

NATIONAL CHILD SAFE PRINCIPLES

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY



The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations are a set of high-level principles that provide a national approach to creating child-safe cultures within organisations, while Child Safe Standards are the specific, state-level implementations of those principles, ensuring consistency across Australia.

The Royal Commission into Institutional Child Sexual Abuse recommended 10 standards for better protection children from harm and abuse. The National Principles reflect these standards and have a broader scope to protect children and young people from all forms of abuse.

In February 2019, the National Principles were endorsed by every state and territory through the Council of Australian Governments (COAG). Each State and Territory holds the responsibility to implement the Principles in their jurisdiction through their Child Safe Standards.

Is my organisation required to implement the Child Safe Standards?

From 1 August 2024, amendments to the Human Rights Commission Act 2005 make it mandatory for all organisations that provide services for children and young people to commence implementing the ACT Child Safe Standards Scheme (the Scheme).

What are the ACT Child Safe Standards?

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

The Child Safe Standards are designed to ensure child safety is prioritised across all aspects of an organisation from leadership and culture to the environment to documentation. Continuous quality improvement has been built into the standards to ensure that organisations must review and enhance their approach to child safety.

How can my organisation implement the Child Safe Standards?

The Children and Young People Commissioner (CYPC) will support implementation of the Scheme across the ACT by working with organisations and sectors to enhance their capability. The CYPC will provide information, resources and training to assist organisations to improve their practices and better prioritise child safety and wellbeing.

The ACT Human Rights Commission has developed a guide to support organisations implement the standards. Further information can be found [here](#).