



SAFE. SECURE. SUPPORTED.

OUR SAFEGUARDING FRAMEWORK



VERSION 1.1

SEPTEMBER 2023

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Department for Education, Children and Young People acknowledges the trauma that continues to affect people with lived experience of child abuse. We are committed to being sensitive to this trauma as we use the learnings from past wrongs to protect the rights of current and future generations of children and young people and keep them safe from harm.

This Safeguarding Framework was developed by the department's Office of Safeguarding Children and Young People, in close collaboration with all portfolio areas of the department, people with lived experience of child abuse, subject matter experts and other Tasmanian Government agencies. The Office of Safeguarding Children and Young People acknowledges and thanks all contributors for their involvement in this important work.

Feedback or comments on this document may be emailed to safeguarding@decyp.tas.gov.au.

DOCUMENT CONTROL

This is a managed document that is subject to regular review and update. Changes will only be issued as a complete replacement. Recipients should remove superseded versions from circulation. This and subsequent versions will be authorised for release once all approvals have been obtained.

Version	Release date	Primary author	Support author
I.1	September 2023	C Noonan	R Jackson

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FOREWORD



All children and young people have the right to feel and be safe, to be heard, respected and shielded from harm.

As adults, it's our job to do everything we can to make sure children and young people's rights are protected, and to provide safe and trusted environments for them to live, learn and thrive.

When adults, systems, institutions and governments take their safeguarding responsibilities seriously, it is much harder for child abuse to occur.

The safety and wellbeing of Tasmanian children and young people is a critical priority for me, as Minister for Education, Children and Youth, as well as for the Premier and the Tasmanian Government.

Through the introduction of new legislation, government agencies and other relevant entities will be required to comply with key elements of our Child and Youth Safe Organisations Framework, including Tasmania's new Child and Youth Safe Standards.

In developing this important Safeguarding Framework, the Department for Education, Children and Young People is taking positive, proactive steps towards embedding the Child and Youth Safe Standards and a child safe organisational culture, backed by a strong commitment to keeping children and young people safe, secure and supported.

I commend the scope and objectives of the Framework and encourage you to work together in pursuing your mission of being an exemplary child safe organisation that encourages and allows children and young people to feel safe, and to be safe.



The Hon Roger Jaensch MP

Minister for Education, Children and Youth



Child abuse is extremely difficult to talk, read or even think about – even more so if you have been personally impacted by child abuse or have lived experience of child sexual abuse.

Through the recent inquiries into child sexual abuse, we have heard distressing accounts of when children haven't been kept safe.

On behalf of the Department for Education, Children and Young People, I am sorry for past failures to protect children and young people from harm in institutional settings in Tasmania. I am sorry for the wrongs experienced by children and young people across the education, out-of-home care and youth justice systems.

We must continue to work harder than ever to ensure that the rights of all children and young people are respected and upheld. Our work must focus on the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people, particularly those who are unable to live at home or are vulnerable due to disability or diversity across culture, language and gender.

Child abuse occurs when there is a potential abuser with an opportunity to abuse, a vulnerable child and an environment in which abuse can occur.

This Safeguarding Framework enables us to scrutinise and address areas of risk. Through the Framework, we will strengthen our governance, culture, systems and practices to uphold the rights of children and young people, keep them at the centre of our work and protect them from harm.



Tim Bullard

Secretary
Department for Education, Children and Young People



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLE AND COUNTRY

The Department for Education, Children and Young People acknowledges Palawa/Pakana (Tasmanian Aboriginal) people as Traditional Owners of Lutruwita / Tasmania. Tasmanian Aboriginal people have cared for Country for thousands of years and continue to care for Country through their strong connections, maintaining their cultural identity and emotional wellbeing. We pay our deepest respects to Elders past and present, and acknowledge Tasmanian Aboriginal people as the continuing custodians of their rich cultural heritage.

We acknowledge the determination and resilience of Tasmanian Aboriginal people, who have survived invasion, dispossession, entrenched disadvantage, exclusion, intergenerational abuse and trauma while continuing to sustain their identity, culture and rights.

We respect and acknowledge the report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families – [Bringing them home](#) – which is a tribute to the many thousands of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families affected by the forcible removal of their children. We acknowledge the hardship they endured and lament the abuse they suffered.



© Takira Simon-Brown, 2023. The artwork above by Tasmanian Aboriginal artist Takira Simon-Brown centres on a contemporary canoe parked on two bays, with mob circles in the bays. Surrounding them are rivers and oceans divided by a line of country, and petroglyphs across the coast of the ocean. The hands represent having a splash of fun while learning.

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TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

abuse (child abuse)	in the context of this document, abuse means child abuse and encompasses any or all types of abuse and neglect, including physical abuse, emotional abuse, psychological abuse, sexual abuse, and exposure to or involvement in domestic and family violence
Ashley	Ashley Youth Detention Centre
bullying	the misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal (and/or written), physical and/or social behaviour that is intended to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm
child or children	anyone under the age of 18; in the context of this document, any reference to a child or children has the same meaning as a young person or young people
child abuse material	any material that depicts or describes a child, or a representation of a child, who is or appears to be under the age of 18, and who is or appears to be in a sexual pose or sexual activity, or that shows or describes the person's sexual organs or breasts; this definition includes material that depicts or describes a child, or a representation of a child, as a victim of torture, cruelty or physical abuse (Commonwealth of Australia, 2021a)
child safe organisation	an organisation that consciously and systematically: creates an environment in which children's rights, safety and wellbeing are at the centre of thought, values and actions; engages with children and young people to create conditions that reduce the likelihood of harm; creates conditions that increase the likelihood of identifying potential harm; and responds to concerns, suspicions, allegations and disclosures of abuse
child sexual abuse	any act (including grooming) that exposes a child to, or involves a child in, sexual activities that are beyond their understanding, are contrary to accepted community standards, or are outside what is permitted by law
child sexual exploitation	a form of coercive and/or violent child sexual abuse in which some form of remuneration is involved whereby the perpetrator/s benefit
Commission of Inquiry	Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings
concerning behaviour	behaviour that would appear to a reasonable observer to present abuse risks or connotations
cultural humility	an ongoing process of self-reflection whereby an individual not only learns about another's culture, but examines and critiques their own beliefs and cultural identities
cultural safety	an environment in which the inherent rights, beliefs and traditions of a particular culture and/or all cultures are recognised, respected, protected and advanced
cyberbullying	bullying that is carried out online using digital devices
department or departmental	refers to the Department for Education, Children and Young People
EAL	English as an Additional Language
employee	any individual employed by the Department for Education, Children and Young People under the State Service Act 2000
Executive Board	senior executives of the Department for Education, Children and Young People
Framework	refers to this Safeguarding Framework
Governance Group	the department's internal Child and Youth Safe Governance Group (see Appendix 3)
grooming	any online or in-person behaviour intended to manipulate and control a child, their family, kin or caregivers, or other support networks or organisations, with the aim of: gaining access to the child, obtaining the child's compliance, maintaining the child's silence, and/or avoiding discovery of sexual abuse; grooming may be difficult to identify, and can be done by people already known to the child, including by a family member, kin or carer (Commonwealth of Australia, 2021a)
harmful sexual behaviour	developmentally inappropriate sexual behaviour displayed by children and young people that may be harmful or abusive (Hackett, 2014), encompassing a range of behaviours, from problematic to abusive, that are directed towards other children, young people or adults, and that may be harmful to those displaying the behaviour as well as those to whom it is directed

Independent Inquiry	Independent Inquiry into the Tasmanian Department of Education's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse
LGBTIQ+	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender; intersex, queer, asexual and other sexually or gender diverse people; this term is intended to have the same meaning as LGBTIQ+
manager	any employee in a management or senior executive position, including school principals
National Principles	National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
National Strategy	National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse 2021-2030
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme
online child sexual exploitation	when an individual (adult or another child or young person) or group uses technology or the internet to facilitate the sexual abuse of a child, including the production and sharing of child abuse material online (ThinkUKnow, 2022)
online grooming	the process of establishing and building a relationship with a child through use of the internet or other technologies to facilitate sexual contact with that child, either physically or online; may include perpetrators encouraging victims to engage in sexual activity or to send the perpetrator sexually explicit material; and may lead to perpetrators meeting the victim in person or blackmailing the victim to self-produce explicit materials (Commonwealth of Australia, 2021a)
out-of-home care	the system of formal care provided to children and young people assessed under the <i>Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997</i> as unable to live safely at home with parents or primary caregivers because of concerns for their safety and wellbeing
rights-based approach	an approach that upholds the rights of children, as set out in United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
Royal Commission	Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse
safeguard	to protect a person's health, wellbeing and human rights, enabling them to live free from harm
Safeguarding Framework	this document, which describes the Department for Education, Children and Young People's framework for safeguarding children and young people from all forms of abuse
sexting	self-generated digital content or images of a sexual nature taken by a person themselves and shared with others, noting that content or images depicting a person under the age of 18 may be considered child abuse material
staff	includes employees and any other individuals engaged by the Department for Education, Children and Young People, for example an employee of a labour hire company
Standards	Tasmania's Child and Youth Safe Standards
trauma-informed practice	an approach that reflects and embeds trauma awareness, sensitivity and responsiveness across the entire organisation and its work
UN Convention	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
volunteer	an unpaid worker who participates in or supports the work of the Department for Education, Children and Young People
worker	any individual engaged by the Department for Education, Children and Young People who is a member of staff, volunteer, trainee or student on work experience placement, contractor or sub-contractor (excluding bodies defined as relevant entities under the <i>Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023</i>)
young person or young people	commonly used to refer to any person aged 12 to 17, but also defined under the <i>Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997</i> as a person aged 16 or 17; in the context of this document, any reference to a young person or young people has the same meaning as a child or children

ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

This Safeguarding Framework was developed to support the Department for Education, Children and Young People's commitment to upholding the rights of children and young people while keeping them safe from harm and at the centre of our work.

Our safeguarding mission

The work of the department is underpinned by our goal for all Tasmanian children and young people to be known, safe, well and learning. Our safeguarding mission is to be an exemplary child safe organisation that puts children and young people at the centre of all actions we take and decisions we make.

We will work hard to ensure that the rights of all children and young people are respected and upheld by every worker in the department. To achieve this, we are strengthening our systems and practices and embedding an organisational culture in which every worker understands that safeguarding children and young people from abuse is everyone's responsibility.

Structure, scope and application

The Framework establishes and describes the department's overarching approach to safeguarding children and young people from abuse, with particular emphasis on child sexual abuse. The Framework directly aligns with and will support the implementation of Tasmania's [Child and Youth Safe Standards](#), providing a clear structure for integrating, implementing, communicating and improving the department's safeguarding culture, policies and practices. Included in this scope is implicit acknowledgement of the department's ongoing obligation to continue to safeguard the young adults in our care (such as students aged 18+).

Consistent with the reach of the Child and Youth Safe Standards, the Framework also references, but does not set out in detail, the broader responsibilities and activities of the department relating to the overall safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

The Framework takes a rights-based approach to inform and guide the department and its workers on how to behave and interact with children and young people. It provides an overview of our professional and legal responsibilities to protect children from harm and references the arrangements and other resources in place to help fulfil those responsibilities.

The Framework applies to all areas of the department. All workers must act in accordance with their legal obligations and the department's policies, procedures and guidelines for safeguarding children and young people from abuse. A list of the relevant policies and procedures is provided at [Appendix 4](#).

Other institutions and providers of education and care services for children and young people in Tasmania are encouraged to leverage sections of the Framework as applicable to their respective organisations and their legal, organisational and ethical obligations to safeguard children and young people from abuse.

Framework objectives

The objectives of the Framework are to:

- **foster** a safeguarding culture that focuses on prevention and is child-centred, trauma-informed and culturally sensitive
- **encourage** a consistent, rights-based approach to involving children in decisions that affect them
- **support** workers to take appropriate and timely action to prevent, be prepared for and respond effectively to all situations involving child abuse
- **reinforce and improve** safeguarding practices to ensure that every concern, suspicion, allegation, disclosure or knowledge of abuse is reported, recorded and responded to in accordance with our policies and procedures
- **identify and promote** new ways to inform and empower children and young people, their families, caregivers and communities to take action against child abuse
- **describe** how our culture and systems will be progressively shaped through continuous improvement.

Use, monitoring and evaluation

This is a 'living' document that will be used to monitor and evaluate the department's progress against the benchmarks of the [Child and Youth Safe Standards](#) and the objectives listed above. This work will be overseen by the department's [Child and Youth Safe Governance Group](#)¹ to ensure ongoing consistency and compliance across all portfolios of the department.

The Framework will be reviewed annually or more frequently as our strategies and policies evolve. Through the process of continuous improvement, we will build on what works, fix the things that don't, fill gaps as they are identified and improve where we can. Updated versions of the Framework will be published as and when they become available on the department's website: www.decyp.tas.gov.au.

Preventing and responding to child abuse is everyone's responsibility

¹ Refer to [Appendix 3](#) for detailed information

CONTEXT

Child abuse is a complex, serious problem. The type of abuse may be sexual, psychological, emotional or physical, frequently occurring in combination. Child abuse also includes neglect and exposure to domestic or family violence.

