



Commissioner for Children and Young People  
Western Australia



# Child Safe Organisations WA: Self-assessment and review tool

April 2016

## Disclaimer

This tool is intended to assist a broad range of organisations in their efforts to become more child safe. Each organisation will need to consider the information in the tool and develop strategies and practices suited to its own specific needs, consistent with its duty of care.

## Recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

The Commissioner for Children and Young People WA acknowledges the unique contribution of Aboriginal people's culture and heritage to Western Australian society. For the purposes of this report, the term 'Aboriginal' encompasses Western Australia's diverse language groups and also recognises those of Torres Strait Islander descent.

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## Alternative formats

On request, large print or alternative formats can be obtained from:

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## Introduction

Leaders of organisations, including board members, chief executives, directors and managers, are responsible for creating and maintaining an organisational culture where the safety of children and young people is a priority.

An ongoing cycle of assessment, action and review will assist leaders to reflect on their effectiveness in implementing child safe practices and to strive for excellence.

This self-assessment and review tool is designed to be used by organisations to:

- assess current organisational practices
- reflect on what the organisation is doing well
- identify areas requiring development
- review progress over time
- highlight positive changes
- acknowledge challenges or barriers
- outline what still needs to be done.

The tool is intended to be used with the publication *Child Safe Organisations WA: Guidelines*, available at [www.ccyp.wa.gov.au](http://www.ccyp.wa.gov.au), which provides information and examples of child safe practices across nine domains.

# How to use the self-assessment and review tool

This tool focuses on the culture and behaviours that are essential to establish and sustain a child safe and friendly organisation.

It is recommended the following steps are taken:

## Consider and Determine

- who will complete the assessment/review (may be one person or multiple)
- who will be involved in providing information on the practices
- which leaders will consider the findings and approve the actions and timeframes

## Assess and Document

Rate how the organisation performs on a series of 'practices' using the following five-point scale:

1. Just beginning, self-assessment and planning
2. Some progress, implementation of some aspects evident
3. Most but not all aspects of the organisational practice are evident
4. All aspects of the organisational practice are evident
5. All aspects of the organisational practice are evident, and regularly reviewed

In rating each practice, consider the following:

- To what extent is the practice implemented and active?
- What can be seen? Use the examples provided as a guide.
- If asked, what would people say about the practice (children and young people, parents, carers, staff and volunteers)?
- What is evidenced in documents?

## Identify and Action

- make notes that support the ratings
- articulate next steps for improvement
- identify who will do the work
- set timeframes for achievement
- have the assessment/review ratings, actions and timeframes approved by leaders

## Monitor and Review

- use the review dates in the tool
- check on improvements identified in the previous assessment and the actions completed
- highlight positive changes
- learn from feedback, complaints, errors
- appraise all domains each time to ensure all aspects of child safe and friendly practices are evident



## Leadership, governance and culture

Date of review:

Date of next review:

Practices	Rating 1 to 5	Evidence of practice in action	Next steps	By whom	By when
<p>An organisational commitment to being child safe and friendly articulates how the commitment is actioned and is publicly available.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in public documents</li> <li>• on the website</li> <li>• on posters/flyers across locations</li> <li>• included in induction/welcome packs</li> <li>• on key internal documents/intranet.</li> </ul>					
<p>A clear accountability framework for child safe and friendly practices and procedures is promoted to staff, volunteers, families, children and young people and includes access to specialist advice about child safe practices internally and/or externally.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• everyone understands their own roles and responsibilities for child safety</li> <li>• there are named people to discuss practices and concerns with</li> <li>• policies and procedures refer to additional information, support and contacts.</li> </ul>					

## Leadership, governance and culture

Date of review:  
Date of next review:

Practices	Rating 1 to 5	Evidence of practice in action	Next steps	By whom	By when
<p>Leaders actively model and promote inclusive practices, respect for diversity and a focus on child safety throughout the organisation. They provide opportunities for staff and volunteers to ask questions and to seek further advice on how to maintain a child safe environment.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• inclusion of child safety messages in newsletters, speeches</li> <li>• regular agenda item in meetings and other communication</li> <li>• monitoring the use of policies and processes in practice.</li> </ul>					
<p>Leaders support and enable staff and volunteers to undertake child safe and friendly practices.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• written into strategic/planning documents</li> <li>• work is planned to minimise situations where children may be harmed</li> <li>• the increased level or risk associated with some activities and/or particular vulnerabilities of some children is accounted for</li> <li>• time/funding is allocated to training/professional development.</li> </ul>					

