



Getting started with implementing the Child Safe Standards

Who is this guide for?

This introductory guide provides child-related organisations with **six practical steps** to get started with implementing the NSW Child Safe Standards.

What is the NSW Child Safe Scheme?

In February 2022, new laws were introduced to create the [NSW Child Safe Scheme](#).

The laws aim to make sure that child-related organisations are doing everything they can to keep children safe from all kinds of abuse, including sexual abuse.

[Most organisations must comply with the Child Safe Scheme if they provide services to children, or if adults have contact with children in their organisation.](#)

The Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG) has oversight of the Scheme.

We have a strong focus on education and capability building to help organisations put child safe foundations in place. However, if an organisation is not willing to apply the Child Safe Standards or is placing children at risk of harm, the OCG can take enforcement action.

This can result in fines and legal action.

How do the Child Safe Standards work?

The Child Safe Scheme is based on 10 [Child Safe Standards](#). These aim to promote child safety and help prevent, detect and respond effectively to harm and abuse if it occurs.

The Standards work by driving change in culture and leadership in organisations so:

- child safety becomes central to everyday thinking and practice, and the best interests of children are always prioritised
- child abuse is never tolerated, and everyone understands they have a role to play in creating a safe and supportive environment
- concerns about child safety are taken seriously and everyone is empowered to report allegations of abuse.

The Standards can be applied in a way that best fits your settings, community and how children interact with your services.

The 10 Child Safe Standards

Standard 1 Child safety is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture

Standard 2 Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously

Standard 3 Families and communities are informed and involved

Standard 4 Equity is upheld and diversity is taken into account

Standard 5 People working with children are suitable and supported

Standard 6 Processes to respond to complaints of child abuse are child focused

Standard 7 Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training

Standard 8 Physical and online environments minimise the opportunity for abuse to occur

Standard 9 Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is continuously reviewed and improved

Standard 10 Policies and procedures document how the organisation is child safe



Reach out for more support

We have introductory training and free resources to help you get started on your child safe journey. There are templates, handbooks, videos, podcasts, eLearning modules and webinars. Some are available in languages other than English.

Go to our 'Getting Started with the Child Safe Standards' webpage:

ocg.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-scheme/getting-started



Register for our webinars and training:
ocg.nsw.gov.au/events

Sign up for regular news and updates:
[Child Safe newsletters](#)

The NSW Reportable Conduct Scheme

Under NSW law, many child-related organisations must also comply with the NSW Reportable Conduct Scheme.

The two schemes work together to help organisations prevent and respond properly to allegations of child abuse.

The OCG also administers the Reportable Conduct Scheme and we provide [information and resources on our website.](#)

Six steps to getting started

To put the foundations of child safety in place, there are **six action-based steps** you can take.

Following them will help you embed child safety in everyday thinking and practice across your organisation. The steps can be taken at the same time as each other, or one at a time – however works best for your organisation.

Step 1: Understand the Child Safe Standards

It is important to know the purpose of each of the 10 Standards and what they look like in practice.

The OCG provides many free resources to help you find out more about the Standards. You can:

- [watch a short introductory video about the Child Safe Scheme and Standards](#)
- read the OCG's [Guide to the Child Safe Standards](#)
- [watch videos on how the Standards can be applied in different settings](#)
- [register for the OCG's Introduction to the Child Safe Standards training](#).

Step 2: Make sure your staff and volunteers have necessary checks

Make sure that everyone in your organisation who is required to have a [Working with Children Check \(WWCC\)](#) has a verified clearance or an application underway. Your organisation must verify all WWCCs on [the OCG website](#). Some workers may also need an [NDIS Worker Check \(NDISWC\)](#).

Step 3: Develop or review your key Child Safe documents

As a foundation to creating a child safe organisation, your organisation should have the following child safe documents in place:

- Statement of Commitment to Child Safety
- Child Safe Policy
- Child Safe Code of Conduct
- Child Safe Reporting Policy
- Child Safe Recruitment, Induction and Training Policy
- Child Safe Risk Management Plan.

The OCG provides [sample templates](#) that you can use as a starting point to develop child safe documents to suit your own organisation.

You should then ask for feedback from across your organisation, including young people. Once completed, it's important that these documents are then shared with all staff and volunteers, as well as children, parents, guardians and your community.

Step 4: Reduce risks to children in your organisation

Another key step to creating a child safe environment is to look across your organisation to identify potential risks to children. You then need to take action to reduce or eliminate these risks. Use your Child Safe Risk Management Plan to describe these risks and actions, and regularly review and update the plan.

To get started on understanding and managing risks to children in organisations:

- watch a [short video](#) that explains key risk principles, with examples from sports clubs
- read the introductory section of OCG's handbook on managing risk: [Risk management and the Child Safe Standards Part 1: Responding to risk](#).

Step 5: Show your commitment to being a child-safe organisation

Some other simple things your organisation can do to promote and prioritise children's safety:

- **Promote and publish your Statement of Commitment to Child Safety.** This must be championed by the leaders of your organisation. You can then share it on your website and social media pages.
- **Make sure that child safety is the top priority of your organisation.** Add child safety as a standard agenda item in your regular staff, management and board meetings. Use these opportunities to make it known that child safety everyone's responsibility, and to track your progress.
- **Print and display Child Safe Standards posters.** Put these in prominent places to show that you value child safety and encourage reporting if something goes wrong. The OCG provides [posters in a range of community languages](#).
- **Make sure all children in your organisation can speak up** about anything that concerns them. Giving children opportunities to participate in decisions that affect them helps them feel safe and included.
- **Communicate regularly to your community by newsletter, social media or email.** Make sure that volunteers, parents, guardians and others understand the importance of the Child Safe Standards in your organisation and that keeping children safe is a shared responsibility.

Step 6: Track and review your progress

You can use the OCG's [Getting Started Tracker](#) to keep track of your progress across these 6 steps.

Once you're underway, use the OCG's online [Child Safe Self-Assessment](#) to see how your organisation is doing. Share the customised progress report with your staff, management and board members, and use this to identify the areas you still may need to build on.

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