Child abuse can take place in many different settings, in person and online. While evidence suggests that the abuser is most commonly somebody who is known to the child², it can be anyone: any adult or any other child or young person.

All forms of child abuse can have lasting, detrimental effects that extend into adulthood.

Learning from the past to protect current and future generations

More than thirty years ago, governments worldwide made a commitment to protect children from harm by adopting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child³. The Convention sets out the rights of children and young people, and describes what adults and governments need to do to protect those rights.

In 2017, Australia's Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse⁴ handed down its findings and recommendations for making institutions child safe and improving the way we report, keep records, share information, respond, support and advocate for children affected by abuse, with specific recommendations for schools, out-of-home care and youth detention environments.

In response, the governments of Australia collaborated to develop the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations⁵. The National Principles are closely aligned with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and aim to embed a child safe culture across all sectors of Australian society.

The National Principles are supported by **Safe and Supported**: the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021-2031⁶, the National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse 2021-2030⁷ and the National Agreement on Closing the Gap⁸, which aims to overcome the entrenched inequality experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Keeping Tasmania's children safe

At a state level, the Tasmanian Government is working hard to enhance the wellbeing and safety of children and young people, supported by Tasmania's Child and Youth Safe Organisations Framework, the Premier's Keeping Children Safer Priority and the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy: ***It takes a Tasmanian village***⁹.

The National Principles have been adopted and enshrined in state legislation as Tasmania's Child and Youth Safe Standards¹⁰ for protecting children and young people from abuse in institutional settings in Tasmania.

From 1 January 2024, the department will be required to comply with legislation that enables implementation of key elements of the Child and Youth Safe Organisations Framework, including: the Child and Youth Safe Standards supported by the **Universal Principle** to ensure Aboriginal Cultural Safety; a **Reportable Conduct Scheme**; appointment of an independent regulator; and provisions for the use and disclosure of relevant information.

The Tasmanian Government is also implementing specific measures to close the gap on inequality and address the significant overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in the out-of-home care and youth justice systems¹¹.

In 2021, the findings and recommendations of the Independent Inquiry into the Tasmanian Department of Education's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse were released. A broader Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse¹² in Institutional Settings was also established in 2021. The Commission of Inquiry examined Tasmanian Government institutions' responses to child sexual abuse incidents and allegations since 2000, focusing on systemic issues and recommendations for reform.

In these and other forums, many people have bravely recounted their stories of child abuse, motivated by the desire to improve the safety of current and future generations, make it harder for child abuse to occur and make it easier to hold abusers to account.

All children and young people have the right to feel safe and be heard, respected and protected from harm

² Australian Institute of Family Studies (2018)

³ United Nations (1989)

⁴ Commonwealth of Australia (2017)

⁵ © Australian Human Rights Commission (2018)

⁶ Commonwealth of Australia (2021b)

⁷ Commonwealth of Australia (2021a)

⁸ Joint Council on Closing the Gap (2020)

⁹ Tasmanian Government (2021)

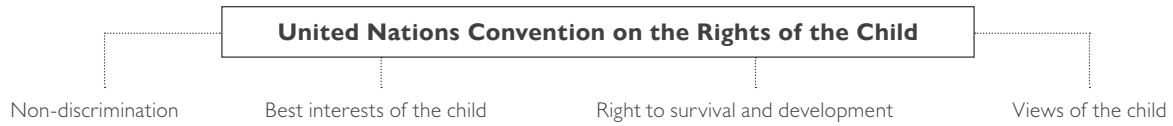
¹⁰ *Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023*

¹¹ Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre (2021)

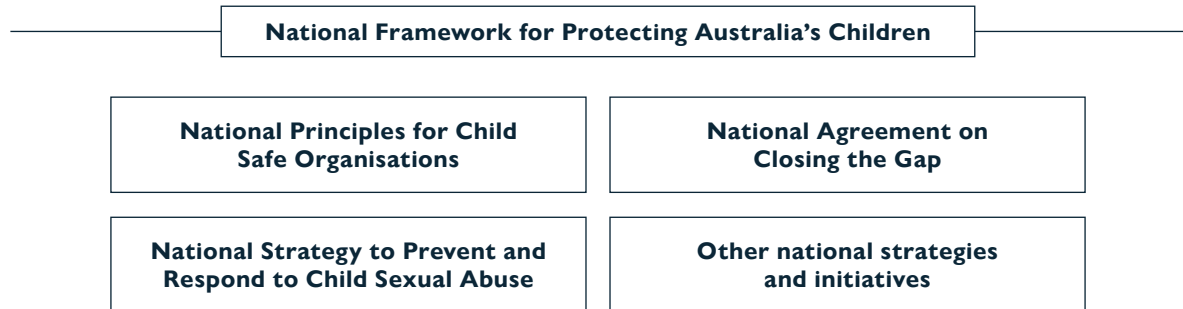
¹² Smallbone and McCormack (2021)

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

INTERNATIONAL



NATIONAL



STATE



DEPARTMENT



COMMITMENT

The Department for Education, Children and Young People is committed to keeping Tasmania's children and young people known, safe, well and learning.

- We are determined to address the wrongs of the past and put measures in place to safeguard children and young people from abuse.
- We are committed to implementing all relevant recommendations from the Royal Commission, the Independent Inquiry and the Commission of Inquiry.
- We are firm in our resolve to be an exemplary child safe organisation that puts children and young people at the centre of everything we do. We will actively seek their input and ideas on decisions that affect them and listen to what they tell us.
- We acknowledge that child abuse can happen anytime and anywhere, and we are committed to meeting the diverse needs and cultural safety of all children across all settings.
- We are committed to implementing Tasmania's Child and Youth Safe Standards as the foundation upon which this Safeguarding Framework was developed and the benchmark against which its effectiveness will be evaluated.

The department is committed to ensuring that children and young people:



feel safe and are **safe**



are **secure** in the knowledge that they can trust us to listen, be present, care, believe and stand up for them when we find out that they aren't or don't feel safe



know that they will be **supported** while we take visible and effective action to protect them from harm or further harm, and that we will support them to recover, rebuild trust, heal and grow

Involving children in decision-making

To support our safeguarding commitment, the department embraces Lundy's Model of Participation¹³. Lundy's Model is grounded in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and promotes a rights-based approach to the active involvement of children and young people in decision-making.

Children have the right to have a say and be listened to when adults are making decisions that impact them



¹³ Lundy (2010)

CHILD AND YOUTH SAFE STANDARDS

STANDARD

1

Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.

STANDARD

6

Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child-focused.

STANDARD

2

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

STANDARD

7

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

STANDARD

3

Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.

STANDARD

8

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

STANDARD

4

Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.

STANDARD

9

Implementation of the Child and Youth Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.

STANDARD

5

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

STANDARD

10

Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLE

All Child and Youth Safe Standards are to be applied in an environment that ensures the right to cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.

**SAFE.
SECURE.
SUPPORTED.**

OUR SAFEGUARDING FRAMEWORK

IMPLEMENTATION

Keeping children safe is a shared responsibility and a priority focus for the department: we are all responsible for protecting children and young people from harm. While the Framework serves to strengthen our cultural, systemic, physical and virtual environments to minimise opportunities for children and young people to be harmed, there are always risks that institutional or community-based abuse may occur.

Embedding a child safe culture

The department is investing in and fostering an organisational culture in which all children and young people feel and are safe, secure and supported. We are committed to a culture that acknowledges and addresses power imbalances. We will challenge the way in which our workforce understands the needs and capacities of children and young people, working hard to remove any lingering vestiges of outdated attitudes and values that do not put them at the centre of actions taken and decisions made.

We are developing and implementing new systems to proactively monitor risks to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. We are committed to ensuring that our physical and online spaces are safer, and that our staff and volunteers are trained and equipped to proactively identify and respond to potentially unsafe situations.

We are working hard to empower children and young people to feel and be safe from all forms of abuse in relationships across all settings – at home, school, sport or play. We will empower them to be confident in knowing when and how to get help when things aren't right, regardless of their age, physical and developmental ability, gender or cultural background. We will encourage them to tell us if they don't feel safe, and when they do we will listen, believe and support them, and respond in a sensitive, trauma-informed way. We will continue to educate them about their rights and ensure that the processes, systems and resources we develop are clear, inclusive and accessible.

Screening and training workers

The department has governance structures and systems in place to oversee, monitor and improve the effectiveness of child abuse prevention measures, including screening, inducting and training workers. We are firm in our resolve to strengthen our policies and practices to ensure that all workers behave and are supervised in accordance with the policies and procedures that support this Framework.

Our safeguarding information and training resources are subject to ongoing enhancement, including the release of new modules and trauma-informed guidance as they are developed. Our initial focus is on resources that support mandatory reporting and provide our staff and volunteers with the knowledge and skills they need to understand, prevent and respond to child abuse.

Supporting families and communities

The department acknowledges and respects the critical, primary responsibility of families, including parents and other caregivers, for the care, upbringing and development of children.

We are committed to engaging with, supporting and empowering families, caregivers and communities to uphold the rights of children, including by providing them with tools and resources to help identify and report concerns of harm to the [Strong Families Safe Kids Advice and Referral Line](#).

We will continue to invest in a range of culturally-appropriate resources designed to raise family and community awareness about child safety, consent and abuse, communicated through our learning, out-of-home care and youth justice settings.

Consultation with children and young people and families and caregivers from a wide range of backgrounds is an integral component of these activities.

Integrating and streamlining systems

The department's Safety and Wellbeing Action Oversight Committee and associated Advisory Group were established to lead and support the alignment of priorities and work practices across all portfolio areas.

A key objective for these groups is to identify opportunities for the co-location and/or integration of functions and systems across the Child Safety Service, [Strong Families Safe Kids Advice and Referral Line](#), schools and other learning environments, student support, community youth justice and out-of-home care. An important element of this work is to improve the quality, relevance and availability of information to better inform decisions affecting the safety, wellbeing and engagement of children and young people.

Focusing on child sexual abuse

The role of the department's Office of Safeguarding Children and Young People is to champion and lead whole-of-department initiatives to strengthen our culture, capability and capacity to safeguard children and young people from child sexual abuse and abuse-related trauma. This role complements and supports the safeguarding work of all portfolios of the department.

Embedding cultural and organisational change is a foundational component of our work on the prevention of child sexual abuse. This includes championing safeguarding values and initiatives, not just across all workers and settings, but more broadly across the Tasmanian community through close collaboration and partnerships with other government departments and non-government organisations.

GOVERNANCE AND CULTURE

STANDARD

1

Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.

- 1.1** The department makes a public commitment to child safety.
- 1.2** A child safe culture is championed and modelled at all levels of the department, from the top down and the bottom up.
- 1.3** Governance arrangements facilitate implementation of the child safety and wellbeing policy at all levels.
- 1.4** A code of conduct provides guidelines for staff and volunteers on expected behavioural standards and responsibilities.
- 1.5** Risk management strategies focus on preventing, identifying and mitigating risks to children and young people.
- 1.6** Staff and volunteers understand their obligations for information sharing and recordkeeping.

GOVERNANCE AND CULTURE

Public commitment

This Framework outlines the department's **commitment** to keeping children and young people safe. This and subsequent versions of the Framework will be published on the department's website: www.decyp.tas.gov.au. We will also publish our safeguarding strategies and policy documents on the website, so they are transparent and accessible for children and young people, their families, caregivers and communities.

We will continue to consider and respond appropriately and sensitively to the culturally, developmentally and socially diverse needs of children and young people as we communicate our ongoing commitment to safeguarding them from abuse.

Child safe culture

A child safe culture encourages an environment in which everyone feels safe and supported to speak up and stop child abuse. A child safe organisation adopts trauma-informed practices to ensure that anyone affected by child abuse is supported and not retraumatised by the words or actions of its workers.

The department is committed to embedding a child safe culture that empowers and puts children and young people at the centre of decisions that affect them, while educating people of all ages about child abuse.

We will continue to engage with children and young people about the work we are doing to protect them from abuse. That includes actively seeking their input into ongoing refinement of Framework and other safeguarding initiatives implemented by the department.

The resources identified in and developed to support the Framework will help workers recognise the signs of child abuse (including grooming behaviour) and guide them in the application of trauma-informed practice when responding to observations and disclosures of abuse and abusive situations. These resources will strengthen individual workers' awareness, sensitivity and responsiveness to the signs and effects of abuse as we work to embed these strengths in our everyday practices.



Our child safe culture will be developed and maintained through proactive leadership at all levels.

- Staff and volunteers are required to undertake annual safeguarding training, with new resources being progressively introduced and refined.
- Workers are expected to uphold and deepen their understandings of the rights of children and young people and translate those understandings into practice in the workplace, including taking steps to impart that knowledge to children and young people.
- Workers are supported to gain confidence in complying with their statutory, organisational and moral obligations to protect children from harm.
- Workers are compelled to speak up and report concerns or situations that put the safety, welfare or wellbeing of children and young people at risk.
- Staff and volunteers are expected to accept individual responsibility for undertaking safeguarding training, sharing information, keeping records, managing risks, and responding quickly to prevent abuse.
- Managers are required to supervise and support all workers, leading by example to embed a strong and consistent culture across the department.

