

Organisational frameworks for safeguarding children and young people

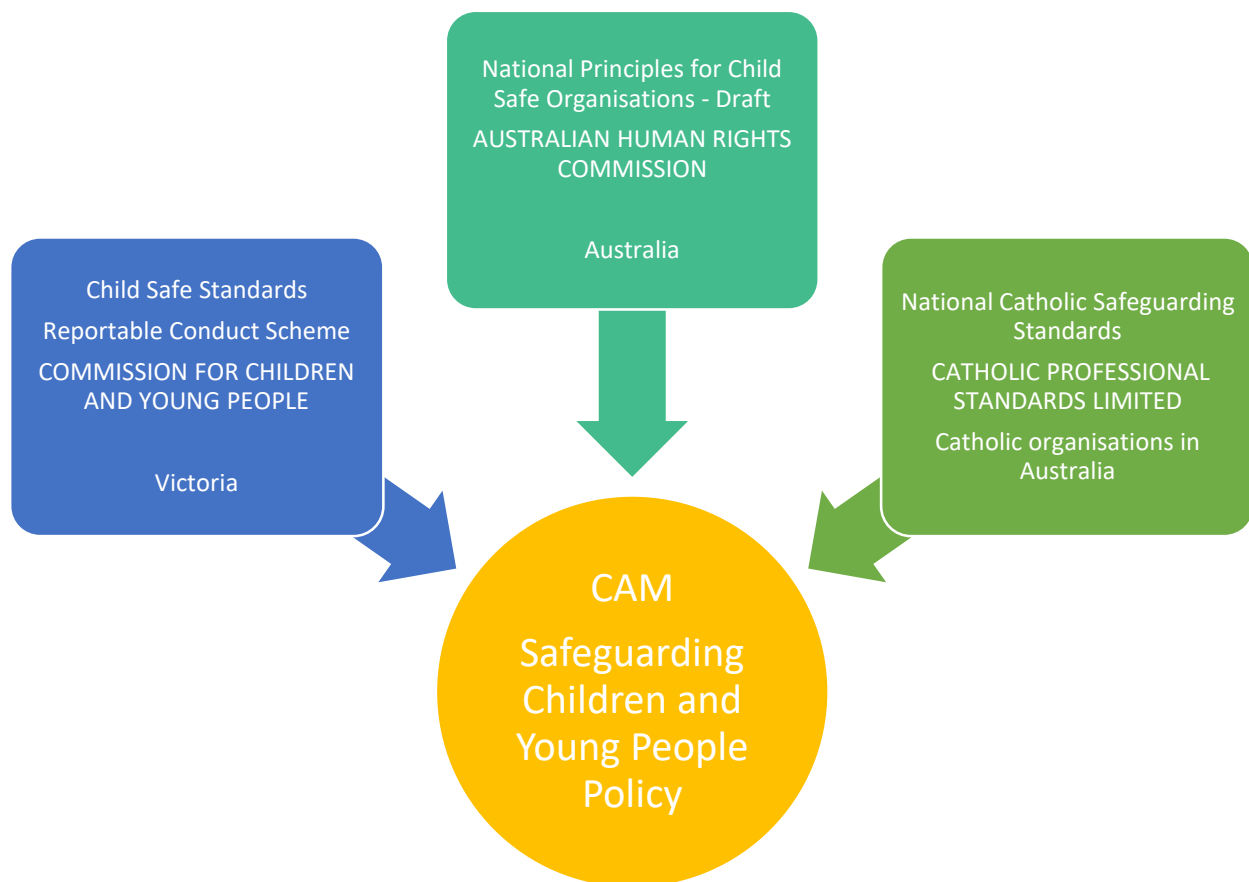
The leadership of each parish, agency and entity is responsible for ensuring compliance with the requirements of the Safeguarding Children and Young People Framework and relevant procedures and practices to promote the safety of children and young people consistent with the:

- Child Safe Standards (Victoria)
- National Catholic Safeguarding Standards
- National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

Figure 1 represents the organisational child safety frameworks which have informed the development of the CAM Safeguarding Children and Young People Framework. Table 1 provides a comparison of the requirements of each of the organisational child safety frameworks.

Figure 1

Organisational frameworks which inform the Safeguarding Children and Young People Framework



Organisational frameworks for safeguarding children and young people

CHILD SAFE STANDARDS (VICTORIA)

The pace of legislative reform in Victoria has been rapid, and driven by a desire to address the significant issue of child abuse within organisations in response to the recommendations of the Betrayal of Trust Inquiry.

Under the *Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005 (Vic)*, compliance with the Child Safe Standards which were introduced in 2015 in Victoria is a legal requirement for all organisations working with children and young people.

Organisations in Victoria must comply with the standards if they:

- provide any services to children and young people
- provide any facilities specifically for use by children and young people who are under the organisation's supervision
- engage a child or young person as an employee, volunteer or contractor.

There are seven child safe standards. The standards highlight the need for organisations to take preventative steps to ensure that children and young people are safe. They require organisations to embed their commitment to child safety within their organisation culture, policies, procedures and practices and to prioritise the safety of children and young people. In effect, the standards aim to make child safety 'part of the DNA' of an organisation. They are designed to encourage and support a shared commitment to protect children and young people from all forms of abuse.

Standard 1: Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, through effective leadership arrangements.

Standard 2: A Child Safe Policy or Statement of Commitment to Child Safety.

Standard 3: A Code of Conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children.

Standard 4: Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel.

Standard 5: Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse.

Standard 6: Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse.

