

# Quick Reference Guide

to implementing the  
**Child Safe Standards**  
in Queensland

Publication date: updated June 2025



QUEENSLAND  
**Family & Child  
Commission**  
Child Safe Organisations



Queensland  
Government

## About this guide

The Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC) is a statutory body of the Queensland Government. Our purpose is to influence change that improves the safety and wellbeing of Queensland's children and their families. Under the *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024*, the QFCC has been tasked by the Queensland Government to oversee the implementation of the Child Safe Organisations system and has been designated as the regulator.

## Our commitment to accessibility standards

The Queensland Government is committed to providing accessible services to Queenslanders from all culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

If you have difficulty understanding this document, you can contact Translating and Interpreting Service National on **13 14 50** to arrange for an interpreter to effectively explain it to you. Local call charges apply if calling within Australia; higher rates apply from mobile phones and payphones.

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Content from this guide should be attributed as: The State of Queensland (Queensland Family and Child Commission) **Quick Reference Guide to implementing the Universal Principle and Child Safe Standards in Queensland.**

## National consistency

Queensland's Child Safe Standards reflect the National Principles that were developed by the Australian Human Rights Commission in response to recommendations made by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Our guide draws from work of other states that are already operating a Child Safe Organisations system. This works towards implementing a nationally consistent approach.

## Acknowledgement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians across the lands, seas and skies on which we walk, live and work.

We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples as two unique peoples, with their own rich and distinct cultures, strengths and knowledge. We celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures across Queensland and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

## Acknowledgement of children's rights

We acknowledge the special rights of children which are recorded in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), guided by its four principles: the right of all children to survival and development; respect of the best interests of the child as a primary consideration in all decisions relating to children; the right of all children to express their views freely on all matters affecting them; and the right of all children to enjoy all rights of the UNCRC without discrimination of any kind.

## The voices of children and young people

Thank you to Samuel, Josh, Nooria, Jess, Rhea, Shraddha and Saanvi who shared their time and insights for this guide.

## Disclaimer

This guide provides advice on interpreting and embedding the Child Safe Standards and Universal Principle. It is not intended to provide guidance on the interpretation and application of other relevant legislation and does not constitute formal legal advice.



Interpreter

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## Support

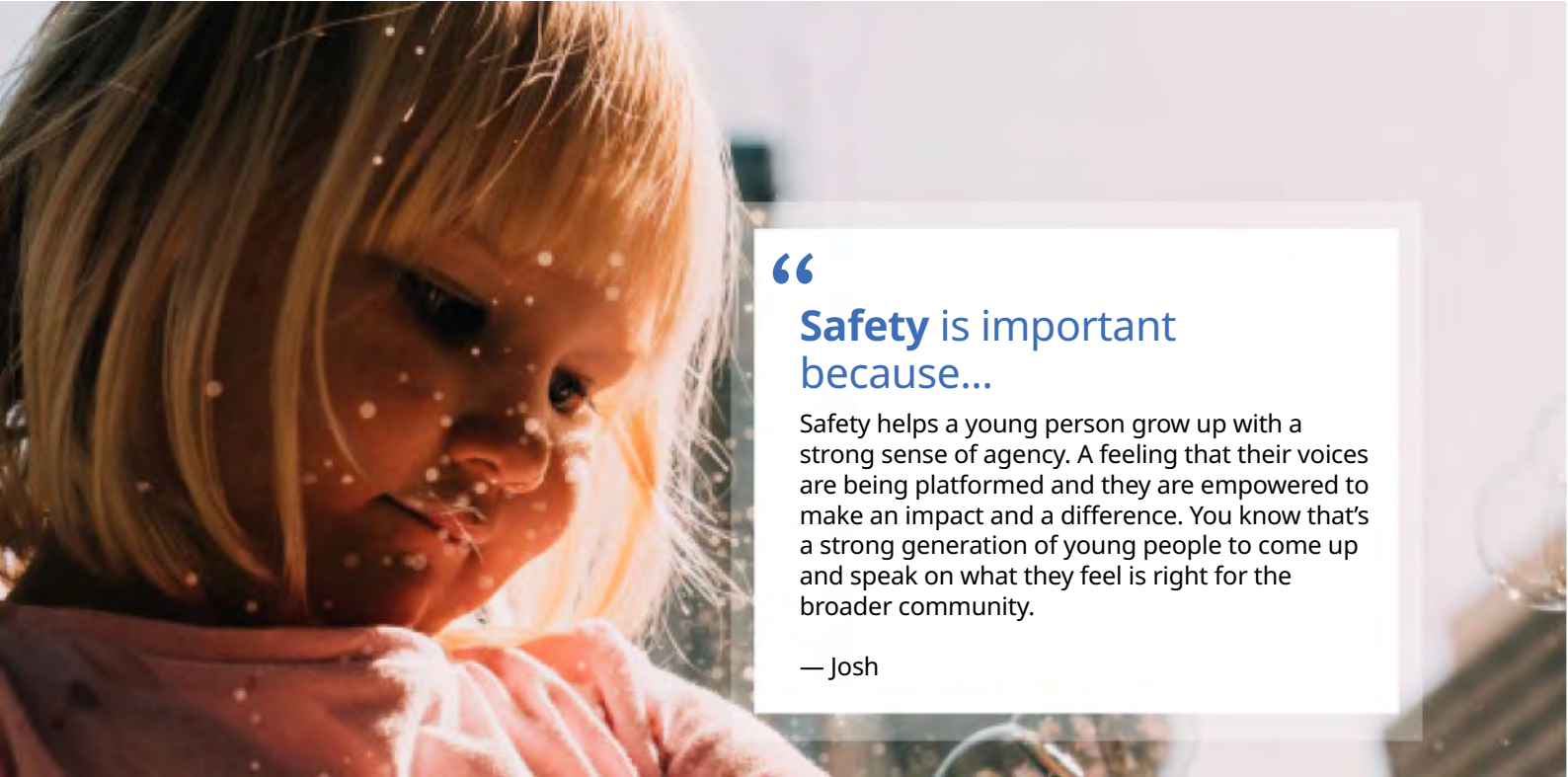
This document may cause distress for some people. If you need help or support, please contact any of these services:

Lifeline 13 11 14

13Yarn 13 92 76

Beyond Blue 1300 224 636

Kids Helpline 1800 551 800 (for 5 – 25 year olds)



“

## Safety is important because...

Safety helps a young person grow up with a strong sense of agency. A feeling that their voices are being platformed and they are empowered to make an impact and a difference. You know that's a strong generation of young people to come up and speak on what they feel is right for the broader community.

— Josh

## Every child has the right to be safe

Queensland has a new child safeguarding law —the *Child Safe Organisations Act*. It aims to protect Queensland children from harm when they interact with businesses and organisations.

Under this law, businesses and organisations that work with children or provide services or spaces for them are required to introduce 10 Child Safe Standards, and some will be required to introduce a Reportable Conduct Scheme.

The Standards aim to create environments that prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children.