Specific guidance on how staff and volunteers can contribute to preventing child abuse and upholding the Child and Youth Safe Standards is provided at [Appendix I](#). This guidance, which is based on Australian Human Rights Commission resources, was substantively developed by and is reproduced with permission obtained from the Department of Health¹⁴ (Tasmania).

¹⁴ Department of Health (2022)

GOVERNANCE AND CULTURE

Legal obligation to report abuse

All staff and volunteers are mandatory reporters and must take steps to prevent child abuse in accordance with the [Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997](#) and the [Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023](#).

- Any member of staff or a volunteer who becomes aware of information or evidence that raises concerns or causes them to believe, suspect or know that a child or young person is being abused is required to contact and report this to the Child Safety Service through the [Strong Families Safe Kids Advice and Referral Line](#).
- The substance of reports is not limited to abuse that may have been perpetrated in sites and settings for which the department has lead responsibility; our mandatory reporting obligations include child abuse or potential abuse at any place or time, including in the broader community and online environments.

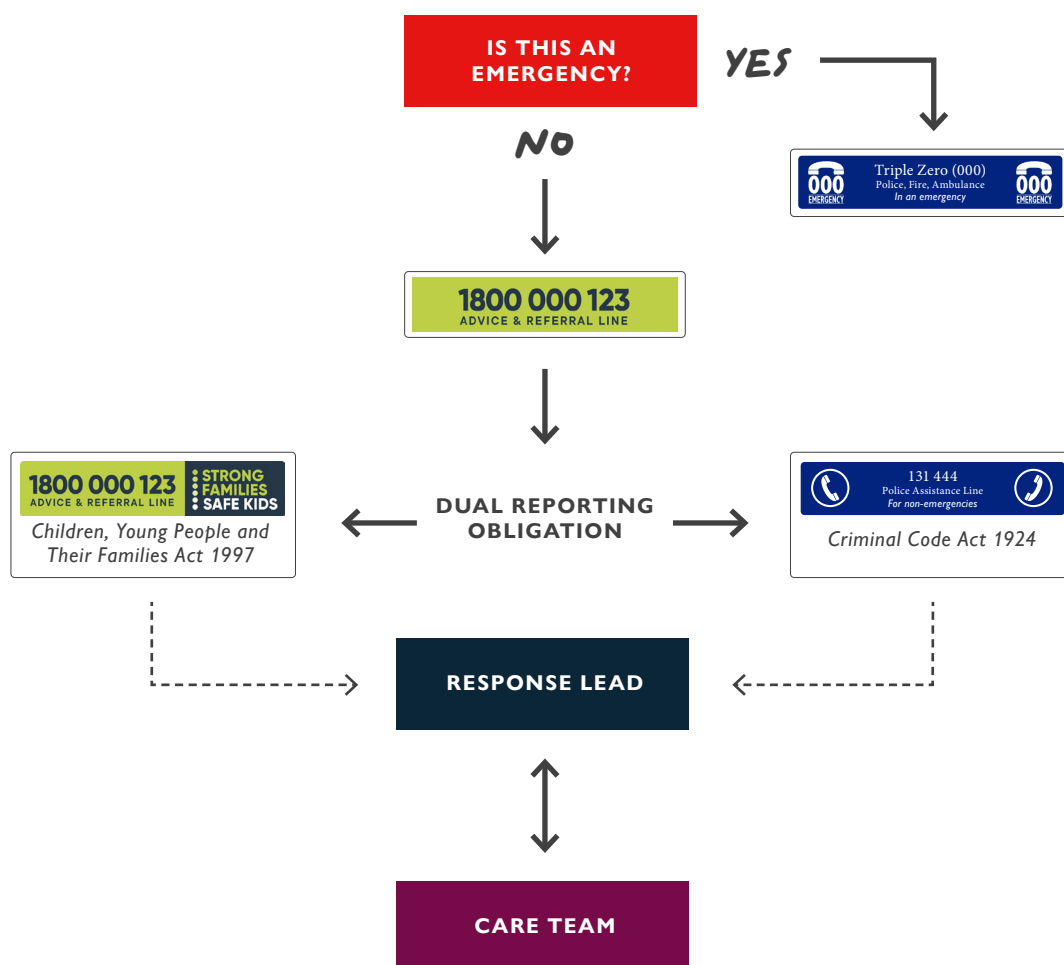
Child abuse is a criminal offence and liable for prosecution under the [Criminal Code Act 1924](#).

- Anyone who reasonably believes or knows about a child abuse offence is required to report that belief or knowledge to Tasmania Police.
- Failure to report a suspected or known child abuse offence is a criminal offence. Anyone who fails to protect a child or young person from abuse or report abuse may be prosecuted under the [Criminal Code Act 1924](#).

For more information on the department's mandatory reporting procedure and advice for staff, refer to [Appendix 4](#).

SUMMARY OF LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

I have a concern, belief or knowledge of child



GOVERNANCE AND CULTURE

Governance roles and responsibilities

The Tasmanian Government has statutory responsibility for educating, promoting and safeguarding the wellbeing of children and, if required, assisting families to fulfil their responsibilities for the care, upbringing and development of their children.

The Minister for Education, Children and Youth has responsibility for furthering the education¹⁵ and the care and protection of children¹⁶ in partnership with Tasmanian Government agencies, municipal councils, non-government organisations, families and communities. The department is responsible to the Minister for Education, Children and Youth in these matters.

The [Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997](#) assigns a range of statutory powers and functions to the Secretary of the department to promote and ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

The Secretary and the department also have regulatory oversight roles and responsibilities¹⁷ for education and childcare service provision in Tasmania, including to ensure that providers have effective measures in place to maintain the wellbeing and safety of children and young people and comply with their mandatory reporting obligations.

The department's Child Safety Service has legislative responsibility for addressing and promoting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in out-of-home care.

The Executive Board is responsible for ensuring that best-practice policies, procedures and systems for preventing child abuse are in place and effective, and that all workers behave in accordance with the Safeguarding Framework. The Executive Board receives strategic advice and reports from the Child and Youth Safe Governance Group and considers and acts in response to regular updates on the status and effectiveness of preventative measures, supported by quarterly statistical data.

Leaders and managers across the department are responsible for ensuring that safeguarding decisions and executive directives are implemented, including leading the culture and actions of their colleagues by example.

Child and Youth Safe Governance Group

The Child and Youth Safe Governance Group provides strategic direction and oversight of the department's safeguarding responsibilities, policies and systems including:

- leading implementation of the Framework
- implementing provisions of the **Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023** and the associated Child and Youth Safe Standards
- coordinating responses to relevant national and state initiatives for the prevention of child abuse, and
- implementing and monitoring activities in response to the recommendations of related commissions and inquiries.

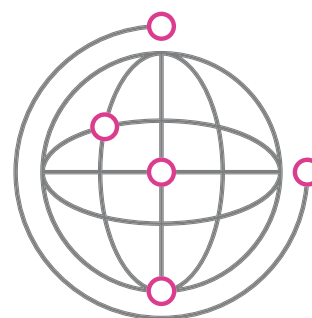
The Governance Group comprises executive-level staff with strategic and operational safeguarding responsibility across child safety, out-of-home care, youth justice, schools and other learning environments, including libraries and Child and Family Learning Centres. The Governance Group's Terms of Reference are included at [Appendix 3](#).

Specific roles and responsibilities for the underpinning policies and procedures that support the Framework are detailed in the relevant policy documents. A categorised list of key documents is provided at [Appendix 4](#).

National alignment

The department works in partnership with the Australian Government and the governments of other Australian states and territories to achieve the shared objectives and outcomes of the national strategies, frameworks and initiatives designed to keep Australia's children and young people safe from harm.

In embedding the characteristics and requirements of a child safe organisation across the department, we will continue to align, monitor and evaluate our performance against national goals and indicators, as well as against the Child and Youth Safe Standards and the objectives of this Framework.



¹⁵ Education Act 2016

¹⁶ Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997 (s7)

¹⁷ Child Care Act 2001; Education and Care Services National Law (Tasmania)

GOVERNANCE AND CULTURE

Worker conduct and professional behaviour

Tasmania's [State Service Act 2000](#) incorporates the State Service Principles and a Code of Conduct that together establish the minimum standards of behaviour and conduct for all Tasmanian State Service employees. This in turn provides a sound basis for the department's expectations of worker conduct and behaviour in a safeguarding context.

Additional requirements for conduct towards children and young people are detailed in the relevant professional and employment standards, which provide direction, boundaries and benchmarks for practice.

All workers are required to ensure that their interaction with children and young people remains within the parameters of professional and ethical boundaries. These boundaries are set within legal and organisational frameworks to maintain a safe environment for everyone involved: children, young people and workers.

Behavioural codes and workplace standards are not a substitute for statutory provisions and directions. If there is conflict between codes, standards and the law, the law takes precedence. Links to more detailed information are provided at [Appendix 4](#).

Duty of care

Some work-related relationships between children and young people and workers give rise to a duty of care at law for workers to take reasonable care to reduce risks of harm (for example, a teachers' duty of care for students).

Irrespective of whether a legal duty of care exists, it is the department's expectation that all workers will take all reasonable steps to protect children and young people from harm. This means anticipating risks, taking action to prevent harm and avoiding omissions or acts that could be foreseen as likely to cause harm.

Refer to [Appendix 4](#) for more information about duties of care for children and young people in specific environments.



Risk management

All areas of the department are required to assess and manage child safety and wellbeing risks specific to their area of core business function and responsibility, as part of standard risk management and business planning practices.

To support more rigorous child abuse prevention and accountability, the department is committed to improving the way we identify, track and manage abuse-related risks as they emerge.

To bolster our risk-managed approach to safeguarding and the effectiveness of strategies across common themes and risk profiles, we are working across all portfolios to improve risk assessment tools and templates.

As part of this work, we will identify and manage risks for groups with additional vulnerabilities, including children living with disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people, those from other culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and LGBTIQ+.

We will adopt a risk-based approach to measuring and evaluating compliance with our policies and procedures for protecting children and young people from harm, including compliance with the Framework. Refer to [Appendix 4](#) for more information on risk management.

Information sharing

The safety of anyone at risk of child abuse is paramount and must not be compromised. By securely managing and appropriately sharing information consistent with the relevant legislation, the department is much better equipped to safeguard children and young people.

The department adheres to and respects the requirements of personal privacy, confidentiality and security. We collect, use, manage and protect personal and sensitive information about children and young people in accordance with relevant national and state legislation, including but not limited to the [Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997](#), [Personal Information Protection Act 2004](#), [Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023](#) and [Right to Information Act 2009](#), including the requirement to redact or not release information when necessary.

The [Personal Information Protection Act 2004](#) regulates the way all portfolios of the department collect and store personal information about individuals. The [Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997](#) is the primary legislation that governs the use and disclosure of information obtained in the course of administering that Act. The [Youth Justice Act 1997](#) and the [Adoption Act 1988](#) also include specific restrictions on the use and disclosure of information. The [Personal Information Protection Act 2004](#) otherwise applies to the use and disclosure of personal information. While the legislative instruments referenced above protect personal and sensitive information from misuse, they also enable authorised information sharing.

Information that is shared within the department for internal purposes is normally considered as a form of data use, not disclosure, in that individuals would reasonably expect the information to be used in a way that relates to the primary purpose for which it was collected, for example to ensure the wellbeing and safety of children and young people.

GOVERNANCE AND CULTURE

The [Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997](#) allows the full exchange of information relating to the safety, welfare or wellbeing of a 'relevant person' between the department's Child Safety Service, Tasmania Police and other information-sharing entities, including in response to suspected child abuse. These carefully controlled information-sharing practices are supported by a practice handbook and memorandum of understanding between the department and Tasmania Police.

In accordance with the [Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013](#), information about workers' [Registration to Work with Vulnerable People](#) status is also shared between the department, Tasmania Police and the Department of Justice. Workers are also required to notify the department of any circumstances that may affect their eligibility for ongoing registration (for example: criminal charges or investigations, and conditional, suspended or revoked registration).

The department safely and responsibly shares information so that children, young people and others with lived experience or at risk of child abuse are able to receive the support they need as quickly and sensitively as possible.

We will ensure that policies, processes and systems are in place so that abuse-related risks and information can be consistently recorded, securely protected and ethically shared, both internally between relevant business units of the department and between the department and authorised external agencies, in accordance with legal and administrative obligations.

All workers are required to abide by legislation and the department's information sharing business rules, while working cooperatively and collaboratively with their colleagues and external agencies to share information, as and when authorised and requested.

Recordkeeping

The department will ensure that systems, processes and business rules are in place to support the requirement for the department and its workers to create and maintain full and accurate records in relation to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

All staff are bound by statutory¹⁸ obligations and recordkeeping standards¹⁹ to:

- create records according to the needs and processes of their business unit that adequately document the activities in which they take part
- register documents in the approved business information management system
- maintain the confidentiality of information acquired in the course of their employment.

Workers must not:

- access, alter, destroy or delete records without proper authority
- remove information, documents or records from the department without permission.



All concerns and/or information about suspected, alleged, disclosed or known child abuse (including grooming and harmful sexual behaviour) must be:

- reported by workers in accordance with the relevant legislative requirements and departmental policies and procedures
- recorded by workers in the appropriate and approved format, which must be compatible with the department's electronic records management system for secure storage, limited-access viewing and permissions-based retrieval.

