

# Child safe environments

## General overview

Ensuring children's safety and wellbeing is the shared responsibility of the whole community.

It is important for any organisation providing services to children and young people to consider what it can do to ensure it is a safe and welcoming place for the children and young people it serves.

## Obligations

In South Australia, legislative obligations require certain organisations to provide safe environments for children.

The focus of child safe environments is not simply to minimise risk or danger. Rather it is to build an environment that is both child safe and child friendly, where children are valued and feel respected and encouraged to participate and reach their full potential.

A commitment to the safety of children and young people should be embedded in every organisation's culture, reflected in its policies and procedures and understood and practiced at all levels of the organisation.

To establish safe environments for children, organisations must:

- develop policies and procedures to ensure child safe environments
- meet Working With Children Check requirements for people working with children or undertaking child-related work
- lodge a Child safe environments compliance statement.

## Types of organisations

All persons or bodies who provide a service or undertake an activity that constitutes child-related work under the *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016*, must meet these obligations. This includes organisations providing:

- accommodation and residential services for children
- services or activities provided by religious organisations (which includes organisations providing spiritual or pastoral services)
- childcare or child-minding services

- child protection services
- services or activities provided in the course of the operation of clubs and associations with a significant membership of, or involvement by, children who provide services or activities of a sporting, recreational, cultural or artistic nature
- coaching or tuition services for children
- commercial services provided directly to children, including:
  - the sale or supply of goods or services where physical contact with children would reasonably be expected to occur
  - recreational services where contact with children would be reasonably expected to occur (such as a play gym)
  - entertainment services provided at children parties or events (such as face painting or the hire of bouncy castles)
  - entertainment services where a person appearing or performing as a costumed character that is likely to appeal to children (such as a sports mascot or Santa Claus)
  - photography of children
  - competitions held primarily for children, or where there is a children's category (such as beauty pageants and talent shows)
- disability services for children
- education services for children (including preschool, primary and secondary education, but not tertiary education)
- health services for children (including allied health services)
- justice and detention services for children
- transport services for children

- other persons or bodies declared in the regulations which include:
  - non-government organisations that provide welfare or cultural services wholly or partly for children.

Organisation in this context includes sole traders or people working in partnerships.

These requirements also apply to State Authorities as defined in the [Children and Young People \(Safety\) Act 2017](#).

## Policies and procedures

Child safe environments policies and procedures developed by the organisation must be of a standard as set in the [Child Safe Environments: Principles of Good Practice](#).

Child safe environments policies and procedures do not need to be 'stand-alone' and can be incorporated into an organisation's overall policy framework.

Information, resources and guidance is available from our website.

## Working with children checks (WWCC)

An important aspect of providing child safe environments is ensuring that people working or volunteering with children and young people are suitable.

The *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016* requires people who are working with children or providing child-related work have a WWCC.

Organisations must ensure that the people they engage are suited to the specific role they are undertaking and that prohibited persons are not engaged to work with children and young people.

Sole traders and people working in partnerships who are working with children or undertaking child-related work are also required to have a WWCC.

For more information about who needs a WWCC and how to apply visit, <https://screening.sa.gov.au/>.

## Compliance statements

Organisations must lodge a Child safe environments compliance statement about their child safe environments policies and procedures, with the Department of Human Services.

A Child safe environments compliance statement sets out the minimum standards organisations must meet in order to ensure child safe environments.

Failure to comply with these requirements may incur a maximum penalty of up to \$10,000.

Please see the compliance statement fact sheet for further information about how to lodge a compliance statement.

## Go to for help

Further information about establishing and maintaining child safe environments, including guidelines, templates and other useful resources, is available from the Child safe environments website, <https://dhs.sa.gov.au/>.

If you can't find what you need online, contact Child safe environments:

Email: [DHS.childsafe@sa.gov.au](mailto:DHS.childsafe@sa.gov.au)

Phone: (08) 8463 6468