The Reportable Conduct Scheme requires organisations to report and investigate allegations of child abuse or misconduct by their staff and volunteers.

These two elements work together: the Standards aim to prevent harm to children in businesses and organisations, and the Reportable Conduct Scheme enables an appropriate response if harm or misconduct happens.

This guide provides information to help organisations implement the Child Safe Standards, which come into effect from 1 October 2025.

Every business and organisation will be at a different stage in its journey to becoming child safe, and the actions required will vary depending on whether you are a large, well-established organisation or a smaller community group, business or sole trader. This guide provides practical information to guide the actions you need to take, depending on your business's or organisation's operating environment and how you interact with children.

You can also find resources and information on our website to help you implement the Standards in your policies and practices. Access these via the QR code below.

We will release more information to help organisations prepare to introduce a Reportable Conduct Scheme, which comes into effect from **1 July 2026**.

**Children** in this guide, 'children' refers to all individuals under 18 years of age

**Child safe entities** are those obliged under the legislation as having to follow the Standards.

**Child safe organisations** includes those required to follow the Standards as well as those that choose to.

**Child safety** in this document refers broadly to children's safety, wellbeing and cultural safety and is not about meeting obligations under the *Child Protection Act 1999* or to the government department responsible for child protection in Queensland.



### Resources:

For resources to help you implement the Standards, visit our website.

[qfcc.qld.gov.au/childsafes/resources](https://qfcc.qld.gov.au/childsafes/resources)



The Universal Principle is about creating environments that make Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people feel culturally safe, which broadly means welcome, safe, valued, included and respected. If an organisation isn't culturally safe, it's not child safe.

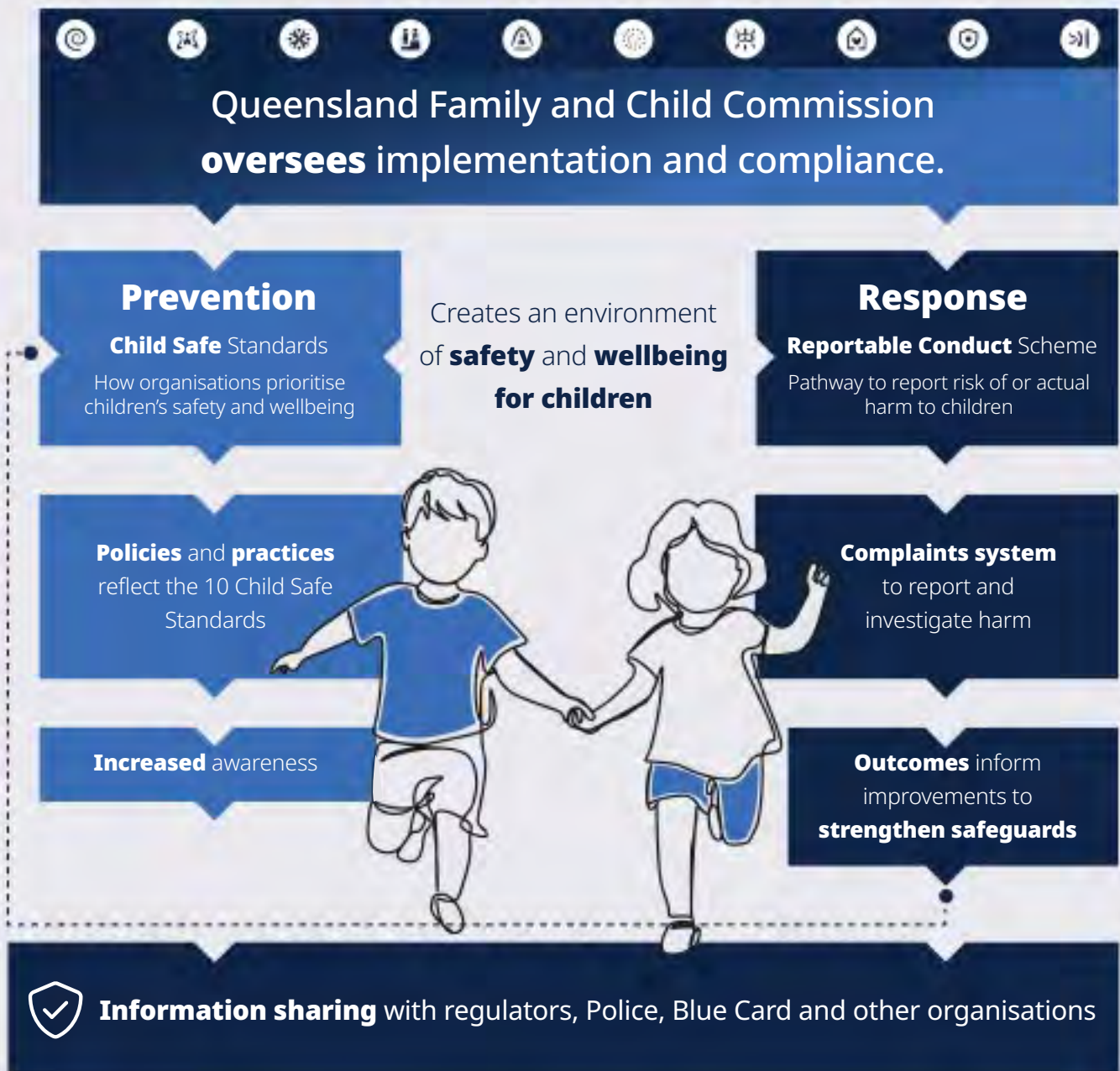
## The 10 Child Safe Standards

	1 Leadership and culture	Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in the entity's organisational leadership, governance and culture
	2 Voice of children	Children are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
	3 Family and community	Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing
	4 Equity and diversity	Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice
	5 People	People working with children are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice
	6 Complaints management	Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused
	7 Knowledge and skills	Staff and volunteers of the entity are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and awareness to keep children safe through ongoing education and training
	8 Physical and online environments	Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing and minimise the opportunity for children to be harmed
	9 Continuous improvement	Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved
	10 Policy and procedures	Policies and procedures document how the entity is safe for children

— [qfcc.qld.gov.au/childsafes](http://qfcc.qld.gov.au/childsafes) to learn more about the Child Safe Standards —

# Child Safe Organisations at a glance

**Your role matters**—and we're here to help you and your business every step of the way.



# THE UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLE AND CULTURAL SAFETY

The Universal Principle is about providing an environment that promotes and upholds the right to cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. Cultural safety requires organisations to take meaningful action to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people feel welcome, safe, valued, included and respected.

Children and young people have a right to practice culture. We know a strong connection to culture is a protective factor for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and an important way to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

There's no one-size-fits all approach to cultural safety, but generally speaking, culturally safe environments have some things in common:

- › Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people feel welcome, valued, safe, included and respected
- › Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people inform and guide actions needed to deliver cultural safety
- › Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are meaningfully involved in the decisions that affect them
- › Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people define and measure cultural safety.

