Implementing the Child Safe Standards*
- *Self-Assessment Tool*
- *Quick Reference Guide*

These resources are designed to help organisations understand what's required, how to apply the Standards in their everyday work, and assess their progress. They are available on our website and have been widely accessed and well-received.

Grants supporting action

The Child Safeguarding Grants Program has provided \$3.57 million to support 46 initiatives across Queensland—helping to build sector capability and develop tools to assist organisations build culturally safe environments.

Sector readiness is **building**, providing a **strong foundation** for implementation, though targeted support remains critical to ensure **sustained momentum and compliance**.

What we've heard: what's working

Growing awareness and momentum

Sectors such as education, child protection and health are making strong progress. Many are already embedding children's safety and wellbeing in their governance, policies and staff training.

Good practice examples of implementation of the Child Safe Standards:

- A regional youth organisation used the Self-Assessment Tool to identify gaps in training about safety and wellbeing for children in their service, and created a local action plan.
- A disability service in South East Queensland has aligned their safeguarding policies with both the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and Child Safe Standards to avoid duplication.
- A local council is including their child safeguarding expectations in community event planning and volunteer onboarding.

What we've heard: key gaps and challenges

- **Workforce pressures:** Staff shortages, high turnover and reliance on volunteers are affecting the ability of many sectors to engage with reforms or address sustainability.
- **Clarity and consistency:** Some organisations are unsure how the Child Safe Standards interact with other regulatory frameworks (e.g. NDIS, health accreditation, education laws).
- **Cultural safety:** The Act requires organisations to consider the Universal Principle as they work to implement the Standards. The Universal Principle is about creating environments that make Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people feel culturally safe. Some sectors are implementing cultural safety well — often in partnership with community-controlled organisations — but many still need guidance, tools and support to understand and meet this obligation meaningfully.

While progress has been made, some sectors still face challenges:

- **Small and volunteer-run organisations** need more tailored support.
- **Sole providers** (e.g. in disability or therapy services) often lack resources or are not yet aware of their new obligations.
- **Clearer information** is needed for those juggling different rules and regulatory systems.

What's next

Over the coming months, the focus across sectors must shift from **awareness** to **action**:

- Finalise self-assessments
- Embed the Child Safe Standards in day-to-day operations
- Prepare for compliance for initial sectors from **1 October 2025**
- Build staff and volunteer understanding of their responsibilities
- Strengthen culturally safe practices and child participation
- Consider whether the sector will be subject to the Reportable Conduct Scheme and commence preparing for these obligations.

The Commission is working hard to make sure every organisation has the help it needs. Over the coming months, the Commission will be:

- **Supporting underprepared sectors** through peak bodies and targeted outreach
- **Promoting inclusive, culturally safe practices**
- **Clarifying requirements** for councils, government bodies and service providers
- **Embedding children's safety and wellbeing** in existing funding, accreditation and reporting systems through collaborative regulatory frameworks
- **Continuing engagement** with all sector representatives.

With the first phase of the Child Safe Standards commencing on 1 October 2025, now is the time for all sectors to shift from preparation to practice. We will continue to monitor progress to ensure that every child in Queensland is safe, respected and supported to thrive in the services they rely on.

Organisations can access free resources and practical tools via our website at <https://www.qfcc.qld.gov.au/childsafe>.