## Empowering children to participate

Date of review:  
Date of next review:

Practices	Rating 1 to 5	Evidence of practice in action	Next steps	By whom	By when
<p>Staff/volunteers promote children’s rights and responsibilities and promote personal safety and support.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• talking to children and young people about               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– their right to feel safe</li> <li>– steps the organisation takes to help keep them safe</li> <li>– the rules of the organisation</li> <li>– who to talk to/how to speak up if something is worrying them</li> <li>– what to do if someone they know is being hurt</li> </ul> </li> <li>• protective behaviours education</li> <li>• child friendly versions of rules/codes of conduct and complaint processes</li> <li>• pro-active checking in with children.</li> </ul>					
<p>The organisation’s environment reflects the lives and identities of the children that engage with the organisation.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• artwork; positive images, photos and role models; maps of Aboriginal cultural boundaries, and/or different countries</li> <li>• information, places or programs in other languages.</li> </ul>					



## Empowering children to participate

Date of review:  
Date of next review:

Practices	Rating 1 to 5	Evidence of practice in action	Next steps	By whom	By when
<p>Staff/volunteers run their activities in an inclusive way that adds to the self-esteem of all participants.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• when a child joins the organisation, assess their needs (including cultural)</li> <li>• facilitate connections between children through buddy systems</li> <li>• work with other professionals and/or families to ensure activities are adapted appropriately</li> <li>• apply knowledge from training; share good practices and previous learnings</li> <li>• individual support plans are in place</li> <li>• discuss/seek feedback on strategies with child, young person, families and/or service providers.</li> </ul>					
<p>Staff/volunteers provide opportunities for children to contribute to program and policy development and review.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ask their opinions through discussions, activities and surveys on: how things could be better, what they like/don't like, what makes them feel safe/unsafe in the organisation</li> <li>• children design/write child friendly versions of policies and procedures.</li> </ul>					

## Involving family and community

Date of review:  
Date of next review:

Practices	Rating 1 to 5	Evidence of practice in action	Next steps	By whom	By when
<p>There are opportunities for families and community members to participate in activities in the organisation.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• P&amp;C committee, volunteers, Elders, cultural advisors</li> <li>• open door policy for parents/carers to visit the organisation</li> <li>• involvement in activities</li> <li>• ‘drop in’ sessions</li> <li>• morning teas.</li> </ul>					
<p>Barriers that may prevent family and/or community participation have been identified and addressed.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• discuss with families how they would like to be involved in the organisation</li> <li>• establish connections to external agencies or community leaders who can support the organisation to build culturally respectful practice.</li> </ul>					

## Involving family and community

Date of review:  
Date of next review:

Practices	Rating 1 to 5	Evidence of practice in action	Next steps	By whom	By when
<p>Opportunities for families and other community members to be involved in program and policy development and reviews within the organisation are actively promoted.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>actively invite feedback or opinions through informal discussions, forums, meetings, surveys</li> <li>supporting several families to speak with others and report back to the organisation on: how things could be better, how could the organisation work in more culturally appropriate ways, what they like/don't like.</li> </ul>					

## Child safe and friendly policies

Date of review:  
Date of next review:

Practices	Rating 1 to 5	Evidence of practice in action	Next steps	By whom	By when
<p>There is a coherent framework of policies and procedures which address safety and other relevant issues facing children and young people.</p> <p><b>Examples – the framework:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• details the organisation’s commitment to child safety and the proactive steps taken to address child safety</li> <li>• incorporates or makes reference to a code of conduct, a risk management strategy, feedback and complaints procedures, including responding to disclosures</li> <li>• details staff and volunteer management (including recruitment, education and development), ongoing supervision and disciplinary procedures.</li> </ul>					
<p>Child safe policies and procedures are applied to the day-to-day practice of the organisation’s workers.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• staff are trained in the policies and they are discussed in supervision, meetings, reviews.</li> </ul>					