Every business or organisation will be at a different stage in developing its attitudes, knowledge and capability in being culturally safe, and this will be determined by how it interacts with children and families. Within each standard of this guide, we have provided some actions your business or organisation can take. These actions won't apply in every setting; however, they provide guidance on how your business or organisation can operate in a culturally safe way.

Start by reflecting on where you are and what you need to do to become culturally safe. You can do this by:

- › asking Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families who you work with for their views on cultural safety in your business or organisation
- › actioning feedback you receive to strengthen cultural safety in your business or organisation
- › ask your staff about what they need to strengthen their capability to create a culturally safe environment.

“

## Cultural safety

Cultural safety is a committed consideration to the experiences and realities of what it is to be First Nations, the cultural load that is carried, as well as the familial and community responsibilities for activism and advocacy. Cultural safety encapsulates a shared commitment to the issues faced by First Nations peoples. It means staying informed and taking the time to embark on their own journey of learning and understanding.

— Josh



## Key documents you may need

We've listed the documents you may need as part of your work to become child safe.

This is not an exhaustive list, and you may need to develop other documents or resources to implement the Child Safe Standards, depending on what your business or organisation does and how it interacts with children. These documents provide a good foundation for you to build on.



### **Publish a commitment to children's safety and wellbeing, which:**

- › Explains how you prioritise the safety of children and young people and will not tolerate child abuse and harm.
- › Affirms your commitment to listen to and empower children within the organisation.
- › Is displayed for public access in your physical and/or online environment.



### **Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy which:**

- › Sets out how you prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and take action to prevent harm.
- › Details how you have updated your policies and practices to reflect the Child Safe Standards and Universal Principle.
- › Defines acceptable and unacceptable interactions with children, relating to staff members, volunteers, other children and anyone who comes into contact with children while involved with your business or organisation.
- › Is publicly available or can be made available on request.



### **Code of Conduct, which:**

- › Sets out expectations for behaviour of staff and volunteers with children and for promoting and maintaining children's safety and wellbeing.
- › Lists acceptable and unacceptable behaviours with children.
- › Explains professional boundaries, ethical behaviour, expected standards of behaviour, and acceptable and unacceptable interactions.
- › Explains how your business or organisation will respond to breaches of your Code of Conduct.
- › Is publicly available or can be made available on request.



### **Complaints Handling Policy, which:**

- > Is linked to a Code of Conduct.
- > Describes your complaints process in an accessible way that can be understood by everyone involved with your business or organisation, including children.
- > Is publicly available and promoted to everyone who interacts with your business or organisation.
- > Includes procedures for keeping families and carers informed and provides guidance on how to do this while complying with obligations regarding confidentiality and privacy.
- > Sets out approaches for dealing with different types of complaints including concerns, suspicions, disclosures and allegations of harm and breaches of the Code of Conduct.
- > Sets out actions to be taken when the complaint is about a worker.
- > Sets out the support and assistance provided to people who make a complaint.
- > Refers to relevant regulatory requirements applicable to the business or organisation.
- > Requires that all staff and volunteers cooperate with relevant external authorities, including police.



### **Risk Management Strategy, which:**

- > Identifies, assesses and takes steps to minimise the opportunity for children to be harmed.
- > Focuses on preventing child harm, including child-to-child harm.
- > Considers increased risk with specific roles and activities and children with heightened vulnerability, for example, children with a disability.
- > Is outlined in policies and procedures and included in training for staff and volunteers.
- > Contains procedures for review.



# STANDARD 1:

## Leadership and culture

Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in the entity's organisational leadership, governance and culture.

### Aim

Organisations create a culture where every decision, action and process prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children. Strong leadership and clear governance lay the foundation for a proactive, accountable and child-focused organisation.

### Our vision for excellence

Every organisation should be a model of children's safety and wellbeing. Leaders set the tone and example by embedding children's safety and wellbeing into policies, procedures and culture and ensuring these are followed and reviewed. Leaders ensure there is a healthy reporting culture and they support people to report concerns. The aim is to create an environment where everyone in the organisation understands their role and responsibilities to protect children, and that they act accordingly. All members of an organisation are accountable for providing a safe environment for every child.

### Applying the Standard

Publicly commit to children's safety and wellbeing.

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Champion and model a child safe culture at all levels of the organisation, from the top down and from the bottom up.

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Implement the key documents listed on pages 6 and 7 and promote them to families involved with your business or organisation, staff and volunteers.

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Provide guidelines for staff and volunteers on expected behavioural standards and responsibilities, documented in the Code of Conduct.

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Focus risk management strategies on preventing, identifying and mitigating risks of harm to children.

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Ensure staff and volunteers understand their obligations on information sharing and recordkeeping.

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Provide training for all staff and volunteers, emphasising the role of leaders in modelling and enforcing policies and the organisation's role in creating a child safe culture.

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Include children's safety and wellbeing objectives in staff performance reviews, with clear consequences for breaches of policies or Codes of Conduct.

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### How does cultural safety look?

- › Leaders ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families feel welcome, safe, valued, included and respected.
- › Leaders incorporate cultural safety into daily operations.
- › Leaders provide opportunities for staff and volunteers to reflect on their understanding or cultural safety and support them to improve.

### For small businesses, sole traders and volunteer community groups

- › Promote your commitment to children's safety and wellbeing on your website or social media pages.
- › Document the actions you take to prioritise children's safety and wellbeing, minimise risk to children, and prevent harm.



“

## Being **safe** makes you feel seen.

Being safe makes you feel seen, heard and valued which is really important. There are a lot of times in a lot of places where you don't have that feeling. You just feel invisible.

— Rhea

### Indicators in practice

Children's safety and wellbeing is prioritised in every business decision.

Children's safety and wellbeing is a standing agenda item in all leadership discussions.

All staff and volunteers are trained in operationalising policies and practices that prioritise children's safety and wellbeing.

Staff receive training and support to follow the Standards, recognise risks to children, and prevent harm.

Feedback from children, carers and families indicates trust in the business's or organisation's approach to children's safety and wellbeing.

There is clear documentation of risk assessments and actions taken to mitigate risks to children's safety and wellbeing.

There is clear documentation of actions taken in response to any issues related to children's safety that occur, inclusive of the actions taken to resolve the issue and prevent it from occurring again.



STANDARD 1



# STANDARD 2:

## Voice of children



Children are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them, and are taken seriously.

### Aim

Empowering children, informing them of their rights, and involving them in decision-making is fundamental to safeguarding their wellbeing. Child safe organisations foster an environment where children's voices are heard and actively shape outcomes that affect them.

### Our **vision** for excellence

Organisations have the ability, support and resources to create spaces where children are knowledgeable about their rights and confident in their ability to express concerns, provide input, and participate in meaningful ways. The adults who support children in these organisations understand and respect children's agency and take steps to ensure they are treated as competent and capable. Adults tailor their approach based on the age, developmental stage, culture and any other specific needs of the child. Decision-making processes should centre on the perspectives of children and demonstrate genuine respect for their views.

### Applying the Standard

Ensure children have access to resources and tools that enable them to understand all of their rights, including right to safety, information and participation – for example, posters or videos.

