



Alister Henskens

Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services

MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW PARLIAMENT PASSES CHILD SAFE SCHEME

There will be greater consistency in how organisations protect children under new laws passed in NSW Parliament today implementing the Child Safe Scheme, a key recommendation of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

The Scheme gives the [Office of the Children's Guardian](#) (OCG) additional powers to monitor and investigate how organisations implement the Child Safe Standards to support the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services Alister Henskens said the *Children's Guardian Amendment (Child Safe Scheme) Bill 2021* means that the [10 Child Safe Standards](#) will create safer environments and organisations.

"These changes are all about a consistent standard for how organisations protect children and the passing of this legislation is an important step forward in line with the recommendations of the Royal Commission," Mr Henskens said.

"The Child Safe Standards provide a framework for organisations to create and maintain child-safe cultures, operations and environments."

The Child Safe Standards are:

1. Child safety is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture;
2. Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously;
3. Families and communities are informed and involved;
4. Equity is upheld and diverse needs are taken in to account;
5. People working with children are suitable and supported;
6. Processes to respond to complaints of child abuse are child focused;
7. Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training;
8. Physical and online environments minimise the opportunity for abuse to occur;
9. Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is continuously reviewed and improved; and
10. Policies and procedures document how the organisation is child safe.

NSW Children's Guardian Janet Schorer said the OCG will support organisations with the implementation of the Standards in ways that will be appropriate to their size, resources and the nature of their involvement with children.

“We will support all organisations to implement the Child Safe Standards, with capability building and support being the foundation of our approach,” Ms Schorer said.

“This reflects the importance of education in changing attitudes and cultures that may make children vulnerable to all forms of abuse, including sexual, physical, emotional and ill-treatment and neglect.”

Under the new Scheme, certain child-related organisations including in the Education, Early Childhood, Health and Youth Justice sectors, must implement the Child Safe Standards.

Local councils, religious organisations providing services to children and sport and recreation organisations providing services to children will also be required to implement the Standards.

The Bill builds on the NSW Government’s strong framework for protecting children and young people, following legislative changes in 2019 which gave the Children’s Guardian greater authority and oversight to protect children and young people.

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