



**Australian
Childhood
Foundation**



Safeguarding Children Services Capability Statement

Who is the Australian Childhood Foundation?

Established over thirty years ago, the Australian Childhood Foundation is a national not for profit organisation with a single purpose. We want to stop children from being abused and exploited.

Our motivation has come from witnessing first-hand the real impact of the trauma of abuse and violence on children and young people. We provide therapeutic programs for children, their carers and families around Australia. In any given year, we offer these specialist trauma informed services to almost 2000 children. Many of them have been removed from their family in order to ensure their safety.

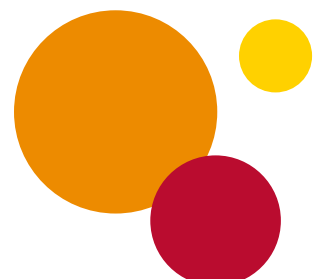
We have 180 staff - many of them psychologists, social workers, educators – who work in partnership with schools, out of home care agencies, police, family services, child care centres, statutory child protection services to support the environments these children and young people need to heal. We use neuroscience to help inform how traumatised children can best be supported to change. We train more than 8000 professionals each year.

Why do we offer our Safeguarding Children Services for organisations?

It is impossible to ignore the deep and residual pain these children carry and the courage they hold onto as they seek out relationships which they can trust and experience love. It is the driver for us to do all we can to stop abuse before it starts.

We believe that the abuse and exploitation of children and young people by employees and volunteers within organisations can be prevented. It is why we have had a focus on meeting this challenge for more than a decade, well before any of the Commissions of Inquiries into the past institutional abuse of children.

As a not for profit, all of the income generated by our range of professional services - such as Training, Research and Safeguarding Children - supports our direct work with traumatised children and young people. It is an important strategy for our organisation.



Why do organisations fail to protect children and young people from abuse and exploitation?

We have developed a model for understanding the reasons that organisations fail in their duty of care to protection children and young people from abuse and exploitation. In the below diagram, we have set out a summary of the factors that lead to failure to protect.



Failure to protect children starts with an ineffective organisational culture that is not resourced by the leadership of the organisation. Often effective governance structures and protocols are absent. Poor or not well executed policies and procedures complicate and confuse decision making processes for staff, volunteers and service users. All of these factors lead to a lack of knowledge and a lack of confidence by staff to know how to respond the risks that may occur in relation to children and young people.

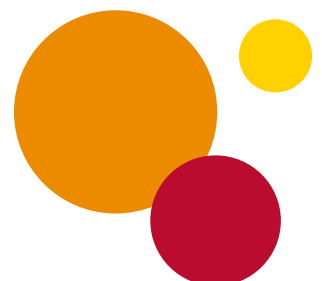
How do our Safeguarding Children Services assist organisations?

Safeguarding Children Services is a cluster of support activities for organisations that assists them to build their capacity to keep children and young people safe from abuse and exploitation by employees and volunteers.

These support activities have been drawn from a decade of national and international research as well as our own collective experience in working with children and young people who have been harmed, perpetrators of abuse, and a range of organisations across a number of different sectors seeking to strengthen their child safe approach.

We have a dedicated team that works closely with key personnel in your organisation to assess the strengths and areas for development within your organisation in relation to your Safeguarding Children capacity and culture. In the diagram below, we set out the areas that organisations will need to consider and address in order to be confident that they have in place a robust and integrated framework that will result in protecting children from abuse and exploitation.

When you engage us, our Safeguarding Children Team will tailor strategies that can meet any or all of these needs within your organisation. Depending on budget and other internal imperatives, we work with you to implement any one, a collection or the whole of the strategies that will achieve the objective of your organisation in relation to child safe organisations.



How can we help?

Our services supplement your internal resources and offer an independent, objective analysis of program and/or organisational performance against all relevant legislative, regulatory and best practice child safe standards. We will work collaboratively with you to co-design a package of the following service activities that are relevant for your objectives, size and budget.



Stakeholder engagement and consultation – We use a range of tested approaches to communicating with and seeking feedback from stakeholders to your service deliver, including children and young people, service users, staff and volunteers. We analyse the data so you can include the findings into plans for developing more effective approaches to safeguarding children.



Program/organisational evaluation and review – We work with you to undertake impact risk assessments and gap analyses of policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding children practices.



Policy development and implementation support – We can review and develop policies for you or support your teams to review and develop organisational policies which meet legislative and other compliance requirements. We also support you to operationalise systems of ongoing preventative and corrective action.