Standard 7: Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children.

Compliance with the standards also require organisations to uphold the following principles as part of each standard:

- promoting the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people
- promoting the cultural safety of children and young people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- promoting the safety of children with a disability.

These principles recognise that factors such as ethnicity and disability may increase a child or young person's vulnerability to abuse and that organisations need to be aware and take additional precautions to ensure children experiencing additional vulnerabilities are safe from harm.

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The Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP) was established to ensure that all organisations covered by the Child Safe Standards meet their obligations in relation to child safety and to support organisations to build their capacity to prevent and respond to allegations of child abuse.

The CCYP has a range of legislative powers to enforce compliance including requesting information, conducting site visits, auditing, publishing the names of noncompliant organisations and initiating civil legal action. The CCYP's audit and enforcement powers are outlined in the *Commission for Children and Young People Act 2012* (Vic) and the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic).

NATIONAL PRINCIPLES FOR CHILD SAFE ORGANISATIONS (NPCSO)

The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (NPCSO) respond to recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse to child safety within an organisational context. The 10 principles with 42 key action areas, which are underpinned by a child-rights approach, are designed to provide consistency across Australia in relation to child safety within an organisational context.

The NPCSO have been endorsed by members of the Council of Australian Governments in February 2019. At present, the NPCSO are not mandatory.

Following a review of the Victorian Child Safe Standards (VCSS) in February 2019, it is anticipated that the NPCSO may be integrated into VCSS.

NATIONAL CATHOLIC SAFEGUARDING STANDARDS (NCSS)

Catholic Professional Standards Ltd (CPSL) released Edition 1 of the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (NCSS) in early 2019. The standards framework is comprised of 10 standards with 49 criteria and 111 indicators, and are closely aligned with the NPCSO.

The NCSS are designed to ensure that Catholic Church organisations have a child safe culture in accordance with Gospel values, community expectations and legislative requirements. The standards seek to create a consistent and comprehensive approach within the Catholic Church in Australia.

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Table 1: Child Safe Standards, NPCSO and NCSS Comparison

Child Safe Standards (Victoria)	National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (NPCSO)	National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (NCSS)
<i>Commission for Children and Young People</i>	<i>Australian Human Rights Commission National Office for Child Safety</i>	<i>Catholic Professional Standards Ltd</i>
<p>Standard 1 Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, through effective leadership arrangements</p> <p>Standard 2 A Child Safe Policy or Statement of Commitment to Child Safety</p> <p>Standard 3 A Code of Conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children</p>	<p>Principle 1 Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.</p> <p>Principle 10 Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.</p> <p>Principle 7 Staff [including clergy and employees] and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.</p>	<p>Standard 1 Committed leadership, governance and culture Child safeguarding is embedded in the entity’s leadership, governance and culture.</p> <p>Standards 10 Policies and procedures support child safety Policies and procedures document how the entity is safe for children.</p> <p>Standard 5 Robust human resource management People working with children are suitable and supported to reflect child safeguarding values in practice.</p> <p>Standard 7 Ongoing education and training Personnel are equipped with knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through information, ongoing education and training.</p>

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Standard 5 Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse	Principle 6 Processes for complaints and concerns are child focused.	Standard 6 Effective complaints management Processes for raising concerns and complaints are responsive, understood, accessible and used by children, families, carers, communities and personnel.
Standard 6 Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse	While there is no direct equivalent – Child Safe Standard 6 would require organisations to identify and reduce or remove risks arising in both physical and online environments. Principle 8 Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.	Standard 8 Safe physical and online environments Physical and online environments promote safety and contain appropriate safeguards to minimise the opportunity for children to be harmed.
Standard 7 Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children	Principle 2 Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.	Standard 2 Children are safe, informed and participate Children are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
No direct equivalent	Principle 3 Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.	Standard 3 Partnering with families, carers and communities Families, carers and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safeguarding.

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<i>Commission for Children and Young People</i>	<i>Australian Human Rights Commission National Office for Child Safety</i>	<i>Catholic Professional Standards Ltd</i>
<p>Compliance with the standards also requires organisations to uphold the following principles as part of each standard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promoting the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people • promoting the cultural safety of children and young people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds • promoting the safety of children with a disability 	<p>Principle 4</p> <p>Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.</p> <p>4.3 requires organisations to pay “particular attention to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with disability, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who are unable to live at home, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children and young people” (p.10).</p>	<p>Standard 4 Equity is promoted and diversity is respected.</p> <p>Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.</p> <p>4.3 of the NCSS also require recognition of the needs of “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with disability, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who are unable to live at home, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children and young people”.</p>
No direct equivalent	<p>Principle 9</p> <p>Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved.</p>	<p>Standard 9 Continuous improvement</p> <p>Entities regularly review and improve implementation of their systems for keeping child safe.</p>

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USEFUL RESOURCES

Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)

www6.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/viewdb/au/legis/vic/consol_act/cwasa2005218

National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (NCSS) – please refer to the Catholic Professional Standards Ltd website.

<https://www.cpsltd.org.au/>

National Principles for Child Safe Organisations – please refer to the Australian Human Rights Commission Child Safe website.

<https://childsafe.humanrights.gov.au/national-principles>

Child Safe Standards (Victoria) – please refer to the Commission for Children and Young People website.

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

What does a child-safe parish look like? - CPSL interview with Robert Fitzgerald AM (video)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wU3o6yg_qQI&feature=youtu.be



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*The Archdiocese of Melbourne is committed to the safety, wellbeing and dignity
of all children, young people and vulnerable adults.*