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Where relevant to the setting, offer children access to age-appropriate information or programs about preventing abuse.

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Regularly seek feedback from children about their safety and wellbeing in ways they feel comfortable and take action on what you hear.

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Facilitate child-friendly ways for children to express their views, participate in decision-making, and raise their concerns and ensure staff and volunteers are attuned to signs of harm or risks of harm.

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Put strategies in place to build a culture of participation that is responsive to the input of children – for example, training staff in active listening and child-centred communication techniques.

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Develop a child-friendly complaints process with clear steps on how feedback will be used and acted on.

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### How does cultural safety look?

- › Make sure your resources and information are culturally safe by developing them with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.
- › Value and respond to the contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to build their trust and confidence to participate.

### For small businesses, sole traders and volunteer community groups

- › Regularly ask the children involved with your business to provide feedback on their safety and wellbeing and take action on what they say.
- › Make children feel comfortable and confident to express their views, especially any concerns about harm or abuse.
- › Make sure your communications are child friendly.



“

### Children’s rights are not **taught**.

Throughout all my years of school, in any pastoral care programs, assemblies or other activities, I never heard anything about children’s rights.

– Samuel

### Indicators in practice

Children report feeling respected and heard within the organisation.

There is evidence that key decisions and policies have been shaped by input from children.

Staff and volunteers demonstrate strong knowledge of, and practice in, child-centred communication.

Staff and volunteers are equipped with the necessary training and skills to provide culturally safe, trauma-informed and strengths-based care and support to children.

Feedback mechanisms are regularly used with children and result in actionable outcomes at all levels of the organisation.





# STANDARD 3:

## Family and community

Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.

### Aim

Organisations build trust and collaboration with families and communities to create a united front to ensure children's safety and wellbeing is a top priority. Child safety and wellbeing are strengthened when families and communities are informed, engaged and are active partners in promoting safe environments.

### Our vision for excellence

Organisations should foster strong, transparent relationships with families and communities as valued contributors to the shared responsibility of protecting children. Open communication, trust and mutual respect are the foundation for collaborative and inclusive child-safe practices.

### Applying the Standard

Give families ample opportunity to participate in decisions affecting their child within their family or community.

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Communicate meaningfully and regularly with families and communities about your approach to children's safety and wellbeing.

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Provide families and communities with clear and accessible information about your safety and wellbeing policies and practices.

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Ensure families and communities have a say in the design, development and review of your policies and practices.

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Establish regular communication channels to keep families informed, and share progress on child safety and wellbeing initiatives with families and communities to maintain transparency and trust.

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Involve families, carers and the community in your operations and governance.

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### How does cultural safety look?

- › Co-design your policies and practices with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities you work with to reflect their perspectives about safety and wellbeing.
- › Remember that families, parents and primary carers are broad terms that may have different meanings for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- › Consider how consulting with Elders can contribute to improving safety and wellbeing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

### For small businesses, sole traders and volunteer community groups

- › Look for opportunities to seek feedback from the families and communities of children involved with your business about how they can be involved in protecting the safety and wellbeing of children.
- › Make sure families and communities know how to raise concerns relating to your business.



“

## Community

I love seeing my mob in a space doing deadly things. It's having real people there with stories and lived experience.

— Josh

## Indicators in practice

Families and communities report feeling informed, included, heard and valued in children's safety and wellbeing initiatives.

Trusted partnerships with community stakeholder organisations are established and maintained.

Feedback from families, carers and communities directly informs policy and practice improvements.

Families, communities and other stakeholders report that the organisation engages with them in a safe way.





# STANDARD 4:

## Equity and diversity



Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.

### Aim

Organisations embed equity into policies and practices to create safe and inclusive environments for all children. Challenge yourself to go beyond compliance and actively ensure that the unique needs of children from diverse backgrounds are recognised, respected and met.

### Our vision for excellence

Organisations foster environments where every child feels valued, respected, supported and culturally safe. Equity is reflected in every policy, decision and action, ensuring that all children have fair access to a safe, nurturing environment and healthy future. Equity requires that the unique needs of every child are met, and that no child is disadvantaged due to their culture, disability, gender or any other aspect of their identity or context.

### Applying the Standard

Ensure your policies and practices enable your business or organisation to treat all children and their families with respect and fairness, without discrimination.

Understand the diverse circumstances and needs of each child, provide culturally safe and trauma-informed support, and respond appropriately to those who need specialised support.

Make adjustments to your operations so that every child feels welcome, safe, respected, heard and valued.

Equip staff, volunteers and board members with the necessary training and skills to provide inclusive, trauma-informed and culturally safe supports and services to all children, and develop proactive strategies to achieve this.

Give children access to information, support and complaints processes in ways that are accessible and easy to understand.

Make sure your Child Safety and Wellbeing policy ensures the safety and wellbeing of children from all backgrounds and it relates to all of your policies, programs and governance structures.

Regularly review policies to ensure they address the needs of children from diverse backgrounds.

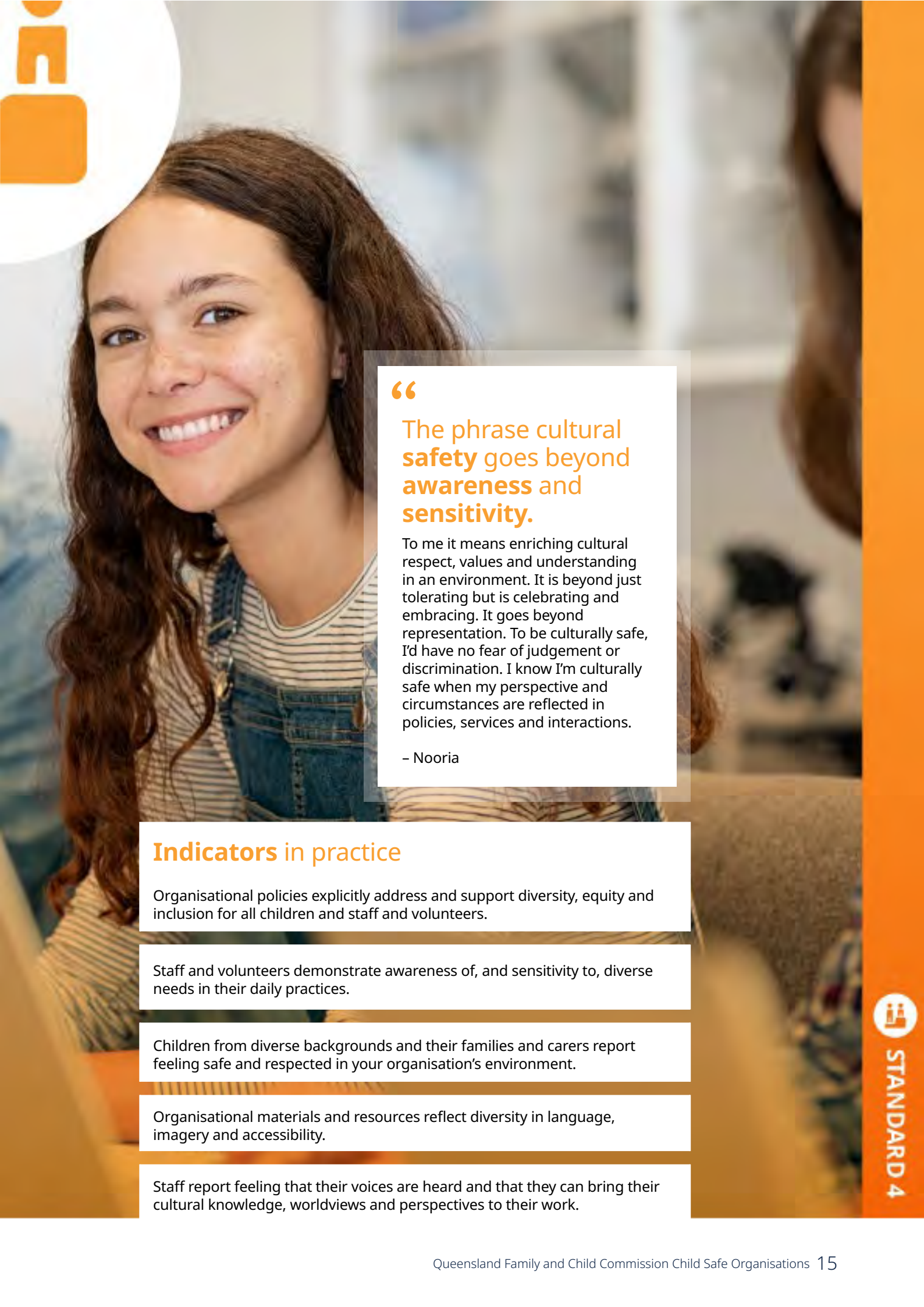
Ensure recruitment policies and practices are equitable and reflect a range of diverse views.