## Child safe and friendly policies

Date of review:  
Date of next review:

Practices	Rating 1 to 5	Evidence of practice in action	Next steps	By whom	By when
The policies and procedures are clear, easy to understand and accessible to all stakeholders, including staff, volunteers, families, children and young people. This may mean there are separate versions for each stakeholder group.					
<p>Everyone in the organisation, including staff, volunteers, children and young people and families can describe what the organisation has in place to keep children and young people safe or what to do in particular circumstances, such as how to make a complaint.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>everyone can describe:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>what is in place to keep children safe</li> <li>what to do in various situations</li> <li>what will happen if they raise a concern</li> </ul> </li> <li>this information may be captured through surveys, informal discussions, focussed meetings, the following of procedures.</li> </ul>					

## Managing staff and volunteers

Date of review:  
Date of next review:

Practices	Rating 1 to 5	Evidence of practice in action	Next steps	By whom	By when
<p>All workers, including paid staff and volunteers, are carefully selected using a recruitment strategy that includes multiple checks.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• multi-person interview panel</li> <li>• transparent short-listing process</li> <li>• standardised reference checks</li> <li>• identity checks</li> <li>• qualification verification</li> <li>• Working With Children Check</li> <li>• National Police Check.</li> </ul>					
<p>Staff and volunteers participate in a structured induction process which includes training, advice and ongoing support in relation to child safe policies and day-to-day child safe practices in the workplace.</p>					

## Managing staff and volunteers

Date of review:  
Date of next review:

Practices	Rating 1 to 5	Evidence of practice in action	Next steps	By whom	By when
<p>Regular supervision and support is provided to staff, which includes the opportunity to discuss child safe practices and checks for understanding of policies and procedures.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• regular training, professional development and/or information sessions</li> <li>• relevant aspects incorporated within performance plans</li> <li>• circulation of information about policies and procedures</li> <li>• active communication of internal and/or external supports</li> <li>• staff mentoring.</li> </ul>					
<p>Staff and volunteer management is supported by clear disciplinary and grievance procedures, which are linked to codes of conduct and feedback/complaint mechanisms.</p>					

## Safe environments – physical and online

Date of review:  
Date of next review:

Practices	Rating 1 to 5	Evidence of practice in action	Next steps	By whom	By when
<p>A practical risk management strategy has been developed, which is adapted for the different settings in which the organisation works and the particular needs of the children and young people.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• visibility has been considered and activities planned accordingly</li> <li>• where visibility is not possible, other practices are strengthened</li> <li>• access to the organisation is actively monitored</li> <li>• off-site activities are planned to take into account the physical environment</li> <li>• procedures and guidelines for managing toilet breaks, changing clothes and personal care are in place</li> <li>• guidelines provided about online environments.</li> </ul>					



## Safe environments – physical and online

Date of review:  
Date of next review:

Practices	Rating 1 to 5	Evidence of practice in action	Next steps	By whom	By when
<p>Behaviours that are inappropriate with children and young people and workplace factors that can affect the likelihood of such behaviour occurring have been identified. Strategies to minimise these activities occurring have been included in the practical risk management strategy.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• guidelines about physical contact between adults and children and young people, and between children and young people</li> <li>• random checks across the organisation</li> <li>• guidelines about off-site activities.</li> </ul>					
<p>Behaviours that are inappropriate with children in an online environment have been identified. Strategies to minimise these behaviours and activities occurring have been addressed.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• guidelines and education about cyber-safety and online security for children and young people provided, or links to education resources provided.</li> <li>• guidelines about taking and storage of photos of children</li> <li>• guidelines for staff and volunteers about communication with children via personal phones, emails and social media.</li> </ul>					

## Child friendly complaints process and reporting

Date of review:

Date of next review:

Practices	Rating 1 to 5	Evidence of practice in action	Next steps	By whom	By when
<p>There are clear procedures for staff, volunteers, families, children and young people to provide feedback, raise concerns or make formal complaints. These procedures are actively promoted.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• staff and volunteers discuss and invite complaints/feedback</li> <li>• easily accessible and visible posters/flyers/flowcharts</li> <li>• information on the website.</li> </ul>					
<p>All concerns from children and young people, staff, volunteers, family and community members are taken seriously and acted upon.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• there is a clear process for raising complaints and concerns, including a record keeping system that is linked to decision making and disciplinary processes about concerns</li> <li>• there are several pathways to escalate concerns</li> <li>• complainants are kept informed of the progress and outcome</li> <li>• feedback and complaints lead to improvement in service planning and/or delivery.</li> </ul>					

## Child friendly complaints process and reporting

Date of review:  
Date of next review:

Practices	Rating 1 to 5	Evidence of practice in action	Next steps	By whom	By when
<p>Barriers that may prevent staff, volunteers, families, children and young people from providing feedback, raising concerns or making a formal complaint have been identified and addressed.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cultural appropriateness of the processes have been considered</li> <li>• there are ways for people with communication difficulties to raise concerns</li> <li>• there is an anonymous option</li> <li>• complaints from an advocate or someone speaking on behalf of children are accepted</li> <li>• staff/volunteers have multiple colleagues to discuss concerns with; not restricted to line managers.</li> </ul>					
<p>There are multiple pathways for staff, volunteers, children, young people and families to provide feedback, raise concerns or complaints.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• incorporated into activities</li> <li>• anonymous dropbox or online system</li> <li>• regular invitations to talk or 'checking in' with people</li> <li>• designated staff role for promoting child safety (more than one).</li> </ul>					

## Education and development

Date of review:  
Date of next review:

Practices	Rating 1 to 5	Evidence of practice in action	Next steps	By whom	By when
<p>Training and resources provided to staff/ volunteers are accessible, evidence-informed and reviewed regularly. Where necessary/applicable, external experts support or provide training.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>resources, or information about resources, are prominently displayed in staff areas or on intranet</li> <li>resources are from organisations that have expertise in the safety of children and young people.</li> </ul>					

## Education and development

Date of review:  
Date of next review:

Practices	Rating 1 to 5	Evidence of practice in action	Next steps	By whom	By when
<p>Training addresses the needs of the whole organisation, including leaders and governing bodies, to ensure they have the knowledge and information needed to understand their responsibilities.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the dynamics of child abuse</li> <li>• how to identify and respond to behaviour by others that is considered risky or harmful to children</li> <li>• being culturally responsive</li> <li>• supporting the participation of children and young people, families and communities</li> <li>• the process of disclosure and responding to children and young people</li> <li>• policies, procedures and reporting within the organisation, and legal reporting obligations</li> <li>• where to access further support internally and/or externally, including what to do if concerns are not acted on appropriately.</li> </ul>					
<p>Ongoing professional development/training is provided to support ongoing responsiveness to, and application of, child safe and friendly practices in the workplace.</p>					

## Continuous improvement

Date of review:  
Date of next review:

Practices	Rating 1 to 5	Evidence of practice in action	Next steps	By whom	By when
<p>Regular reviews of policies and procedures, and the enactment of policies and procedures, are undertaken and are informed by a range of information/data sources from the organisation.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>planned activities, brainstorming sessions, meetings, forums, etc.</li> <li>regular proactive discussion/input about practice as part of general meetings; informed by general feedback, input from staff, volunteers, children, young people, carers and parents.</li> </ul>					
<p>Policies and procedures are dated and new versions/changes are brought to the attention of staff, volunteers, parents, carers, children and young people and supported by relevant information and/or training as required.</p>					

## Continuous improvement

Date of review: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of next review: \_\_\_\_\_

Practices	Rating 1 to 5	Evidence of practice in action	Next steps	By whom	By when
<p>The organisation fosters open and positive relationships with other organisations to share lessons learned, experiences and practices.</p> <p><b>Examples</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• working groups</li> <li>• network meetings</li> </ul>					
<p>Self-assessment and review of all child safe organisation domains and strategies are undertaken regularly and leaders in the organisation are aware of the outcomes, any areas requiring attention and the completion of necessary tasks.</p>					

Completed by \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved / Noted by \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved / Noted by \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved / Noted by \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



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