Records involving the abuse or potential abuse of a child or young person (including information about grooming and harmful sexual behaviour) should include:

- description and date of initial information/concern, action taken and observations/evidence of harm
- any heightened risk factors and/or vulnerabilities
- when, why and to whom the information/concern was reported, including details of conversations with the [Strong Families Safe Kids Advice and Referral Line](#), written reports and related emails
- name, position and contact information for the person/s recording the information/concern and lodging the report
- subsequent actions and reviews by workers and other authorised people or entities
- follow-up, support and/or monitoring activities.

Records relevant to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people will be disposed of in accordance with the relevant legislation and policies. These records are subject to minimum retention periods that allow for delayed disclosure and consider limitation periods for civil actions in accordance with the [Limitation Act 1974](#).

In accordance with a [notice issued by the State Archivist](#), the department will freeze the disposal of all records that contain the best information about children and young people, the services provided to them and workers that provided the service until 2029. The records disposal freeze includes records kept by any organisations to which the department outsources or has outsourced services, activities and/or functions.

More information on requirements for the retention of records that may become or are relevant to allegations or occurrences of child sexual abuse is available online through the [Office of the State Archivist](#).

¹⁸ State Service Act 2000; Archives Act 1983

¹⁹ Office of the State Archivist (2020)

THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

STANDARD

2

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

- 2.1** Children and young people are informed about all their rights, including to safety, information and participation.
- 2.2** The importance of friendships is recognised and support from peers is encouraged, to help children and young people feel safe and be less isolated.
- 2.3** Where relevant to the setting or context, children may be offered access to sexual abuse prevention programs and to relevant related information in an age-appropriate way.
- 2.4** Staff and volunteers are attuned to signs of harm and facilitate child-friendly ways for children to express their views, participate in decision-making and raise their concerns.

THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Promoting the rights of children

Children and young people have the right to be respected, feel safe and be protected from harm, irrespective of their gender, race, sexual orientation, ability, special needs or cultural, religious and family circumstances.

The department is committed to maintaining and deepening workers' knowledge about, and capability to fulfil, their individual and collective responsibilities to uphold and advance the rights of children and young people at all times.

Across all portfolios of the department, we adopt an adapted version of Lundy's²⁰ rights-based approach to the participation of children and young people.

PARTICIPATION = PROTECTION

In putting this approach into practice, we pursue child safe, trauma-informed practices that put the rights of children and young people first.

Our approach and practices will be informed by and adjusted in accordance with the increasing autonomy of children and young people as they grow and develop.

OUR RIGHTS-BASED MODEL OF PARTICIPATION

SPACE

Children and young people are entitled to be consulted and give their opinions freely on issues that affect them. They have a right to know about, understand and have a say in what the department is doing to protect them from harm. Adults should listen and take them seriously.

VOICE

Children and young people have a right to be confident in knowing who they can turn to for help if they don't feel safe, and that those people will listen to and believe them, take their concerns seriously, support them and put them at the centre of all decisions that affect them.

AUDIENCE

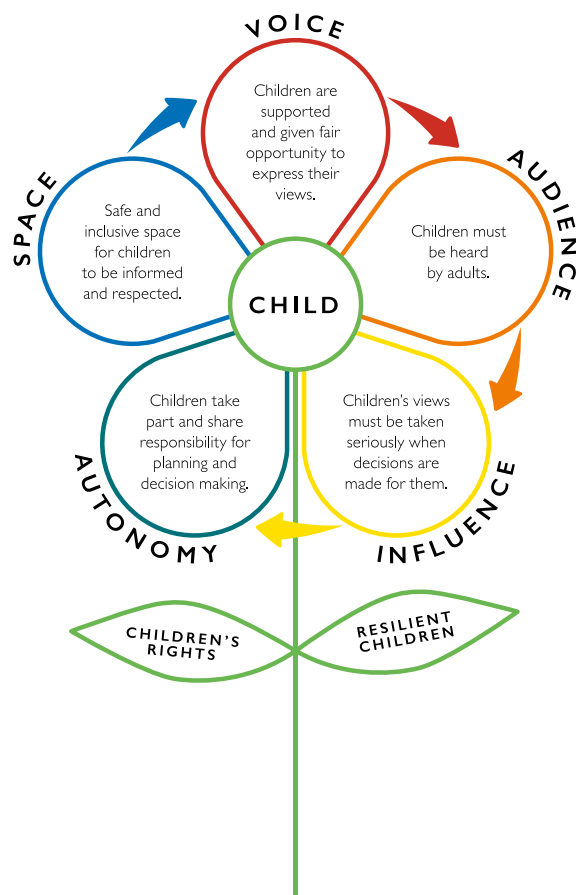
Children and young people have a right to be listened to, believed and supported through investigations into harm or potential harm, and to be consulted and actively involved in all decisions that affect them.

INFLUENCE

Children and young people have a right to know about, understand and have a say in how the department intervenes and responds in situations involving child abuse. They have a right to be provided with choice and control when decisions are made about how they are supported and by whom.

AUTONOMY

Children and young people have a right to be included and their views taken seriously in decisions that affect them, helping to empower them, build their resilience and improve their wellbeing.



²⁰ Lundy (2010)

THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Information and communication

In our work to safeguard children and young people from abuse, we develop and communicate clear and accessible information that is appropriate to their age, culture, and developmental and cognitive ability.

We are committed to open, honest and transparent two-way communication with children and young people about all matters that affect them, including if and when things don't go to plan.

When developing new resources for children, we focus on providing information so they are better equipped to recognise abusive behaviour and know what to do and who they can turn to for help if they don't feel safe at home, at school or in the community. In developing these resources, we adhere to best-practice guidance and actively seek input from children and young people on the content and format of the information we develop. This information is also available for access by families and communities.

We actively raise awareness among workers about the Rights of the Child, which are embedded in the Child and Youth Safe Standards. We encourage and support our educators, caregivers and workers to uphold and communicate these rights to children and young people, including by providing them with a range of specialist resources and educational training packages.

**The behaviour
you walk past is
the behaviour you
condone**

At a school level, we encourage student voice and agency and ensure that children and young people are informed about the school's approach to student behaviour and management. Our [Student Behaviour Management Policy](#) supports the safety and wellbeing of students, workers and families in Tasmanian Government schools, outlining:

- what constitutes unacceptable student behaviour
- the requirements for responding to unacceptable student behaviour
- the minimum standards for preventing and responding to bullying.

CHILD AND YOUTH WELLBEING NEEDS

Evidence shows that children and young people who have developed a strong sense of wellbeing are more likely to feel safe, connected and secure (Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth, 2021).

The department understands and promotes child safety and wellbeing in terms of the six [Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth](#) (ARACY) Child and Youth Wellbeing Domains, which are the foundation of Tasmania's Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy: *It takes a Tasmanian village* (Tasmanian Government, 2021) and the department's [Child and Student Wellbeing Strategy](#).

The ARACY Child and Youth Wellbeing Domains acknowledge the many factors that contribute to the wellbeing of children and young people and include the following:



Being loved, safe and valued



Having material basics



Being healthy



Learning



Participating



**Having a positive sense
of culture and identity**

THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Empowering through formal learning

The [Australian Curriculum](#) sets goals for what all students are expected to learn as they progress through school life, no matter where they live in Australia or what school they attend.

The [Health and Physical Education](#) learning stream supports educators to develop students' knowledge, understanding and skills to access and synthesise information so they can take positive action to protect, enhance and advocate for their own and others' health, wellbeing, safety and physical activity.

Students learn about safe and unsafe situations at home, school, online and in other settings. Content covers strategies for dealing with unsafe or uncomfortable situations, cyberbullying, dating and relationships.

- Content aims to empower children and young people to make healthy, safe and active choices. It explores identities and emotions, and contextual factors that influence health, safety and wellbeing.

- Mental health and wellbeing content teaches students to maintain and enhance their mental health and wellbeing, and support that of others.

- Relationships and sexuality content supports the development of age-appropriate understandings and positive practices to support respectful relationships and consent, recognise power imbalances, maintain reproductive and sexual health, develop identities, and celebrate and respect difference and diversity. Content covers matters such as online and offline relationships, bullying, harassment, violence and discrimination.

- Age-appropriate content aims to empower children to make safe decisions and behave in ways that protect their safety and that of others.

The [Personal and Social](#) capability stream provides a foundation for all students to understand and feel positive about themselves and others, develop empathy, regulate behaviour, set goals and resolve conflict.

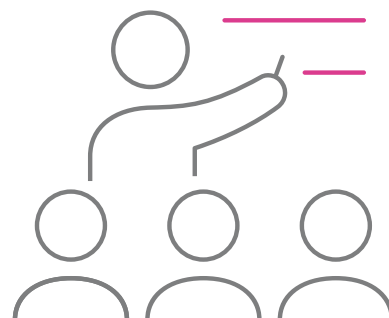
This stream also supports accessible content for students with disability, so they are able to participate in learning on the same basis as their peers.

- Self-awareness aims to help students develop personal and emotional awareness in relation to themselves and others.

- Self-management covers emotional regulation and personal strategies to overcome obstacles and challenges.

- Social awareness involves empathy, community and relational awareness, including how to participate in positive, safe and respectful relationships.

- Social management covers effective verbal and non-verbal communication, collaboration, decision-making and conflict resolution.



THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Safeguarding in care

Primary responsibility for the care and protection of children ultimately rests with their families. When a child cannot live safely with their family, the Child Safety Service plays a central role in protecting their rights and safeguarding them from harm in a trauma-informed environment outside the family home.

The [Charter of Rights](#) for out-of-home care establishes the rights of children and young people to:

- be safe and feel safe
- receive health care when it is needed
- be consulted and listened to seriously about decisions that affect them
- have regular meetings with their case workers
- be treated fairly and respected for who they are
- identify with their culture and community and observe their chosen religion
- have safe contact with their families and people who matter to them
- have an education and gain life skills
- have their privacy respected.

The Child Safety Service will implement an individual Care Plan and Care Team for each child and young person in out-of-home care. As well as the child themselves, their Care Team includes key people who are important in their life, such as family members, caregivers, student support workers in schools and other professionals.

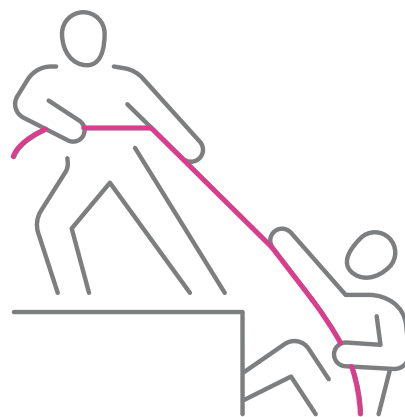
In accordance with the [Child and Youth Wellbeing Domains](#) and the Charter of Rights, the Child Safety Service and each child's Care Team work together to listen, record and respond to the safety and wellbeing worries of and concerns about children in a trauma-informed way.

When concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing arise, each wellbeing need will be considered and assessed in a way that upholds the rights of the child, includes them in decision-making, is culturally responsive and grounded in respectful relationships.

Where particular issues or complex needs involving the wellbeing or safety of a child or young person cannot be resolved or addressed through their Care Team, matters will be escalated to the appropriate group of cross-agency senior officers for advice and resolution.

The Commissioner for Children and Young People monitors Tasmania's out-of-home care system to protect the rights and wellbeing of children and young people in the system.

Children and young people who are in foster, kinship or residential care in Tasmania, and who have concerns or complaints about their rights not being upheld, may seek advice and support through Tasmania's Child Advocate for children in care. More information about the Child Advocate's role, including when and how to make contact, is provided on the [Child Advocate](#) pages of the department's website.



Safeguarding in youth justice

In accordance with the [Youth Justice Act 1997](#), the department is responsible for:

- diversion and rehabilitation programs for young people under supervision in the community
- the supervision, safe and secure care and education of young people on remand and detention in custodial care.

Like all children and young people, those who are detained in youth justice facilities have rights that must be recognised, respected and promoted while in detention. These rights are clearly set out in the Australian Children's Commissioners and Guardians' [Model Charter of Rights for Children and Young People Detained in Youth Justice Facilities](#).

The Youth Justice Blueprint 2022²¹ establishes a new strategic direction for Tasmania's youth justice system over the next ten years, including setting out a more contemporary, integrated and therapeutic approach to youth offending through:

- greater focus on early intervention and diversion
- specialist therapeutic intervention to support behavioural change and reduce recidivism
- building and supporting a therapeutic, trauma-informed workforce
- supporting the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people, in a culturally appropriate way
- detention as a last resort.

The immediate focus of the first two-year action plan to implement the Blueprint is on short-term priorities, including responding to matters raised through the Commission of Inquiry.

New, fit-for-purpose facilities will be established to replace the Ashley Youth Detention Centre. To ensure the safety and wellbeing of young people in Ashley until its closure, the department is working to increase safety and security, maintain staffing with experienced and competent workers, and deliver a therapeutic service model and improvements in practice²².