Training and capacity building of your personnel - We develop and deliver face to face and online training for all levels of personnel from Board and senior management to service deliver staff and volunteers.



Supporting child safe improvement – We can provide advice about integrating child safe frameworks into your strategic planning, implementation and review cycles.



Ready made tools and resources – We have a range of ready made tools and resources that we have developed which your organisation can use to support ways to communicate with children and young people, rate risk and offer ways for communicating with organisational personnel.



Integrating risk management and governance - We support you to investigate and address ongoing areas of risk so that it is incorporated into organisational governance processes.



Partnerships – We build partnerships with organisations so that they working collaboratively and sensitively with their communities to extend the reach of their safeguarding children strategies.



Safeguarding Children Accreditation is a unique voluntary organisational development accreditation scheme for organisations who want independent validation of their internal systems for protecting children and young people. We can audit your organisation against relevant child safe standards and accredit your organisation so that it can communicate its own best practice credentials. This scheme is endorsed via the ACCC.

What are the outcomes we support organisations to achieve?

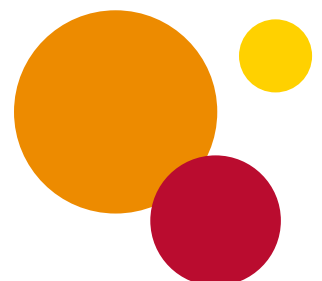
- Staff have increased knowledge, confidence and skills to implement child safe practices in their work.
- Clear behavioural expectations are effective in guiding staff and volunteers interactions with children and young people.
- Organisations have a strong regime of policies which are compliant with legislative, regulatory and best practice standards in relation to protecting children from abuse and exploitation.
- Organisations strengthen their capacity to identify, assess and address risks in relation to the safety of children from abuse and exploitation.
- Boards and senior management assume greater leadership to embed safeguarding children practices across the whole of the organisation.
- Organisations develop and implement a clear and effective process for responding to allegations of abuse and exploitation.
- Children and young people are empowered to participate in the design and implementation of services for them.
- Children, young people and parents have a greater sense of confidence about the organisation's capacity to protect children and young people from abuse and exploitation.
- Organisations have an ongoing approach to validate that their policies, procedures and practices in relation to safeguarding children remains effective and consistent.



Why select us?

Safeguarding Children Services team members bring extensive human services experience and high-level technical capabilities to every assignment. Organisations choose to work with us for the following reasons.

- We offer access to the long history of key personnel with extensive experience in child abuse, child protection, program implementation, an organisational change management.
- We understand how to communicate and facilitate participatory processes for children, young people and families.
- We have an up to date knowledge about the changing compliance, legislative and regulatory environments across the country.
- We provide clear, practical and actionable advice that focuses on identifying new ways to effectively and efficiently manage key issues related to the implementation and strengthening of practices that keep children and young people safe from abuse and exploitation.
- We develop close working relationships that is based on experience drawn from having worked with over 250 organisations across a range of sectors.
- We have already dealt with many of the issues and concerns that you and your organisation has in relation to strengthening the culture of organisation in relation to safeguarding children.
- We provide advisers who have the capacity to facilitate knowledge and skill transfer to the organisation.
- We offer a flexible, cost-effective, client-oriented approach.
- We will work with your budget.
- We understand the political and community sensitivities for organisations in implementing safeguarding children frameworks.
- We value our reputation for integrity and professionalism in everything we do.
- We provide advisers who are results or outcome oriented and will work with you to achieve your objectives.
- We provide reports about progress regularly for any or all of your stakeholders.



Who have we already worked with to build their Safeguarding Children capability?

Safeguarding Children Services has extensive experience across Australia and New Zealand in a range of sectors and with a range of organisations that have worked to strengthen their capacity to keep children and young people safe from abuse and exploitation.

The following organisations are a representative sample of those that have engaged our Safeguarding Children Services:

Parks Victoria	Surf Life Saving Australia
Australian Football League (AFL)	Anglicare Tasmania
Australian Sports Commission	Catholic Care NT
RMIT	St Vincent de Paul Society WA
YMCA Australia	Oak/Possability
City of Monash	Parkerville Children and Youth Care
Starlight Foundation	Tennis Australia
YMCA Auckland (NZ)	Mallee District Aboriginal Corporation
Scotch College	Camp Quality
Xavier College	Scouts Australia, NSW
Western Health	Australian Science Innovations
Mercycare	Jewish Care Victoria

Contact us

Contact us and discuss your needs so we can make recommendations about how we support you to realise your objectives.

Phone: 1300 381 581

Email: safeguarding@childhood.org.au