### How does cultural safety look?

- > Provide an environment that promotes and upholds the right to cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.
- > Seek feedback from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, communities, staff and volunteers about cultural safety in your business or organisation and take action on what they say.
- > Ask your staff about what they need to strengthen their capability to create a culturally safe environment and take action what they say.
- > Where you can, design your spaces to be welcome to and respectful of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and cultures.

### For small businesses, sole traders and volunteer community groups

- > Make sure you and your staff have the skills needed to provide inclusive services and support to the children and families involved with your business.
- > Make sure the way you operate makes every child feel welcome, safe, respected, heard and valued.



“

The phrase **cultural safety** goes beyond **awareness and sensitivity**.

To me it means enriching cultural respect, values and understanding in an environment. It is beyond just tolerating but is celebrating and embracing. It goes beyond representation. To be culturally safe, I'd have no fear of judgement or discrimination. I know I'm culturally safe when my perspective and circumstances are reflected in policies, services and interactions.

– Nooria

## Indicators in practice

Organisational policies explicitly address and support diversity, equity and inclusion for all children and staff and volunteers.

Staff and volunteers demonstrate awareness of, and sensitivity to, diverse needs in their daily practices.

Children from diverse backgrounds and their families and carers report feeling safe and respected in your organisation's environment.

Organisational materials and resources reflect diversity in language, imagery and accessibility.

Staff report feeling that their voices are heard and that they can bring their cultural knowledge, worldviews and perspectives to their work.



# STANDARD 5:

## People

People working with children are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice

### Aim

Organisations have robust recruitment, training and ongoing support systems in place to ensure all personnel embody child safety and wellbeing values in their actions. The suitability and capability of staff and volunteers is pivotal to creating safe environments for children.

### Our vision for excellence

Organisations recruit and retain individuals who are not only qualified but are deeply committed to upholding children's safety and wellbeing. Staff and volunteers are supported with ongoing professional development and clear guidance, empowering them to model safe and respectful practices in every interaction.

### Applying the Standard

Prioritise children's safety and wellbeing as pre-requisites for employment throughout your recruitment practices, including advertising, referee checks and staff and volunteer pre-employment screening.

Ensure all position descriptions outline children's safety and wellbeing responsibilities and expectations.

Ensure and continuously monitor that relevant staff and volunteers have current Working with Children Checks or equivalent background checks.

Give all staff and volunteers an appropriate induction and ensure they are aware of their responsibilities to children and to recordkeeping, information sharing and reporting obligations.

Include onboarding and regular, ongoing training about children's safety and wellbeing, including training on cultural safety and trauma-informed care and support, depending on the nature of your business or organisation.

Focus ongoing supervision and people management on children's safety and wellbeing.

Ensure a safe and responsive mechanism is in place for reporting concerns.

### How does cultural safety look?

- > Train staff and volunteers in culturally safe practices.
- > Invite Aboriginal and Torres Strait people to co-design policies and practices.
- > For large organisations, look for opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to hold leadership positions.

### For small businesses, sole traders and volunteer community groups

- > Make sure every employee and volunteer has a Working with Children check.
- > Hire staff and volunteers with capability to protect children's safety and wellbeing.
- > Make sure every employee and volunteer can identify signs or risks of harm and knows how to report it.
- > Provide ongoing training to all staff and volunteers and keep a record of all training completed.
- > Make sure staff and volunteers know how to report concerns and are comfortable to do so.



“

### Understanding my feelings

Someone who holds space for you to vent your feelings. Asks how you want to move forward and gives you the agency to decide the next steps. Asks if you want support and lets you determine the type of support, too.

— Josh

### Indicators in practice

All personnel working with children have undergone rigorous reference checks, hold mandatory clearances to work with children, and complete induction training before working directly with children.

Staff and volunteers report feeling confident and supported in their roles regarding children’s safety and wellbeing and cultural safety. There are processes in place to support staff and volunteers to proactively raise concerns and for investigating, responding to and resolving related issues.

Clear and documented processes exist for addressing concerns about the suitability of staff or volunteers.

Ongoing professional development opportunities are regularly accessed by personnel.





# STANDARD 6:

## Complaints management

Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child-focused.

### Aim

Organisations have systems in place that are transparent, accessible, and designed to empower children to raise concerns safely and confidently, knowing they will be taken seriously. Effective, child-focused complaint and concern processes are essential for protecting children.

### Our vision for excellence

Organisations create a culture where children, families, carers, staff and volunteers feel safe and supported to speak up about concerns. Complaints are managed in a timely, transparent, trauma-informed and respectful way, with the child's wellbeing and safety at the centre of every response.

### Applying the Standard

Have an accessible, child-focused complaint handling policy, which clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of individuals at each level of your organisation and their approach to dealing with different types of complaints, breaches of relevant policies or the Code of Conduct and their obligation to act and report.

Put policies and procedures in place that address reporting of complaints and concerns to relevant authorities, whether or not the law requires reporting, and co-operate with authorities that have a responsibility to investigate.

Ensure investigations into complaints do not re-traumatise children and families.