The Ashley Youth Detention Centre Practice Framework²³ focuses on a trauma-informed approach to the relationships, family, safety, community and culture of young people in custodial

²¹ Department for Education, Children and Young People (2022b)

²² Department for Education, Children and Young People (2022a)

²³ Department of Communities Tasmania (2020)

THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

care. Under this framework, young people are placed at the centre of decision-making and workers are provided with training opportunities and resources to gain new knowledge and skills in therapeutic practice.

As in all out-of-home care situations, workers at Ashley are guided by the [Child and Youth Wellbeing Domains](#) and must uphold the [Charter of Rights](#) for all young people in custodial care. A range of complementary educational, health and wellbeing services are delivered at the Centre to maximise the safety and wellbeing of young people in custody.

Tasmania's Commissioner for Children and Young People advocates for young people detained under the **Youth Justice Act 1997**, assisted by the role and functions of the Advocate for Young People in Detention.

Safeguarding in learning

The department's Child and Student Wellbeing Strategy²⁴ provides guidance for staff and volunteers in schools, libraries and Child and Family Learning Centres in supporting and encouraging the safety and wellbeing of young learners.

Our Model for Supporting Students Impacted by Trauma aims to identify and address needs at universal, whole-of-school and individual student levels. Through this tiered approach, the department is working to build system-wide capability in trauma-informed and trauma-responsive practice.

We partnered with the Australian Childhood Foundation and the University of Tasmania to develop a program for staff on trauma-informed practice in educational settings. The program is available to all Tasmanian Government school principals, teachers and teacher assistants, including the statewide network of school-based Wellbeing Leads and Safeguarding Leads.

Each school has an appointed Safeguarding Lead, who works as part of the school's Support and Wellbeing Team and across the broader school community to identify and mitigate risks to the wellbeing and safety of students and guide the enhancement of each school's child-safe culture, with a particular focus on child sexual abuse.

Libraries Tasmania has a responsible conduct policy and procedures in place to support the prevention of abusive behaviour displayed towards or by young people in both physical and online environments.

The department also has arrangements, policies and procedures to ensure that external organisations and providers at sites where children and young people engage in off-campus learning (for example, workplace-based learning, school excursions) are aware of our safeguarding approach and provide the department with an undertaking that they will comply with their legal and ethical obligations to safeguard children and young people from abuse.

Friendships and peer support

Our Child and Student Wellbeing Strategy²⁵ is aligned with and reinforces the importance of the six [Child and Youth Wellbeing Domains](#), recognising that safe, well and positive learners are better able to engage with their peers and others when their learning environment provides the opportunities and mechanisms to do so.

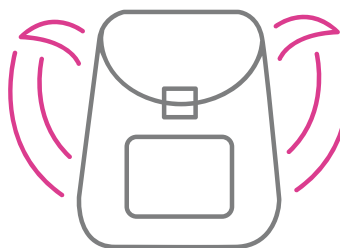
Child wellbeing, safety and student voice are key features of our educational planning process, encompassing strategic planning at both departmental and individual school levels.

We know from the department's annual Student Voice Focus Groups that students want genuine involvement in decision-making, positive school culture and good relationships with teachers. Students believe that all of these things make a difference to their learning.

The department's Student Wellbeing and Engagement Survey is run annually with students in every Tasmanian Government school across Years 4-12, capturing data on student feelings of safety, respect and belonging across the six Child and Youth Wellbeing Domains. The [2022 survey](#) was completed by more than 28,500 students, with results including the following:

- 87 per cent of students told us they felt they had good quality social support from their peers
- 84 per cent of students said they felt safe at school most of the time
- 72 per cent of students reported they felt that teachers and students care about each other and treat each other with respect
- 79 per cent of students said they felt part of a group of friends and usually fitted in with other students.

The department uses information gained through the annual survey to inform and enhance our approach at school and system levels.



²⁴ Department of Education (2022)

²⁵ Department of Education (2022)

THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Child sexual abuse prevention

Our [Office of Safeguarding Children and Young People](#) works collaboratively with all portfolios of the department to develop new information resources, systems and training to protect children and young people from child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.

We will continue to actively seek and incorporate input from children and young people, and people with lived experience of child sexual abuse, on expanding and improving the content, range and means of communicating information about child sexual abuse.



At a school level, age-appropriate education on consent and respectful relationships is delivered through the Australian Curriculum, starting with learners in kindergarten through to Year 10. The Curriculum supports the development of knowledge, understanding and skills to help children and young people develop consent negotiation skills, respectful relationships and positive practices for sexuality and sexual health.

The department has Respectful Relationship Education resources for teachers and offers professional learning to support schools in the explicit teaching of respectful relationships and consent. These resources are evidence-based and aligned with the latest version of the Curriculum (V9.0).

Our work on embedding respectful relationship and consent education in schools is aligned with and guided by Tasmania's Third Family and Sexual Violence Action Plan 2022-2027, particularly Action 24, which is to:

effectively embed Respectful Relationship and Consent Education in Tasmanian schools and develop a suite of resources informed by key stakeholders and children and young people that builds understanding of consent, coercive control and grooming in the Tasmanian community²⁶.

Many schools also engage with specialist support services to deliver age-appropriate protective behaviour and consent programs, such as those provided by the department's [Strong Families Safe Kids Advice and Referral Line](#), Family Planning's [Growing Up Program](#), Bravehearts' Ditto's [Keep Safe Adventure Program](#), the [Sexual Assault Support Service](#) and [Laurel House](#).

Other external support services

As well as the services referenced above, there are many other independent organisations that advocate for and uphold the rights of children and young people, work on their behalf and/or help them to resolve harm-related issues. These services include but are not limited to:

- [Commissioner for Children and Young People](#)
free advice on the rights and wellbeing of children and young people
- [Tasmania Legal Aid](#)
free legal advice and representation in criminal and family law matters for eligible people
- [Tasmanian Aboriginal Legal Service – Support Information + Strength \(SiS Tasmania\)](#)
holistic legal and other services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with lived experience of family violence and sexual assault
- [Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre](#)
member of the [Coalition of Peaks](#) working to achieve better outcomes for Tasmanian Aboriginal people
- [Ombudsman Tasmania](#)
investigation and resolution of complaints about the administrative actions of public authorities
- [Equal Opportunity Tasmania](#)
assistance with the resolution of disputes about discrimination, sexual harassment and other unlawful behaviour
- [Youth Law Australia](#)
free, confidential legal advice, assistance and referrals for young people and their advocates
- [eSafety Commissioner](#)
guidance and resources for online safety, including resources designed for children and young people, families and communities.

²⁶ Tasmanian Government (2022)

FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

STANDARD

3

Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.

- 3.1** Families participate in decisions affecting their child.
- 3.2** The department engages and openly communicates with families and the community about its child safe approach and relevant information is accessible.
- 3.3** Families and communities have a say in the development and review of the department's policies and practices.
- 3.4** Parents, caregivers and the community are informed about the department's operations and governance.

FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

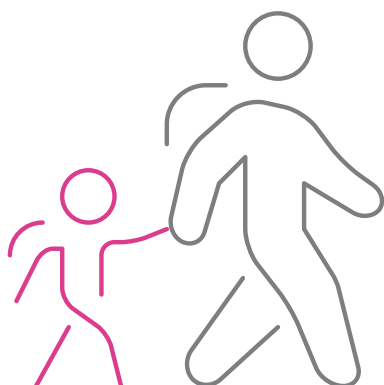
Participation and consent

Families and caregivers have the primary role and responsibility for the upbringing and development of their child, including advocating for their rights, helping them learn to exercise their rights, and ensuring that those rights are protected. Families and caregivers are best placed to understand the roles that each person plays in their child's life and how their needs and capabilities are best supported.

The department works *together with families* and respects this critical role and the corresponding right of families and caregivers to participate in the decisions that affect the lives of the children and young people in their care and, by extension, their own lives.

All portfolios of the department are required to ensure – and document the way in which workers are to ensure and record – family and caregiver participation in decisions that involve the wellbeing and safety of their children.

More information on the relevant policies and procedures is provided at [Appendix 4](#).



Information and communication

The department is committed to continuously improving information resources and collaborative partnerships with families and communities (including Tasmanian Aboriginal communities) to empower them to speak up and act without delay to protect the wellbeing and safety of children and young people.

That commitment includes providing families and communities with information about their moral and legal responsibilities to protect children from harm and report child abuse, as well as information about how to recognise the signs of harm or potential harm, including information about grooming and child sexual abuse. The [homepage of the department's website](#) has a direct 'Child Safety Concern' link to information about the [Strong Families Safe Kids Advice and Referral Line](#).

The Strong Families Safe Kids Advice and Referral Line has a team of dedicated liaison officers working across all three regions of Tasmania (south, north and north-west), who are able to facilitate and deliver education sessions to communities and professional groups on request. These sessions provide information about each person's legal and moral obligations to report all concerns, suspicions, allegations, disclosures and evidence of child abuse by contacting the Advice and Referral Line on 1800 000 123, including what to expect when contact is made. The sessions highlight the importance of a first point of contact, conversation-based approach.

Extensive information on the work we are doing to safeguard children and young people from harm is regularly updated and published on our website (www.decyp.tas.gov.au) under categories including but not limited to:

- [Safeguarding Children and Young People](#)
- [Child Safety Service](#)
- [Reporting Concerns](#)
- [Strong Families Safe Kids Advice and Referral Line](#)
- [Out of Home Care in Tasmania](#)
- [Youth Justice Services](#)
- [Parent and Carer Fact Sheets](#)
- [Child and Student Wellbeing](#)
- [Appropriate Relationships between Employees and Children and Young People](#)
- [Complaints \(learning environments\)](#)
- [Complaints \(child safety and youth justice\)](#).

As well as online information, families and communities are regularly provided with information about the prevention of child abuse through face-to-face presentations, smart device applications, electronic newsletters and hard copy information sheets distributed through schools and other learning environments.

FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

Contribution to policies and practices

The department is committed to ensuring that processes and mechanisms are in place to support meaningful engagement with families and communities to seek out and incorporate their contributions to our safeguarding policies and practices.

In doing so, we are guided by the following characteristics of effective and genuine engagement:

- **Participation:** We will invite input from families, caregivers and communities on progressive review of this Framework and the policies and procedures we have in place to safeguard children and young people from abuse.
- **Respect and influence:** We will listen to, value and respect the positive contributions of families, caregivers and communities that help us improve our policies and practices for safeguarding children and young people from abuse.
- **Accessibility:** We will provide families, caregivers and communities with a range of options to facilitate their contributions to our safeguarding policies and practices.
- **Partnership:** We will seek safeguarding policy and practice contributions from families, caregivers and communities in a manner that is collaborative, transparent and accountable.
- **Diversity:** We will engage with families, caregivers and communities in a manner that values and supports diversity and inclusion.
- **Continuous improvement:** We will regularly review and evaluate the way we engage with families, caregivers and communities to make sure we are actively seeking out and incorporating their contributions to our safeguarding policies and practices.

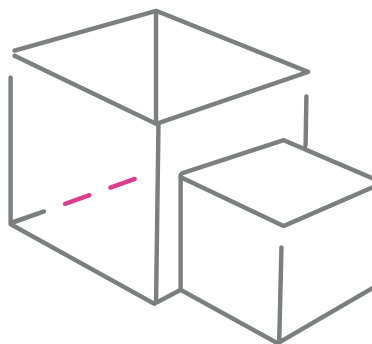
Transparency and accountability

Public transparency and accountability for the department's safeguarding policies, practices and governance structures is supported by development and publication of this Framework on the department's website: www.decyp.tas.gov.au.

Overarching information about the department's operations and governance is also available and regularly updated on the website. Publicly available policies, procedures, guidelines and relevant Ministerial Instructions are available through the department's [Policy Library](#).

Questions about departmental operations and governance may be directed to:

- phone: **1800 816 057**
- email: ServiceCentre@decyp.tas.gov.au.



EQUITY AND DIVERSITY

STANDARD

4

Equity is upheld, and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.

- 4.1** The department – including staff and volunteers – understands children and young people's diverse circumstances and provides support and respond to those who are vulnerable.
- 4.2** Children and young people have access to information, support and complaints processes in ways that are culturally safe, accessible and easy to understand.
- 4.3** The department pays 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 LGBTIQ+ children and young people.

EQUITY AND DIVERSITY

Approach to diversity and inclusion

All children and young people have rights, regardless of who they are, their gender, sex, sexuality, where, how and who they live with, their culture, religion, the language they speak, whether they have any form of disability, are rich or poor, how their family is structured and what their parents do²⁷.

We are committed to making sure our organisational culture, values and behaviours are respectful and inclusive of diversity at all sites and settings for which the department has lead responsibility. At the same time, we actively encourage cultural humility and promote inclusive and respectful behaviours among children and young people, families, caregivers and the broader community through our work in corporate, learning, out-of-home care and youth justice environments.

We support our workers to fulfil their legal obligations in accordance with the **Anti-Discrimination Act 1998** and the **Work Health and Safety Act 2012**. We are focused on providing culturally safe and inclusive environments in which every child and young person feels safe and accepted.

We are committed to building an organisational culture across all workers and workplaces that acknowledges and builds on the personal strengths of all children and young people, irrespective of abilities, gender, sexuality, sex or intersex status, social, economic or cultural background.

