



# YOUR LIBRARY

## Child Safe Standards

**Approval:** Board

**Endorsement Date:** 24/8/2023

**Current Version:** 1

**Review Cycle:** 2 years

**Review Date:** Every two years and no later than 31 March in the review year.

It is recognised that, from time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Where an update does not materially alter this document, such a change may be made administratively and noted in document history.

### Document History

Date	Change Type	Version	Review Year
24/8/23	Initial version	1	2025

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## 1. Victoria's Child Safe Standards

The Child Safe Standards (the Standards) commenced in Victoria in January 2016.

Since 1 July 2022, organisations covered by the Standards have to comply with 11 new Standards.

The 11 Standards set out minimum requirements and outline the actions organisations must take to keep children and young people safe.

The Standards provide more clarity for organisations and are more consistent with Standards in the rest of Australia.

The 11 Standards include specific 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; and
- in relation to governance, systems, and processes to keep children and young people safe.

## 2. What does Your Library need to do?

YLL must comply with the 11 Standards (refer to Attachment 1).

The Commission has powers to take action where Your Library Limited (YLL) may not be compliant with the Standards.

## 3. Definitions

**Child** means a child or young person under the age of 18 years.

### Child abuse

Types of child abuse can include:

- Physical violence:
  - Actual violence — a child suffers or is likely to suffer harm or an injury from physical force against, with, or in their presence and the action was either intentional or reckless.
  - Apprehended physical violence — a child thinks that physical force is about to be used against them or another person, as a result of action by any personnel.
- Sexual abuse — a child is exposed to or suffers from sexual behaviour to them, or in their presence, or they are exposed, by an adult, to sexually explicit material.
- Emotional abuse — a child is severely or repeatedly rejected, isolated, humiliated or threatened, or through witnessing violence by others.
- Neglect — occurs where there is a significant, deliberate or reckless failure to meet the basic needs of a child in circumstances where the adult understood the needs of the child, or could have understood those needs and had the opportunity to meet those needs but failed to do so. This includes supervisory, physical, educational and emotional neglect.
- Family violence — is any violent or threatening behaviour including physical, verbal, emotional, psychological, sexual, financial or social abuse that occurs in any current or previous family, domestic or intimate relationship.
- Grooming — targets communication, including online communication, with a child or their parents, with the intent of committing child sexual abuse. Grooming does not necessarily involve sexual activity or discussion. It is the establishment of a relationship with the child, parent or carer for the purpose of facilitating sexual activity at a later time. It is illegal to groom a child under 16 years of age and a significant breach of this policy to groom or sexually harass any child.
- Racial, cultural and religious abuse — is behaviour that demonstrates contempt, ridicule, hatred or negativity towards a child because of their race, culture or religion.
- It may be direct or in direct by demonstrating a lack of cultural respect and awareness or failing to provide positive images about another culture.



**Child Safe Standards** as made under section 17(1) of the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*.

**Disclosure** is when a child or young person tells someone that he/she/they feels unsafe or has been harmed. A disclosure can also be made by adults including parents and carers or any person in contact with the child or young person, where that person reveals that they believe a child or young person has been harmed or is likely to be harmed.

**Grooming** concerns predatory conduct undertaken to prepare a child for sexual activity at a later time.

**Staff or Personnel** includes all staff, volunteers, work experience members, consultants and contractors engaged by YLL.

#### 4. Approval

This Child Safe Standards is issued under the authority of the Board.

The contents of this document represent the current Child Safe Code of Conduct of YLL and reflect its current practices and experience.

This Code of Conduct is subject to biennial review and will be altered (and the alterations communicated to users) as, and when, appropriate to ensure that it remains current.

#### 5. Other Your Library Relevant Policies and Procedures

- Child Safe Policy
- Child Safe Code of Conduct
- Child Safe Reportable Conduct Scheme Procedures

Available at: <https://www.yourlibrary.com.au/about/>

#### 6. Disclaimer

The information provided in this Code is intended as general information only. The Corporation strives to provide information as accurately as possible.

The Corporation makes no claims, promises, or guarantees about the accuracy, completeness, or adequacy of the contents of this Code, and expressly disclaims liability for errors and omissions in the contents of this Policy.

#### 7. Contact

Please contact a Your Library Child Safety Officer in relation to matters arising under this policy, including advice, support and internal reporting:

Chantell Harris – Phone: (03) 9800 6414

Emma Wallis – Phone: (03) 9800 6428

Email: [childsaf@erl.vic.gov.au](mailto:childsaf@erl.vic.gov.au)

If further advice is required after speaking to one of our Child Safety Officers, please contact the person responsible for Child Safety in your relevant Council area:

- Knox City Council - Child Safe Advisor – 9298 8000
- Maroondah Council - Youth & Children's Planning and Strategy Advisor – 9298 4598
- Yarra Ranges Council - Child Safety Business Partner – 9294 6905



## Attachment 1 – The 11 Child Safe Standards

### Child Safe Standard 1

**YLL will establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.**

YLL will ensure:

1. A child's ability to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights is encouraged and actively supported.
2. Strategies are embedded within YLL which equip all staff and volunteers to acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal culture and understand its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children and young people.
3. Measures are adopted by YLL to ensure racism within YLL is identified, confronted, and not tolerated. Any instances of racism are addressed with appropriate consequences.
4. YLL actively supports and facilitates participation and inclusion by Aboriginal children, young people, and their families.
5. All of YLL's policies, procedures, systems, and processes together create a culturally safe and inclusive environment and meet the needs of Aboriginal children, young people, and their families.