Have effective complaint handling processes that are understood by children, families, staff and volunteers. Train staff to respond sensitively to disclosures, ensuring children's safety and wellbeing is prioritised.

Take complaints seriously and respond to them promptly and thoroughly. Inform complainants about the outcomes and actions taken because of their feedback.

Meet all your reporting, privacy and employment law obligations.

Monitor and review complaint trends to identify systemic issues and drive continuous improvement.

### How does cultural safety look?

- > Ask Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families if they need support in the complaint process from a First Nations Liaison Officer, trusted community Elders, and/or an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander support person.

### For small businesses, sole traders and volunteer community groups

- > Take complaints seriously.
- > Have a complaints process, including contact details.
- > Promote your complaints process on your website or social media channels.
- > Make sure the children and families involved with your business know how to make a complaint and can understand the process.
- > Seek support from child abuse prevention organisations or refer children and families to them if needed.
- > Protect the privacy of anyone who makes a complaint to you, in line with your legal obligations.

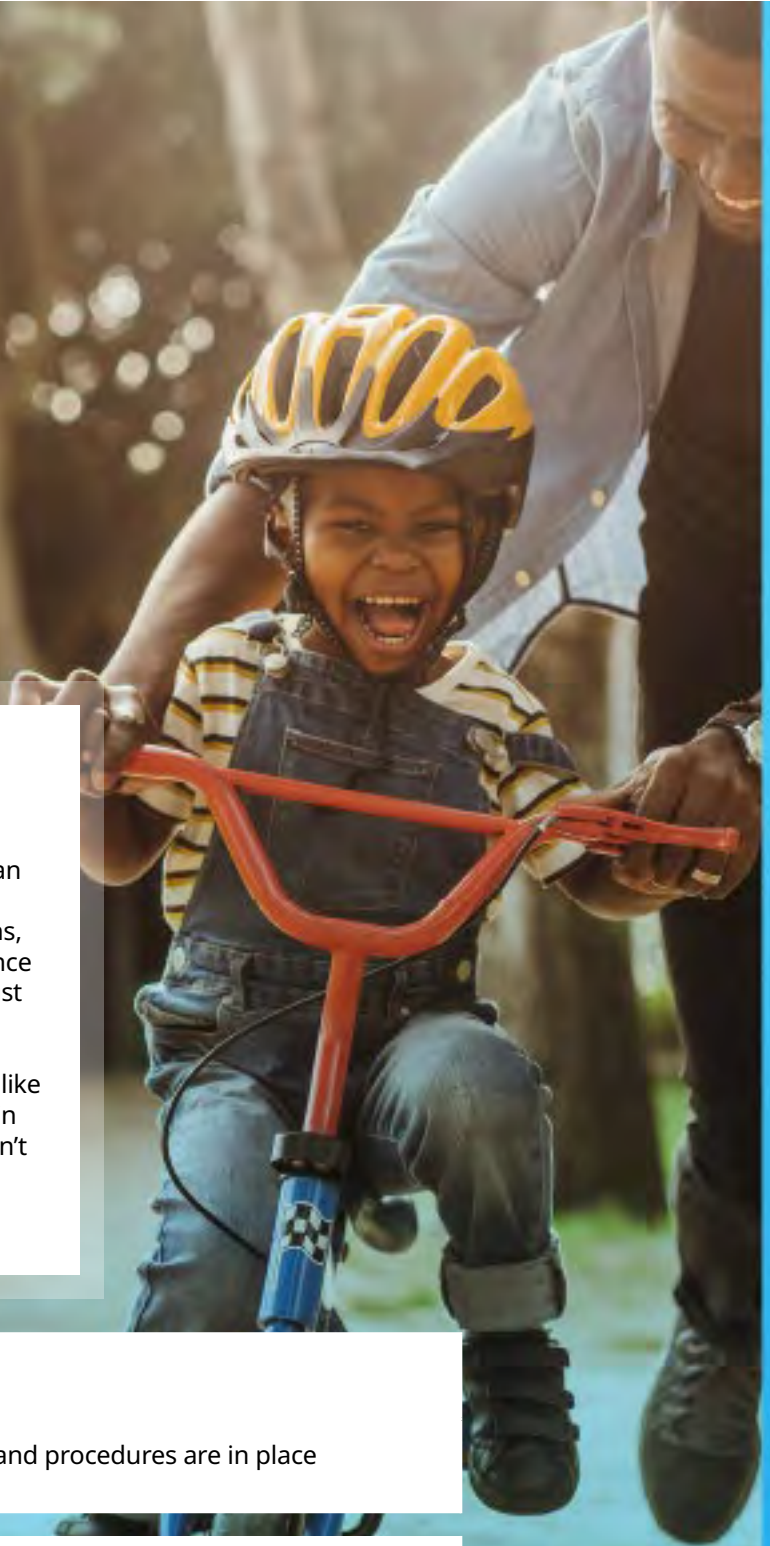


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### It's about **processes**

You need a proper process that has an outcome, and it doesn't keep getting referred on. It's not just conversations, it's action. Tangible things happen once something is reported, and it's not just brushed off with "Oh we're sorry this happened to you". The appropriate action is not just a band-aid solution like putting out a statement. It's putting in place measures to make sure it doesn't happen again.

- Rhea



### **Indicators in practice**

Clear, documented complaints policies and procedures are in place and accessible.

Staff demonstrate confidence and competence in identifying and managing child-focused complaints.

Feedback from children, carers, families and staff confirms they feel safe and supported, when raising concerns and confident about the process.

Complaint data is regularly reviewed and informs potential systemic reform and policy and process improvements.

All children feel safe to report concerns and complaints and feel that the resolution process results in meaningful change.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people report that the complaints processes are culturally safe.





# STANDARD 7:

## Knowledge and skills

Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through ongoing education and training.

### Aim

Staff and volunteers are not only screened and qualified but also receive ongoing education, training and capacity building support to build the knowledge, skills and awareness required to proactively safeguard children in all interactions. Staff and volunteers are the backbone of child safe organisations.

### Our vision for excellence

Organisations foster a culture of continuous learning and quality improvement where staff and volunteers are empowered with the latest knowledge and best practice in children's safety and wellbeing, cultural safety and trauma-informed care. Training is tailored to specific roles and equips staff and volunteers to identify risks or harm, respond appropriately, and create environments where children feel safe and supported.

### Applying the Standard

Train and support staff and volunteers to effectively implement your Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

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Provide training and information for staff and volunteers on how to build safe environments for children.

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Provide training and information for staff and volunteers to respond effectively to issues of children's safety and wellbeing and support colleagues who disclose harm.

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Provide training and information for staff and volunteers on how to build inclusive and culturally safe environments for children.

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Develop a training schedule that includes induction, role-specific modules, and regular refresher courses to keep staff informed about changes in legislation and best-practice standards, and to keep knowledge and skills current. Maintain a system to monitor training completion and compliance across the organisation.

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### How does cultural safety look?

- › Train your staff and volunteers to understand the impacts of discrimination and how to address it.
- › Make sure your staff and volunteers understand how to provide an environment that promotes and upholds the right to cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.
- › Ask your staff about their needs to build their knowledge and understanding of cultural safety and about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and connect them with the training they need.

