

# Child Safety Standards

Creating a genuinely child safe environment requires more than policies—it demands consistent, visible action at every level of our organisation. The following guide outlines practical ways Surf Life Saving Clubs can implement the **10 Child Safe Standards**, ensuring that the safety, wellbeing and voices of children are embedded into our culture, programs, and day-to-day operations. By working together, we can build a safe and inclusive surf lifesaving community where every child feels supported, heard and protected.

Below are the **10 Child Safe Standards**, along with practical actions clubs can take to ensure alignment. These steps will help embed child safety into all aspects of club operations and demonstrate a clear commitment to protecting children and young people in the Surf Life Saving community.

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

Leaders set the tone and must demonstrate a commitment to safeguarding children through clear accountability and transparency.

### **Clubs Should**

- Ensure child safety is a standing agenda item at the Board/Management Committee meetings.
- Include child safety responsibilities in leadership role descriptions (e.g. Club President, Junior Activities Chair).
- Promote a culture of child safety through regular communication, posters, and events.

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

Their views must be listened to, respected, and acted upon where appropriate.

### **Clubs should**

- Involve young members in decision-making through junior committees or feedback sessions.
- Use suggestion boxes or surveys to gather feedback from nippers and youth.
- Display kid-friendly posters with contact points if they feel unsafe or worried.

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

Organisations must actively engage with them, keep them informed, and involve them in efforts to uphold child safety.

- Provide families with information on the club's child safety policies and procedures
- Host parent info sessions at the start of the season outlining expectations and reporting processes.
- Share updates on child safety initiatives through newsletters and social media.

### **4. Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.**

This includes children from diverse cultural backgrounds, those with disabilities, and LGBTQIA+ young people.

#### **Clubs should**

- Make programs accessible for children with disability, culturally diverse backgrounds, and LGBTQIA+ youth.
- Provide uniforms and activities that consider individual needs and sensitivities.
- Train staff and volunteers in inclusive practices, unconscious bias and culturally safe communication.

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

Staff and volunteers must be carefully selected, screened, and supported to reflect child-safe values. Ongoing supervision and alignment with child safety responsibilities is critical.

#### **Clubs should**

- Ensure all personnel (including parents helping with activities) have valid Blue Cards and complete required training.
- Screen and induct all volunteers in line with SLSQ's safeguarding requirements.
- Reinforce the Code of Conduct and monitor behaviour regularly.

### **6. Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.**

Complaints and concerns must be managed in a way that prioritises the safety, rights, and wellbeing of children. Processes must be accessible, child-friendly, and timely.

### **Clubs should**

- Promote who to talk to if something goes wrong (e.g. posters showing the Club Child Safety Officer).
- Respond to concerns promptly and in accordance with the SLISA complaints framework.
- Keep families informed of how concerns are handled, where appropriate.

*SLSQ are working on child safety posters*

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

All personnel must receive regular education and training to maintain the knowledge and skills required to keep children safe. This includes understanding indicators of harm and how to respond appropriately.

### **Clubs should**

- Ensure all age managers, coaches and leaders complete child safety training.
- Include child safety in all new member and volunteer inductions.
- Promote awareness of misconduct and safe communication.

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

Organisations must identify and manage risks in both physical and digital spaces. Environments should be designed to reduce opportunities for harm and to promote transparency and supervision.

### **Clubs should**

- Design patrol areas, change rooms, and club spaces to allow visibility and reduce isolated interactions.
- Supervise activities, ensuring adult-child ratios are appropriate.
- Monitor club-related social media groups and enforce safe online behaviour.

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

Organisations should continuously review and improve their child safety practices. This includes evaluating incidents, reviewing policies, and engaging children, families, and staff in feedback processes.

### **Clubs should**

- Conduct an annual child safety self-assessment or audit.
- Seek feedback from children, families, and volunteers to improve practices.
- Report to the club committee on child safety implementation progress.

## **10. Policies and procedures document how the entity is safe for children.**

Comprehensive and clearly documented policies and procedures must describe how the organisation keeps children safe. These documents guide consistent practice, support accountability, and must be regularly reviewed.

### **Clubs should**

- Display policies in the clubhouse and online in a parent-friendly format.
- Ensure documentation is kept up to date and accessible to all members.
- Adopt the Child Safe policies and procedures and ensure all members are aware of it.

## **Universal Principle for cultural safety**

When organisations implement the Child Safe Standards they must also provide an environment that ensures the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and Torres Strait Islander children. This is known as the Universal Principle.

The Universal Principle needs to be embedded in each of the 10 Child Safe Standards. It has the same importance as each of the Standards and the same enforcement powers can be used to address non-compliance.

If an organisation isn't culturally safe, it isn't child safe.

The [Child Safe | Surf Life Saving Queensland](#) offers a range of resources, tools, and templates to support Clubs in meeting the Child Safe Standards and creating safer environments for children and young people.