### Child Safe Standard 2

**Child safety and wellbeing are embedded in our organisational leadership, governance, and culture**

YLL will ensure:

6. YLL makes a public commitment to child safety.
7. A child-safe culture is championed and modelled at all levels of YLL from the top down and bottom up.
8. Governance arrangements facilitate the implementation of the child safety and wellbeing policy at all levels.
9. A Code of Conduct provides guidelines for staff and volunteers on expected behavioural standards and responsibilities.
10. Risk management strategies focus on preventing, identifying, and mitigating risks to children and young people.
11. Staff and volunteers understand their obligations to information sharing and recordkeeping.

### Child Safe Standard 3

**Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them, and are taken seriously**

YLL will ensure:

1. Children and young people are informed about all of their rights, including safety, information, and participation.
2. The importance of friendships is recognised and support from peers is encouraged, to help children and young people feel safe and less isolated.
3. Where relevant to the setting or context, children and young people are offered access to sexual abuse prevention programs and to relevant related information in an age-appropriate way.
4. Staff and volunteers are attuned to signs of harm and facilitate child-friendly ways for children and young people to express their views, participate in decision-making, and raise their concerns.
5. YLL has strategies in place to develop a culture that facilitates participation and is responsive to the input of children and young people.
6. YLL provide opportunities for children and young people to participate and are responsive to their contributions, thereby strengthening confidence and engagement.



## Child Safe Standard 4

### **Families and communities are informed, and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing**

YLL will ensure:

1. Families participate in decisions affecting their children.
2. YLL engages and openly communicates with families and the community about its child-safe approach and relevant information is accessible.
3. Families and communities have a say in the development and review of YLL's policies and practices.
4. Families, carers, and the community are informed about YLL's operations and governance.

## Child Safe Standard 5

### **Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice**

YLL will ensure:

1. YLL, including staff and volunteers, understands children and young people's diverse circumstances, and provides support and responds to those who are vulnerable.
2. Children and young people have access to information, support, and complaints processes in ways that are culturally safe, accessible, and easy to understand.
3. YLL pays particular attention to the needs of children and young people with disability, children and young people 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.
4. YLL pays particular attention to the needs of Aboriginal children and young people and provides/promotes a culturally safe environment for them.

## Child Safe Standard 6

### **People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice**

YLL will ensure:

1. Recruitment, including advertising, referee checks, and staff and volunteer pre-employment screening, emphasise child safety and wellbeing.
2. Relevant staff and volunteers have current working with children checks or equivalent background checks.
3. All staff and volunteers receive an appropriate induction and are aware of their responsibilities to children and young people, including record keeping, information sharing, and reporting obligations.
4. Ongoing supervision and people management are focused on child safety and wellbeing.

## Child Safe Standard 7

### **Processes for complaints and concerns are child-focused**

YLL will ensure:

1. YLL has an accessible, child-focused complaint handling policy that clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of leadership, staff and volunteers, approaches to dealing with different types of complaints, breaches of relevant policies or the Code of Conduct, and obligations to act and report.
2. Children and young people, families, staff and volunteers understand effective complaint handling processes and are culturally safe.
3. Complaints are taken seriously and responded to promptly and thoroughly.
4. YLL has policies and procedures in place that address reporting complaints and concerns to relevant authorities, whether or not the law requires reporting, and co-operates with law enforcement.
5. Reporting, privacy, and employment law obligations are met.



## Child Safe Standard 8

**Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training**

YLL will ensure:

1. Staff and volunteers are trained and supported to effectively implement YLL's child safety and wellbeing policy.
2. Staff and volunteers receive training and information to recognise indicators of child harm including harm caused by other children and young people.
3. Staff and volunteers receive training and information to respond effectively to child safety and wellbeing issues and support colleagues who disclose harm.
4. Staff and volunteers receive training and information on how to build culturally safe environments for children and young people.

## Child Safe Standard 9

**Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed**

YLL will ensure:

1. Staff and volunteers identify and mitigate risks in the online and physical environments without compromising a child's right to privacy, access to information, social connections, and learning opportunities.
2. The online environment is used in accordance with YLL's Code of Conduct and child safety and wellbeing policy and practices.
3. Risk management plans consider risks posed by organisational settings, activities, and the physical environment.
4. YLL has procurement policies that ensure the safety of children and young people when it contracts facilities and services from third parties.

## Child Safe Standard 10

**Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved**

YLL will ensure:

1. YLL regularly reviews, evaluates, and improves child-safe practices.
2. Complaints, concerns, and safety incidents are analysed to identify causes and systemic failures to inform continuous improvement.
3. YLL reports on the findings of relevant reviews to staff and volunteers, community and families, and children and young people.

## Child Safe Standard 11

**Policies and procedures document how YLL is safe for children and young people**

YLL will ensure:

1. Policies and procedures address all Child Safe Standards.
2. Policies and procedures are documented and easy to understand.
3. Best practice models and stakeholder consultation informs the development of policies and procedures.
4. Leaders champion and model compliance with policies and procedures.
5. Staff and volunteers understand and implement policies and procedures.