We will continue to place importance on developing cultural understandings, competence and inclusivity of workers' interaction and communication with children and young people.

More information about our policies for supporting diversity and inclusion is provided in [Appendix 4](#).

Recognising increased vulnerability

In fulfilling our commitment to being an exemplary child safe organisation, we recognise and acknowledge the importance of building staff awareness of the additional vulnerabilities that may be associated with:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people
- children and young people from other culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- physical disability, cognitive impairment and/or mental ill health experienced by children and young people
- gender, gender identity, gender expression, intersex status and/or sexuality, including children and young people identifying as LGBTIQ+
- children and young people with augmentative or alternative forms of communication
- children and young people who are young carers and/or have lower levels of social or family support, including those who have experienced abuse and are unable to live at home
- harmful sexual behaviour.

The department recognises the importance of learning from existing and new collaborative partnerships with other organisations and people with lived experience of diversity and vulnerability.

In developing information and services for children and young people, including information about support services and complaints processes, we ensure that our words and actions are culturally safe, accessible and easy to understand.



²⁷ United Nations (1989)

EQUITY AND DIVERSITY

Diversity of culture and language

In safeguarding children and young people from harm, the department upholds the values of Our Multicultural Island: Tasmania's Multicultural Policy²⁸, which requires that every Tasmanian of every age:

- is free to celebrate their culture, declare and practise their religion, use their language and express their gender identity and sexuality, both privately and in public
- is treated with respect and dignity, free from discrimination on any grounds, including race, language, religion, gender and sexual orientation
- has the right to fair and equitable access to Tasmanian Government services, including education
- has the opportunity to achieve financial security, free from cultural and language barriers
- has an equal opportunity and responsibility to contribute to the social, political and cultural life of Tasmania
- is able to live without discrimination, free from abuse, violence and fear.

The department is responsive to the language and cultural diversity of children and young people using and participating in our services, with particular attention paid to the needs of families and caregivers. We publish information and fact sheets on our website that have been [translated into the most common languages](#) spoken by families in Tasmanian schools, as well as 'plain English' versions of these resources.

All Tasmanian Government schools welcome children and young people from different cultural and religious backgrounds. We encourage all children to be resilient, creative and curious thinkers. The department has adopted an [English as an Additional Language \(EAL\) Support Model](#) to support EAL students, based on their individual needs and skills with the English language.

Our EAL Service supports schools and provides resources to help students learn English, working closely with schools to:

- ensure that all EAL students can learn
- create successful links between home and school
- increase skills and knowledge within the school to help support EAL students.

More information on EAL support is available under [Supporting Student Need](#) on the department's website, as well as links to local Migrant Resource Centres and the Translating and Interpreting Service.

When required, the department will engage internal or external translation and/or cultural support resources to support the safety and wellbeing needs of children and young people who are or may be at risk of abuse.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people

The department recognises and supports the family, community and cultural strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We are committed to improving our ways of working, constantly striving to be more inclusive and working directly alongside and in partnership with Tasmanian Aboriginal communities and organisations, including to ensure that our resources and communication with these groups is effective, inclusive and culturally appropriate.

We acknowledge the significant over-representation of Tasmanian Aboriginal children and young people in the child protection, youth justice and out-of-home care systems²⁹ and recognise the importance of supporting and enabling Aboriginal-led solutions to reverse these trends.

Workers in all portfolios of the department will continue to be assisted and provided with specialist resources to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.

Our work in this area is guided by and consistent with the Safe and Supported: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander First Action Plan 2023-2026³⁰ under the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021-2031³¹ and the goals of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Early Childhood Strategy³².

Our schools also provide opportunities for all Tasmanian students to learn about and value the deep and rich history and culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples, as well as to understand the injustices of colonisation and the ongoing effects of intergenerational trauma. More information on our approach in learning environments is available on the [website](#).

Gender diversity and sexual identity

Discrimination, harassment or bullying based on sexual orientation, intersex status, gender identity and gender expression is not tolerated in any departmental workplace. These and other discriminatory behaviours are also prohibited by law under the **Anti-Discrimination Act 1998**.

The department has been supporting LGBTIQ+ inclusion since 1997, guided and advised by a long-standing working group that includes representatives from across the department, LGBTIQ+ organisations and community members, Catholic Education Tasmania and Independent Schools Tasmania.

We are committed to providing [services and resources](#) for children and young people that support the development of personal identities, including contemporary values and approaches that promote LGBTIQ+ inclusivity.

We will continue to deliver and improve workplace-specific resources to support workers in delivering LGBTIQ+ inclusive education and care. Managers are expected to put the necessary programs and supports in place to ensure that environments are safe, supportive and inclusive.

²⁸ State of Tasmania (2019)

²⁹ Department for Education, Children and Young People (2022b)

³⁰ Commonwealth of Australia (2022)

³¹ Commonwealth of Australia (2021b)

³² National Indigenous Australians Agency (2021)

EQUITY AND DIVERSITY

Disability considerations

The department upholds the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#) in ensuring that children and young people with disabilities are able to fully enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with other children.

We work closely with families, caregivers and the relevant disability support services to understand and respond to the educational and personal care needs of children and young people on an individual basis.

We work collaboratively with the National Disability Insurance Agency to help families and caregivers access the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). More detailed information about [providing NDIS services at schools](#) is published on the department's website.

In learning environments, we are guided by the national *Disability Standards for Education 2005* and the department's current [Disability Action Plan](#).

The Tasmanian Government's new Disability Framework for Action will provide a strong foundation for future actions and reporting.

Inability to live at home

Every day, more than 1,000³³ Tasmanian children and young people are unable to live at home and require a safe and supportive alternative living arrangement. Out-of-home care is the system that provides formal protection for those children.

The *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997* provides the framework and mandate for government and non-government services and members of communities and families to respond to situations in which a child or young person has experienced – or is at risk of experiencing – abuse within their family.

If the department's Child Safety Service assesses that a child or young person is unable to remain at home due to the level of assessed risk, they will seek a court order for short or long term out-of-home care. The Secretary of the department is then responsible for the care and protection of that child or young person.

The department's commitment to stronger, more accountable and equitable safeguards for children and young people in out-of-home care is guided by the [Tasmanian Out of Home Care Standards](#), which aim to ensure that the services provided:

- are high quality and safe
- focus on achieving the best possible outcomes for children and young people
- support out-of-home care providers and carers
- drive continuous service improvement.

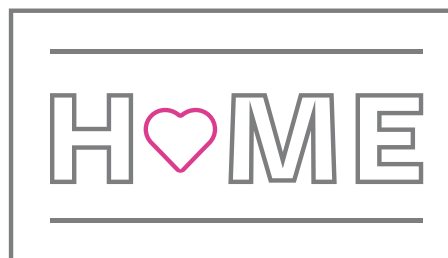
The standards include clear benchmarks and examples of indicators of success, with the objective of ensuring that children and young people in out-of-home care are safe, nurtured, feel loved and have a strong sense of wellbeing. This is an important step towards a more accountable system and establishment of a robust framework for the accreditation of out-of-home care providers, backed by strong independent oversight.

To further ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in out-of-home care, the department will invest in new guidance resources for staff and more rigorous processes for collecting and reporting information, including information about abusive behaviour by an adult or another child or young person, for example developmentally inappropriate and/or harmful sexual behaviour.

Inclusive involvement in policy and practice

The department engages and will continue to engage with children and young people from different social, economic and cultural backgrounds, of all abilities, genders, sexualities, sexes and intersex variations in developing and communicating information to help protect them from abuse.

We will ensure inclusive involvement by children and young people in developing a child-friendly version of this Framework and other child safety and wellbeing resources and initiatives implemented by the department.



³³ [Human Services Dashboard](#), October 2022

ENGAGING NEW WORKERS

STANDARD

5

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

- 5.1** Recruitment – including advertising, referee checks and staff and volunteer pre-employment screening – emphasises child safety and wellbeing.
- 5.2** Relevant staff and volunteers have current working with children checks or equivalent background checks.
- 5.3** All staff and volunteers receive an appropriate induction and are aware of their responsibilities to children and young people, including recordkeeping, information sharing and reporting obligations.
- 5.4** Ongoing supervision and people management is focused on child safety and wellbeing.

ENGAGING NEW WORKERS

Recruitment and screening

The department will take all reasonable steps to engage workers who are suited to work safely with children and young people.

- All recruitment and worker screening practices and processes undertaken by the department are carried out in accordance with Tasmanian State Service requirements.
- All staff and volunteers are required to undergo pre-employment screening and complete the required safeguarding training at induction.
- All advertised positions and Statements of Duties are required to include information about the department's commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

Managers are required to apply relevant screening requirements as specified in the essential requirements of the position as stated in the relevant Statement of Duties or role description, for example:

- Workers are required to hold current [Registration to Work with Vulnerable People](#) as a prerequisite and ongoing condition of employment or placement.
- Workers with responsibilities for NDIS participants may be required to undergo an [NDIS Worker Screening Check](#) when registering.
- In some situations, new workers may be required to provide evidence of a recent (preceding 12 months) [National Police Check](#) report before commencing work with the department.

In some circumstances, People Services and Support may approve risk-based exemptions from mandated screening requirements for workers who are engaged on an ad-hoc or short-term basis and who do not have direct contact with children and young people.

All teaching professionals in Tasmanian schools are required to register with the Teachers Registration Board (Tasmania), be of good character and fit to teach, in accordance with the [Teachers Registration Act 2000](#). Teachers are required to record their Registration to Work with Vulnerable People details with the Board when applying for their registration.

Workers in other specialised frontline service areas of the department, such as the Child Safety Service and Youth Justice, are subject to rigorous recruitment and screening processes. Other professional workers are also subject to the standards and requirements of registration applicable to their profession.

Workers are required to notify the department of any circumstances that may affect their suitability for initial or ongoing employment, including their Registration to Work with Vulnerable People status (for example: criminal charges or investigations, and conditional, suspended or revoked registration).

More information on recruitment and screening policies and procedures is provided at [Appendix 4](#).

Induction and supervision

All workers must be aware of and abide by this Framework and the department's safeguarding policies and procedures.

As part of the induction process, all new staff and volunteers must be provided with information about the department's expectations and requirements for workplace behaviour, professional standards and safeguarding, including the legal obligation and procedures for mandatory reporting and recording and sharing information about all concerns and situations involving child abuse.

New staff and volunteers will be provided with access to this Safeguarding Framework at induction and will be required to participate in introductory safeguarding training, the content of which will be specified by the department at the beginning of each calendar year.

At a minimum, introductory safeguarding training will include the completion of training on the mandatory reporting obligations of staff and volunteers, including information about recordkeeping and information sharing procedures. This training must be undertaken by new staff and volunteers within three months of commencing work with the department. New training modules will be progressively rolled out as they are developed.

Staff and volunteers who are unable to access and/or complete their training through the online modules, for whatever reason, will be provided with an equivalent, alternative form of individual or group training within the required three-month timeframe. Evidence of the completion of safeguarding training is required to be recorded by the relevant managers.

The department will maintain focus on supervising and mentoring new staff, volunteers, work experience students and trainees on placement to ensure they develop a strong understanding of their legislative, organisational and ethical responsibilities to safeguard children and young people from abuse. Managers are encouraged to have regular discussions with staff and volunteers about behavioural and performance expectations and provide them with ongoing access to resources to strengthen their safeguarding knowledge, preparedness and capability.

All portfolios of the department are expected to provide staff with ongoing performance development opportunities that focus on embedding the Child and Youth Safe Standards in the organisational culture, values and practice of workers.



More intensive safeguarding training at induction is provided to frontline workers in areas across the Child Safety Service and Youth Justice portfolios.

Information about ongoing supervision and training is provided at [Section 7](#).





SAFEGUARDING CHECKLIST FOR MANAGERS INDUCTING STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of current Registration to Work with Vulnerable People sighted and recorded |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> If applicable, evidence of additional screening requirements (NDIS Worker Screening Check, National Police Check) sighted and recorded |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic and/or hard copy of the Safe. Secure. Supported. Framework provided |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Introductory safeguarding training (as specified at the beginning of each calendar year) to be completed within three months of commencement, either online or in a face-to-face environment |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic and/or hard copy of the Mandatory Reporting Procedure provided at commencement |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consider the need for and/or establish safeguarding mentoring or supervisory arrangements |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal briefing within the first three months to reinforce mandatory reporting, recordkeeping and information sharing requirements |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regular discussions about behavioural and performance expectations in relation to safeguarding |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Embed safeguarding considerations and actions as part of performance development activities |  |

INTERVENTION AND RESPONSE

STANDARD

6

Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child-focused.

- 6.1** The department has an accessible, child-focused complaint handling policy that clearly outlines: all roles and responsibilities; approaches to dealing with different types of complaints; breaches of relevant policies or the code of conduct; and obligations to act and report.
- 6.2** Effective complaint handling processes are culturally safe and understood by children and young people, families, caregivers, staff and volunteers.
- 6.3** Complaints are taken seriously and responded to promptly and thoroughly.
- 6.4** The department has policies and procedures in place that address reporting of complaints and concerns to relevant authorities, whether or not the law requires reporting, and cooperates with law enforcement.
- 6.5** Reporting, privacy and employment law obligations are met.