### For small businesses, sole traders and volunteer community groups

- › Make sure you, your staff and volunteers have the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe.
- › Document the skills you, your staff and volunteers have and connect them with training to fill gaps.
- › Commit to ongoing training to continue building skills across your business. Visit our website for helpful training and resources.



“

### Cultural competence

We need adults who have cultural competence. Who understand about different disabilities. Who are prepared to educate and respond when they see something happening that isn't right.

– Rhea

### Indicators in practice

All staff and volunteers have completed induction and ongoing training specific to children's safety and wellbeing.

Training records show high participation rates and regular refreshers.

Staff and volunteers report feeling confident and supported in their roles related to children's safety and wellbeing.

The organisation has a process to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of training programs based on feedback and outcomes.



STANDARD 7



# STANDARD 8:

## Physical and online environments

Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing and minimise the opportunity for children to be harmed.

### Aim

Organisations actively identify, assess, and mitigate risks in all spaces that children access to ensure their wellbeing is prioritised and opportunities for harm are significantly reduced. Creating safe environments, both physical and online, is a cornerstone of children's safety and wellbeing.

### Our vision for excellence

Organisations provide environments where children feel secure, safe, respected and supported. Physical and online environments must prioritise the physical, social, spiritual, emotional, and cultural safety and wellbeing of all children. This requires a holistic, strengths-based approach to safety and wellbeing. It includes designing physical spaces to minimise risks and maintaining online platforms that are safe, well-monitored, and aligned with the Child Safe Standards.

### Applying the Standard

Take a holistic, strengths-based approach to safety and wellbeing, ensuring that all aspects of a child's wellbeing – physical, social, spiritual, emotional and cultural – are prioritised.

Conduct regular audits of physical spaces to identify and mitigate risks, including playgrounds, classrooms and communal areas.

Develop plans for responding to incidents in physical and digital environments, such as cyberbullying or accidents.

Establish clear protocols for supervising children in both physical and online spaces. Ensure that staff and volunteers identify and mitigate risks in the online and physical environments without compromising a child's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.

Ensure the online environment is used in accordance with your Code of Conduct and Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and practices.

Consider risks posed by organisational settings, activities, and the physical environment in your risk management plans.

If you contract facilities and services from third parties, have procurement policies and checks that ensure the safety of children.

Gather feedback from children, carers, families and staff about the safety of your physical and online environments and act on concerns raised.

### How does cultural safety look?

- › Design your physical and online spaces so they are welcoming to and respectful of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and co-design, where possible.

### For small businesses, sole traders and volunteer community groups

- › If needed, seek advice from child safety community groups for advice about the safety of your physical and online spaces.
- › Invite feedback from children and families involved with your business about the safety of your physical and online spaces and make changes based on what they say.
- › Make sure any third-party providers have the necessary checks to work safely around children.
- › Be mindful that some children will have specific needs that you may need to accommodate, for example, needs relating to disability, family and living arrangements, or culture.



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### Online safety

Education about online safety is really important. Like knowing how to stay safe, how to know when something is wrong, how to get support.

– Shraddha

### Indicators in practice

Physical environments meet safety standards and are regularly assessed for risks.

Policies for online safety are documented, implemented and monitored effectively.

Children report feeling safe in both physical and online environments, including culturally safe.

Incidents of harm or breaches are rare and are responded to swiftly and effectively when they occur.





# STANDARD 9:

## Continuous improvement

Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.

### Aim

Organisations proactively create the space and time to interrogate feedback and information gathered from children, families, staff and volunteers, as well as performance data to identify and address systemic issues. Ensuring children's safety is a core priority means building an organisational culture that is responsive to challenges and new situations and is willing to learn and change.

### Our vision for excellence

Continuous improvement is a dynamic process where constant reflection on what is working and where challenges or gaps exist is prioritised. A child safe organisation ensures that progress and outcomes are set, measured and monitored based on a range of different success indicators, not just the normalised standards and methods. Continuous quality improvement processes contribute to a culture of accountability and a commitment to ongoing quality assurance and improved practices.

### Applying the Standard

Regularly review, evaluate and improve all policies, procedures and practices relating to children's safety and wellbeing and update to keep them current.

Seek the participation of children, families and your community in your reviews of policies, procedures and practices, and keep them informed about how their feedback is being incorporated.

Analyse complaints, concerns and safety incidents to identify causes and systemic failures to inform continuous improvement.

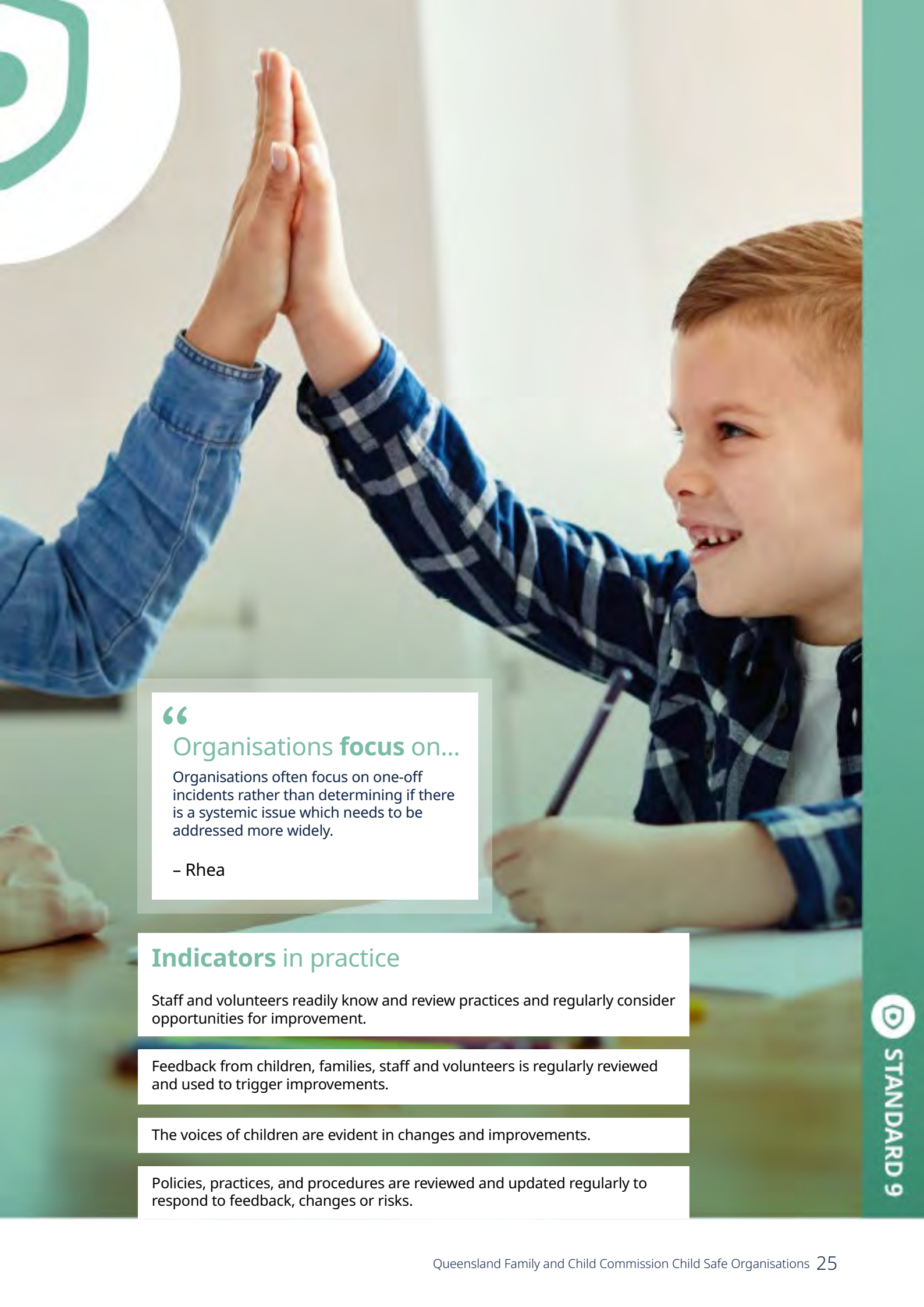
Create action plans to implement any changes resulting from periodic reviews and communicate these changes to staff and volunteers, families, children and the community to reinforce a culture of accountability and growth.

