

# Child Safe Standards

## ABOUT THE NEW STANDARDS

### WHY DO WE HAVE THE STANDARDS?

In April 2012, the Victorian government initiated an inquiry into the handling of child abuse allegations within religious and other non-government organisations. The inquiry's final report, *Betrayal of Trust*, made a number of recommendations that have been acted on by the Victorian Government. The creation of Child Safe Standards (the Standards) was one of the key recommendations.

### WHY HAVE THEY CHANGED?

The Victorian Government announced an update to the Victorian Child Safe Standards, which **commenced on 1 July 2022**. The **eleven (11)** new Standards replaced Victoria's original seven standards and three principles.

Changes have been made to support greater national consistency, reflecting the National Principles for a Child Safe Organisation developed following the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

### WHAT ARE THE CHANGES?

Key changes include new requirements:

- To involve families and communities in organisations' efforts to keep children and young people safe
- For a greater focus on safety for Aboriginal children and young people
- To manage the risk of child abuse in online environments
- For greater clarity on the governance, systems and processes to keep children and young people safe.

### WHO DO THEY APPLY TO?

The Standards apply to organisations that operate for and provide services to children within Victoria, regardless of how many children are involved. Victorian sporting organisations (including National Sporting Organisations based in Victoria) must comply with the Standards if they provide a service to children under the age of 18.

The Standards apply to organisations as a whole, not just the areas/departments that work with children and young people. This means the Standards apply to **all personnel** in your organisation including, but not limited to:

- Board of Management / Committee Members
- All paid staff (CEO, Executive, Employees)
- All Volunteers (Coaches, officials, administrators etc)
- All students on placement
- Any contractors you engage

## WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW?

For the purpose of these Standards a child is defined as a person under the age of 18 years.

Child abuse is defined as:

- Sexual abuse or sexual exploitation of a child (including grooming, with the intent to sexually harm a child);
- Physical abuse or violence;
- Serious psychological or emotional abuse;
- Serious neglect; and
- Abuse of power, that has caused, is causing or is likely to cause harm to a child's wellbeing, development or health. It includes bullying, harassment and grooming.

## WHAT ARE THE STANDARDS?

It takes many components to build an organisation with a culture of child safety. The Standards should act as a starting point from which your organisation can take action. The Standards are:

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

## WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW?

Now is a great time to review the Croquet Victoria Child Safe Framework Action Plan. This document takes you through three phases including nine easy steps, that will help you implement the Child Safety Framework.

## WHO CAN HELP ME?

Vicsport

03 9698 8100

[admin@vicsport.com.au](mailto:admin@vicsport.com.au)

[www.vicsport.com.au/child-safe-standards](http://www.vicsport.com.au/child-safe-standards)

The Commission for Children and Young People

03 8601 5281

[childsafestandards@ccyp.vic.gov.au](mailto:childsafestandards@ccyp.vic.gov.au)

<https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/>

## REMEMBER:

Child safety is not an add-on or one-off exercise. It is a legal requirement that your organisation must comply with. Having policies and procedures in place is not enough. It's about creating a culture and environment within sport that is supportive and protective of children.

Vicsport is here to assist you through the process.

## Further Information:

**P** +61 3 9698 8100

**E** [admin@vicsport.com.au](mailto:admin@vicsport.com.au)

**W** [www.vicsport.com.au/child-safe-standards](http://www.vicsport.com.au/child-safe-standards)

*This resource is supported by the Victorian Government.*