INTERVENTION AND RESPONSE

Keeping our children safe

We are all responsible for intervening, reporting and responding to child abuse. This is a legislated and organisational requirement that applies across the department, without exception.

The department works in partnership with children and young people – and their families, caregivers and other government entities – to ensure that coordinated, effective and supportive action is taken when their wellbeing and safety is at risk, in a way that meets their individual needs.

Safeguarding in regulated settings

As Tasmania's regulatory authority for education and childcare services, the department has a role in overseeing and monitoring regulated activities to ensure that these activities comply with the [Child Care Act 2001](#) and [Education and Care Services National Law \(Tasmania\)](#). This includes the requirement to protect children from harm.

The department assesses all notifications relating to the wellbeing and safety of children and young people in regulated settings and takes action, as required and provided for in the relevant legislation, to prevent child abuse.

Child-focused approach

Children and young people have a right to know about, understand, participate and have a say in how the department intervenes and responds to protect their wellbeing and safety.

In strengthening the department's child safe approach, we will respond to the needs of children and young people, families, caregivers, communities and workers by:

- keeping the wellbeing and safety of children and young people at the centre of all safeguarding processes and decisions
- providing externally and internally accessible mechanisms and transparent processes for raising concerns and reporting abuse-related information
- seeking expert advice and responding to potentially abusive situations in a way that is appropriate to the level of risk presented
- investing in supportive, child-centred resources that encourage everyone to speak up about abuse
- seeking and incorporating input from children and young people, families and communities on the development and improvement of those resources
- letting everyone who speaks up about child abuse – particularly children and young people – know that we will listen to, believe and support them
- working together to take immediate and effective action to prevent and respond to child abuse
- providing support for all those who need it
- ensuring that children and young people have a say in all the decisions that affect them.

Raising and recording concerns

Safeguarding concerns may be raised at any time by anyone: workers, children and young people, families and caregivers, representatives from other government agencies or members of the community.

The department strongly encourages anyone who has any concerns, or is unsure about their reporting obligations and processes, to contact the [Strong Families Safe Kids Advice and Referral Line](#) for information and advice by phoning 1800 000 123.

The [homepage](#) of the department's website has a prominent Child Safety Concern 'quick link' to information about [when, how and what to expect](#) when contacting the [Advice and Referral Line](#).

In Tasmanian Government schools, children and young people of all ages are encouraged in an age-appropriate, culturally sensitive way to identify a trusted adult they can speak with if they don't feel safe at home, at school or in the community.

Children and young people are also provided with a range of tools, guidance and resources to help them understand their rights to be treated with respect, feel safe and be protected from harm.

The department's approach will be supported by new online information and a call to action designed first and foremost for children and young people.

Complaints management

The department welcomes constructive input from people of all ages and all sections of the Tasmanian community, particularly feedback on what we are doing to keep children and young people safe from harm.

Complaints about any aspect of the department's operations or its workers in relation to the wellbeing and safety of children and young people may be lodged in person or by:

- phone: 1800 816 057
- email: ServiceCentre@decyp.tas.gov.au
- post: GPO Box 169, Hobart 7001.

The department's website also provides information and online forms for lodging complaints specifically about:

- [Schools and Child and Family Learning Centres](#)
- [Child Safety and Youth Justice Services](#).

Complaints received will be:

- treated seriously
- triaged immediately on receipt
- responded to promptly and consistently

INTERVENTION AND RESPONSE

- handled in accordance with:
 - principles of fairness, accessibility, responsiveness and efficiency
 - trauma-informed, child safe practice
 - relevant legislation
 - departmental policies and procedures
 - sensitivity to equity, diversity and cultural safety, including access to translation if required.

The complaints process provides an opportunity for early intervention to resolve issues and risks as they emerge, and to ensure that plans are in place and actions are initiated to safeguard children and young people from harm.

Anyone who is unhappy with the complaints process or a related decision may request an internal review. If a complainant is unhappy about the outcome of an internal review, an external review may be requested by contacting [Ombudsman Tasmania](#) on 1800 001 170.

More information is available on the department's [website](#) or on request by phone, email or in person.

Misconduct in the workplace

The department is committed to ensuring that all workers behave and are supervised in accordance with the [State Service Code of Conduct](#) and/or relevant professional and behavioural standards. If a worker is alleged to have acted contrary to any of these, they may be subject to disciplinary processes, which may include suspension from duties while the matter is investigated.

If a worker behaves or interacts with children in a way that raises concerns, suspicions, allegations or evidence of child abuse, irrespective of the setting, information about that behaviour must be recorded and reported by the person or worker with knowledge of the behaviour.

Matters involving the potential misconduct of workers is managed by the department's Workplace Relations business unit and/or supported by staff in Legal Services. Information about these matters is recorded in the department-mandated electronic records management system, in accordance with the requirements outlined in Recordkeeping under [Standard 1: Governance and Culture](#).

Internal assessment of information and allegations of misconduct are undertaken in accordance with departmental policies and procedures and may include consideration of any previous reports of a similar nature involving the same worker.

Depending on the nature and severity of the matter, informal feedback may be provided to the worker or more formal action may be initiated. In all instances, detailed information about activities undertaken or proposed will be recorded, including when and to whom reports were made, as well as why, when and what decisions were made, and who was involved in the decision-making process.



If an investigation determines that a member of staff has breached the [Code of Conduct](#) or that any worker has acted contrary to the department's professional standards or established policy (including this Framework), a range of outcomes may apply. These include being provided with a lawful direction, professional counselling and training, a reprimand and, in some cases, termination of employment.

As well as the requirement for mandatory reporting to the [Strong Families Safe Kids Advice and Referral Line](#), the department will report matters of concern regarding the conduct of workers to any or all of the following:

- Tasmania Police (criminal matters)
- Department of Justice (Registration to Work with Vulnerable People, Reportable Conduct Scheme)
- Teachers Registration Board Tasmania (teaching professionals)
- Tasmanian Integrity Commission.

The department also upholds the objectives of the [Public Interest Disclosures Act 2002](#). If a worker has serious or significant concerns about the misconduct of a colleague, another public officer or a public body that have not otherwise been addressed, the worker can report those concerns as a public interest disclosure. Public interest disclosures can be submitted through:

- OfficeoftheSecretary@decyp.tas.gov.au
- [Tasmanian Integrity Commission](#)
- [Ombudsman Tasmania](#).

National Redress Scheme

The department deeply regrets and apologises for any harm caused to children and young people in a site or setting for which the department has, or has previously had, lead responsibility or any involvement.

Tasmanian Government agencies are members of the National Redress Scheme, which acknowledges and supports people who experienced child sexual abuse in institutional settings in Australia prior to 1 July 2018. Information on how to apply for redress is available on the [National Redress Scheme](#) website.

INTERVENTION AND RESPONSE

Harmful behaviour by children and young people towards others

A child or young person may display behaviours that cause harm to themselves and others, including other children and young people, including through:

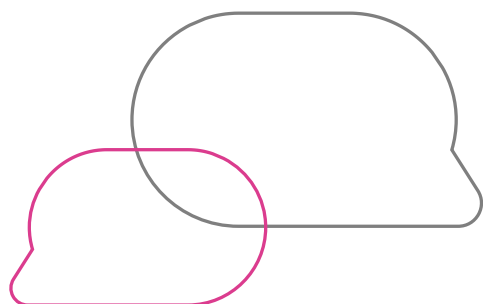
- bullying or cyberbullying
- physical, psychological or emotional abuse
- online abuse
- sexting
- developmentally inappropriate or harmful sexual behaviour.

The department acknowledges that a child or young person displaying harmful behaviour may not always intend to harm or understand the harm caused. The child may themselves have experienced maltreatment or abuse at the hands of others, and may require targeted intervention and therapeutic support to reduce the likelihood of them inflicting further harm.

The department mitigates and manages risks and incidents of harmful behaviour by children and young people through trauma-informed practice, which is underpinned by policies, procedures and best practice guidance specific to the setting, to ensure that:

- the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people subjected to or displaying harmful behaviour is addressed in a timely, trauma-informed and culturally sensitive way
- children and young people, and their parents and caregivers are actively involved in decision-making that is relevant to the harmful behaviour
- the background of the child or young person displaying the harmful behaviour is considered
- measures are put in place to safeguard children and young people from further harm, commensurate with the level of risk posed
- the children and young people are referred early and appropriately to specialist support services.

Links to workplace guidance for managing information about and observations of harmful sexual behaviour are provided at [Appendix 4](#).



Responding to abuse and disclosures

In all situations involving the disclosure, knowledge or observation of child abuse, the department and its workers will act quickly to ensure the physical and emotional safety of everyone at immediate risk.

If there is imminent danger to any person, workers must call 000 for urgent police or medical assistance and undertake subsequent response activities in accordance with the department's [Security and Emergency Management Response Procedures/Manual](#).

After immediate safety and wellbeing issues have been assessed and addressed, the rights of the child or young person impacted by abuse take priority over all other considerations. Children and young people have a right to be listened to and believed, supported through the investigation process, and consulted and actively involved in all decisions that affect them.

While staff may ask clarifying questions of children or young people, workers must not 'interview' children and young people about the alleged abuse unless authorised by the department to do so. For more information on the type of questions that may be asked, refer to the next section on [Trauma-informed support at disclosure](#).

Staff and volunteers who have information about or have witnessed child abuse must make a mandatory report by phone to the [Strong Families Safe Kids Advice and Referral Line](#) and notify their manager as soon as possible.

Depending on the situation, the Advice and Referral Line may advise the worker to contact Tasmania Police³⁴. The NDIS Commissioner may also be notified, if required and in accordance with the relevant legislation, policies and procedures. Step-by-step guidance for responding to abuse and disclosures is provided at [Appendix 4](#).

Workers must not take part in any investigations into child abuse or disclosures of abuse, unless authorised and/or trained to do so as part of their job.

The department will ensure that children and young people, and those who care for and about them, feel safe and are supported in a timely manner when the department and other entities are responding to or investigating situations involving child abuse.

- We adopt practices and services that respect and promote the rights of children, prioritise and ensure short and long-term support, and encourage efficient and sensitive investigation.
- We take steps to ensure that all independent investigators engaged abide by trauma-informed practice to avoid compounding harm to impacted children and young people during the investigation and/or interview process. This includes taking a rights-based approach to involving children in decisions about the time, location and presence of trusted people during an interview to ensure they feel safe and supported throughout the process.

³⁴ Criminal Code Act 1924 (s105A)

INTERVENTION AND RESPONSE

Trauma-informed support at disclosure

The disclosure of child abuse may occur at any time: while the abuse is happening, after it has ended or years later. Disclosure is about asking for help. When a child or young person discloses abuse, the critical priorities are to believe and support them and protect their safety and wellbeing, including to protect them from further abuse.

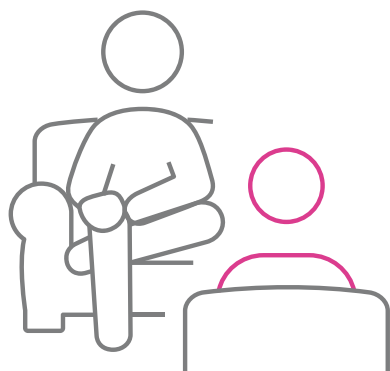
Disclosure is not always straightforward; it may be indirect or accidental and may involve changes in behaviour such as harmful sexual behaviour, heightened risk-taking or ambiguous verbal statements. Delays in disclosure may be due to many factors, including the fear of not being believed and the consequences of disclosure for the individual and/or others they care about³⁵.

The department encourages all staff and volunteers to provide a safe and trusted environment for the direct and indirect disclosure of child abuse, including using best practice guidance material, such as the resources developed and published by the:

- [Australian Institute of Family Studies](#)³⁶
- [Department of Health \(Tasmania\)](#)³⁷.

When a child or young person discloses information about abuse, the person to whom the disclosure is made should:

- believe them, and tell them that they are believed
- listen to, support and understand them
- tell them that it is not their fault
- tell them they have done the right thing by telling someone
- explain what will happen next and why, providing them with choice where appropriate (for example, the child may wish to be present when a mandatory report is made, call a family member/caregiver or request ongoing presence to support them)
- only discuss the situation with people who have been authorised to deal directly with the matter.



Child safe support services

The department maintains a comprehensive range of specialist services and personnel to support children and young people impacted by abusive behaviour. When appropriate, those services may also be offered to impacted families and carers.

We acknowledge that children may not feel safe talking about abuse if they fear they will not be believed, or they do not feel comfortable with or trust the adults supporting them. Some children may experience cultural sensitivities and multiple risk factors. They may feel intimidated, vulnerable and scared.

We will ensure that specialist resources are available to support children and young people, their families, caregivers and workers when disclosures about abuse are made or information about harmful situations becomes known. In doing this, we will:

- embed transparent, trauma-informed, culturally sensitive practices to ensure that children and young people are not retraumatised during investigations into situations involving potential or experienced child abuse
- work in partnership with external agencies and support organisations to ensure anyone with lived experience of child abuse is appropriately supported over short, medium and longer terms
- let abuse-impacted children and young people know what all the different people are doing to support them and keep them safe from further harm
- establish Care Teams and Care Plans and provide children and young people with choice and control when decisions are made about how they are supported, and by whom.