### How does cultural safety look?

- > Continually review your policies and procedures and assess whether changes are needed to ensure cultural safety. This can include consulting with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people involved with your business or organisation.
- > Regularly invite feedback from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people involved with your business or organisation and take action on what they say.

### For small businesses, sole traders and volunteer community groups.

- > Implementing the Standards is not a set-and-forget activity. Commit to regularly reviewing your policies and practices and make changes where you need to.
- > Regularly invite feedback from the children and families you work with, and the staff and volunteers associated with your business, and make changes based on the improvements they say are needed to protect children.



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### Organisations focus on...

Organisations often focus on one-off incidents rather than determining if there is a systemic issue which needs to be addressed more widely.

– Rhea

### Indicators in practice

Staff and volunteers readily know and review practices and regularly consider opportunities for improvement.

Feedback from children, families, staff and volunteers is regularly reviewed and used to trigger improvements.

The voices of children are evident in changes and improvements.

Policies, practices, and procedures are reviewed and updated regularly to respond to feedback, changes or risks.



STANDARD 9



# STANDARD 10:

## Policy and procedures

Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children.

### Aim

Staff at all levels of your organisation understand their individual responsibility to ensure transparency of all aspects of service delivery in a child safe organisation.

### Our vision for excellence

Organisations' policies and procedures clearly prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children. They enable safe practices and adequately equip staff and volunteers with a working knowledge to identify and prevent harm.

### Applying the Standard

Embed the Child Safe Standards in your policies and practices. If your business or organisation needs to implement a Reportable Conduct Scheme, start preparing now.

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Make sure your policies and procedures are well-documented, accessible and easy to understand.

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Use best practice models and stakeholder consultation to inform the development of your policies and procedures.

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Have leaders who champion and model compliance with policies and procedures.

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Ensure your policies and procedures are well understood and implemented by staff and volunteers.

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Regularly review your policies and practices to ensure they prioritise children's safety and wellbeing.

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### How does cultural safety look?

- › Assess cultural safety in your business or organisation and the actions you need to take to make improvements.
- › Invite feedback from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families and communities your business or organisation works with.

### For small businesses, sole traders and volunteer community groups.

- › Learn about the Child Safe Standards.
- › Visit our website for resources and training about implementing the Child Safe Standards.
- › Talk to other businesses that work with children and share knowledge about how you are becoming child safe.
- › Develop the documents listed on pages 6 and 7 of this guide, or if you already have them, review them to ensure they are current.
- › Engage with children, families and staff involved with your business about the effectiveness of your policies and practice.
- › Update your documents so they are easily accessible, reflect equity and diversity, and are culturally safe.



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### Feeling **safe** to speak up

Young people need to have the agency and the ability to speak up, and feeling safe is an enabler to that. If they're not feeling safe, they're not going to speak up about the issues impacting them. You need to feel safe to speak up.

— Nooria

### Indicators in practice

There is a clear understanding of and engagement with policy and procedure documents by staff and stakeholders.

Policies and procedures are accessed regularly by staff and stakeholders.

Policies and procedures are easily accessible by everyone and reflect feedback provided by children and families involved with your business or organisation.



STANDARD 10

# Next steps for implementing the Child Safe Standards

The below prompts will help you to take the first steps towards implementing the Child Safe Standards.

## 1. Policies and practices

- Review your policies and practices against this guide to evaluate the actions you need to take to be child safe.
- Develop the documents listed on pages 6 and 7 of this guide, or if you already have them, review them to ensure they are current.
- Engage with children, families and staff involved with your business or organisation about the effectiveness of your policies and practices.
- Update your documents so they are easily accessible, reflect equity and diversity, and are culturally safe.
- Commit to regularly reviewing and updating your policies and practices so that you continue to prioritise children's safety and wellbeing.

## 2. Leadership and culture

- Make a public commitment about your actions to prioritise children's safety and wellbeing.
- Nurture a child safe culture at all levels of your organisation.

## 3. Engagement with children and families

- Talk to the children and families involved with your business or organisation about being child safe and take action on what they say.
- Assess whether your information is child-friendly and makes children feel safe, respected, welcome and involved.
- Review your communication channels and check they meet families' needs.

## 4. Building capability and skills

- Talk to your staff and volunteers about their confidence in prioritising children's safety and wellbeing and take action on what they say.
- Assess your staff's and volunteers' ability to identify and prevent harm and take action on their recommendations to address their needs or gaps in reporting systems.
- Arrange training to build knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe and make a plan to continually invest in your staff and volunteers.

## 5. Places and spaces

- Review your physical and online environments and whether they make children feel secure, safe, respected and supported.
- Make a plan to regularly audit spaces to identify and mitigate risks that could lead to harm.
- Make sure your plans for responding to incidents are adequate.

## 6. Cultural Safety

- Read about cultural safety on page 5 of this guide.
- Seek feedback from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families engaged with your business or organisation about the actions you need to take to deliver a culturally safe environment, and take action on what you hear.
- Assess your ability to engage in a culturally safe way with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families and take action to build capability.

If you're looking for more detailed guidance, access our full **Guidelines** and **Self-Assessment tool** using the QR code.



[qfcc.qld.gov.au/childsafes/resources](https://qfcc.qld.gov.au/childsafes/resources)



We are building a culture  
of **safety** and **wellbeing**  
for all Queensland children  
through the **Child Safe  
Organisations system.**

**Every** Queensland child  
is loved, respected and  
has their rights upheld.



QUEENSLAND  
**Family & Child  
Commission**  
Child Safe Organisations