The Child and Youth Safe Governance Group will oversee the institution of consistent and transparent processes to ensure the suitability and/or accreditation of specialist resources to support children, young people and others adversely affected by child abuse.

Business units responsible for supporting anyone who is experiencing abuse-related trauma will ensure that those employed or engaged to support these children are appropriately qualified and authorised to do so.

Unqualified and unauthorised workers are not permitted to investigate or attempt to provide support – beyond the scope of their roles and responsibilities – to children, young people or adults with lived experience of child abuse.

³⁵ Australian Institute of Family Studies (2022)

³⁶ Australian Institute of Family Studies (2022)

³⁷ Department of Health (2022b)

INTERVENTION AND RESPONSE

Recordkeeping

After safety and wellbeing needs have been addressed and support and reassurance provided to the child or young person affected, details about the abuse or disclosure and action taken will be recorded by the reporting worker in the department-mandated electronic records management system, consistent with any advice provided by the [Strong Families Safe Kids Advice and Referral Line](#). The Advice and Referral Line will also record and report on all information provided.

Transparent communication

When appropriate, approved and authorised to do so – such as when there are broader ramifications and safety risks or concerns for the immediate community or the broader public – the department will externally communicate information about institution-based incidents involving child abuse.

Public information is developed in consultation with, and on the advice of, relevant entities and personnel, including Tasmania Police and the Minister for Education, Children and Youth.

The department's Strategic Marketing Communications and Media business unit maintains a communications strategy in preparedness for incidents that may involve institution-based child abuse and in which the communication of community and/or public information is appropriate, approved and authorised.



The Tasmanian Government is establishing new multidisciplinary centres to provide people of any age who have experienced or are experiencing sexual abuse with immediate trauma-informed care, clear and consistent information and streamlined response services.

The Arch initiative brings together specialist personnel from government and non-government services in one location, with the aim of improving personal experiences, integrating processes and strengthening criminal justice outcomes.

Arch centres will initially be piloted in Hobart and Launceston. Additional centres are expected to be progressively introduced to other areas, subject to review and evaluation of the pilot.

Services represented at the centres include sexual assault support services, the Child Safety Service, health care providers and specialist police investigators, working together in a safe, welcoming and culturally sensitive space where people can expect to be listened to, believed, respected and supported.

The Arch initiative was developed in consultation with people with lived experience of sexual abuse and their advocates.

Further information

More information about the Arch multidisciplinary centre initiative, including timelines and services, can be obtained by emailing mdc@dpfem.tas.gov.au.

TRAINING OUR WORKFORCE

STANDARD

7

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

- 7.1** Staff and volunteers are trained and supported to effectively implement the department's child safety and wellbeing policy.
- 7.2** Staff and volunteers receive training and information to recognise indicators of child harm, including harm caused by other children and young people.
- 7.3** Staff and volunteers receive training and information to respond effectively to issues of child safety and wellbeing, and support colleagues who disclose harm.
- 7.4** Staff and volunteers receive training and information on how to build culturally safe environments for children and young people.

TRAINING OUR WORKFORCE

Supporting our workforce

The department is committed to ensuring that all workers understand and are ready to fulfil their personal obligations, roles and responsibilities for safeguarding children and young people.

**If we fail to
prepare, then we
are preparing to
fail**

The department's Executive Board will ensure that department-wide systems and training resources for recognising, reporting, recording, sharing and responding to information about child abuse are fit-for-purpose, so that workers are better able to uphold the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and Tasmania's Child and Youth Safe Standards.

The Child and Youth Safe Governance Group champions and oversees the development of training resources to ensure staff preparedness for early intervention and response to threats to the wellbeing and safety of children and young people. The Governance Group establishes strategic direction and business rules for safeguarding, informed by regular reports on relevant statistics, activities and outcomes.

Leaders and managers across all portfolios of the department encourage and support staff and volunteers to accept individual responsibility for familiarising themselves with knowing the [signs of abuse](#) and when and how to respond to concerns about the wellbeing and safety of children and young people.

We encourage staff and volunteers to build their knowledge, ask questions and seek out more information if necessary, so that they feel capable and confident in their ability to intervene and respond to different situations involving, or potentially involving, threats to the wellbeing and safety of a child or young person.

Information and training resources

Within the limits of their areas of responsibility, all portfolios of the department develop and/or circulate information and educational resources that foster wellbeing, safety and trauma-informed practice, including resources for use by workers, children and young people, families, caregivers and communities.

The Child Safety Service develops and maintains a range of resources to help workers and all members of the community meet their shared obligation to safeguard children and young people from abuse. More information and links to policy and information resources are provided at [Appendix 4](#).

As well as fulfilling mandatory reporting functions, the [Strong Families Safe Kids Advice and Referral Line](#) provides advice to any person who has general concerns or who is seeking information, such as information about trauma-informed practice, cultural safety, available support services and how to manage difficult conversations.

The Office of Safeguarding Children and Young People works collaboratively with all portfolios of the department to champion the development and communication of information and training resources that deal specifically with child sexual abuse.

Specialist training

Staff and volunteers in different portfolios of the department are provided with specialist safeguarding training and educational resources specific to their roles and areas of responsibility and expertise, for example:

- introductory and annual refresher training in mandatory reporting and safeguarding
- trauma-informed practice, harmful sexual behaviour and cultural safety training, with priority given to the needs of frontline workers
- intensive 'beginning practice' and ongoing training for Child Safety Service and Youth Justice staff
- consent and respectful relationship education training for teachers
- ongoing training and professional development for staff and counsellors in advocacy and support positions.

TRAINING OUR WORKFORCE

Building capability and confidence

The department will maintain focus on supervising workers to ensure they develop strong understandings of their legislative, organisational and ethical responsibilities to safeguard children and young people from abuse.

Leaders across all portfolios of the department are required to have ongoing regular discussion and performance development conversations that focus on embedding the Child and Youth Safe Standards in the organisational culture, values and practice of workers.

Managers are expected to encourage and provide staff and volunteers with access to resources that strengthen their safeguarding capability, including:

- knowledge of their legislated and organisational responsibilities to appropriately report, record and securely share abuse-related information
- how and when to use the department's safeguarding information systems, tools and technologies.

To support ongoing awareness-building across the department, all staff and volunteers are required to complete annual safeguarding refresher training, the content of which will be specified by the department at the beginning of each calendar year. Annual training will cover information on mandatory reporting, cultural safety, recordkeeping and information sharing. New online training modules will be progressively rolled out as they are developed.

Staff and volunteers who are unable to access and/or complete their training through the online modules, for whatever reason, will be provided with an equivalent, alternative form of individual or group training.

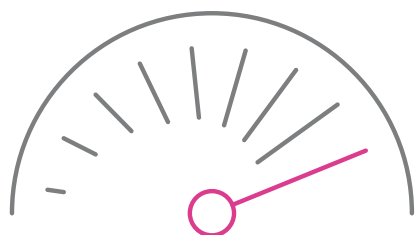
Evidence of the completion of annual safeguarding training is required to be recorded by the relevant managers.

Key focus areas for the department over the next year are to develop:

- new safeguarding training resources
- clear and clearly communicated information about how all portfolios of the department work together to protect the wellbeing and safety of children and young people
- new child sexual abuse prevention training resources, including information to help workers recognise signs of harm
- enhanced systems and procedures to ensure that all abuse-related information is securely and appropriately recorded, shared and followed up
- mechanisms to monitor and ensure that the rights of children and young people are always at the centre of all decisions made and actions taken.

Recognising signs of abuse

The department encourages all workers to build awareness and be alert for the indicators of harm in children and young people, specifically the indicators summarised in [Appendix 2](#) and further detailed in the Department of Health's practice guidance: [Recognising the Signs of Harm in Children and Young People](#)³⁸.



³⁸ Department of Health (2022c)

SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

STANDARD

8

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

- 8.1** Staff and volunteers identify and mitigate risks in online and physical environments without compromising a child's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.
- 8.2** The online environment is used in accordance with the department's code of conduct and child safety and wellbeing policy and practices.
- 8.3** Risk management plans consider risks posed by organisational settings, activities and the physical environment.
- 8.4** The department has procurement policies for contracting facilities and services from third parties that ensure the safety of children and young people.

SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

Safe physical environments

As part of our duty of care, the department takes a holistic approach to ensuring the overall wellbeing and safety of children and young people at the physical sites and settings for which the department has lead responsibility.

The department will conduct site-specific safeguarding risk assessments at all Tasmanian Government schools, with initial focus on child sexual abuse risks. This approach will be progressively rolled out across all departmental sites that provide frontline services to children and young people, supported by the development of new risk assessment tools and templates to help managers and staff identify threats and mitigate risks to the wellbeing and safety of children and young people in physical settings.

The department will continue to liaise with site managers and workers in settings where department-sponsored, off-campus learning occurs (for example workplace-based learning, traineeships, school excursions) to ensure that the hosts of these settings are aware of the department's safeguarding approach and their own legal and ethical obligations to safeguard children and young people from abuse.

Wellbeing and safety in out-of-home care is guided by the [Tasmanian Out of Home Care Standards](#), which aim to ensure that care providers are aware of and comply with their legal and ethical responsibilities to maintain physical environments that are safe, stable and supportive for children and young people.

All visiting workers entering a child-facing, frontline service and/or site for which the department has lead responsibility are required to check in on arrival with evidence of their current Registration to Work with Vulnerable People. In accordance with departmental policy, the currency of registration must be validated on check-in against the authoritative database held by the Department of Justice. Managers at each site will ensure compliance with these requirements at all times.

The department also participates in a secure and authorised data sharing arrangement with the Department of Justice, through which the department may be automatically notified if a worker's Registration to Work with Vulnerable People lapses or is revoked.

Risk management plans

The department is committed to identifying, evaluating, documenting and responding to child abuse risks. We maintain rigorous processes to screen and support our workers, invest in ongoing strategies to reduce the vulnerability of children and young people, and address environmental and situational factors to overcome conditions that may enable abuse to occur.

Risk management plans that include safeguarding considerations are a compulsory requirement for any non-standard activity, excursion or outing involving children and young people that is arranged, managed and/or supervised at locations for which the department does not have lead responsibility. The department has policies and procedures in place to support these processes. More information is provided at [Appendix 4](#).

Safe online environments

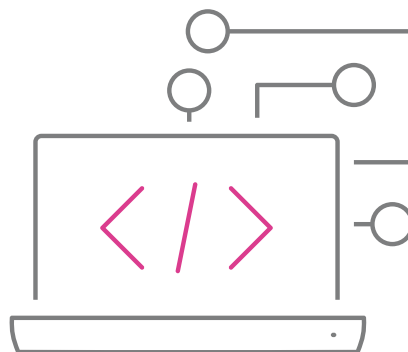
The increasing shift of various forms of human interaction to the digital environment has brought with it a corresponding increase in the level of adult-to-child and peer-to-peer abuse occurring online.

In managing our online environments, the department's overarching objective is to allow children and young people to enjoy the benefits of the digital world while protecting their safety and rights.

We support workers, families and caregivers in leveraging opportunities afforded by the digital environment, while recognising the risks and complexities that may be involved.

Any worker, child or young person who uses departmental computers, laptops, phones or other mobile devices to access the internet must abide by the [ICT Conditions of Use Policy](#). Under this policy, equipment must not be used to perpetrate any kind of online abuse, including cyberbullying, harmful sexual behaviour, child sexual exploitation or child sexual abuse, including grooming.

Workers must abide by legal and ethical government and department requirements for the professional use of information and resources, including adherence to the [State Service Code of Conduct](#)³⁹ and/or the department's [ICT Conditions of Use Policy](#) and [Social Media Policy](#).



³⁹ State Service Act 2000

SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

Staff must always maintain a clear distinction between their personal life and work activities, in both physical and online environments.

Engaging in online child sexual exploitation or abuse is a criminal offence. Perpetrators may seek out and groom children and young people through gaming and social media sites. Online offenders may be prosecuted for abusive and exploitative activities such as grooming and the generation, viewing and sharing of child abuse material.

Australia's [eSafety Commissioner](#) offers a range of resources specifically designed to help children and young people stay safe online, including age-appropriate information about different types of online harm, and when and how to report harmful online content or experiences.

The department will proactively distribute information from the eSafety Commissioner and other authoritative sources about emerging threats in the online environment to children and young people, their families and caregivers and communities, as and when that information comes to hand.

Information and advice about steps that can be taken to encourage and maintain safe online environments and behaviours will be distributed regularly through a variety of channels across all frontline service delivery areas of the department.

Suspensions, allegations and evidence of non-compliance with the department's policies and procedures for all users of department-provided ICT resources and networks will be investigated by the department's Information and Technology Services business unit.

The department will immediately record and report suspicions or evidence of online abuse, both internally and externally to Tasmania Police. Offenders may be prosecuted. State Service employees may also be subject to disciplinary action under the *State Service Code of Conduct*.

Engaging other relevant entities as service providers

When engaging and/or partnering with other entities⁴⁰ to provide education and care services for children and young people for and/or on behalf of the department, the department will take all reasonable steps to ensure that those entities:

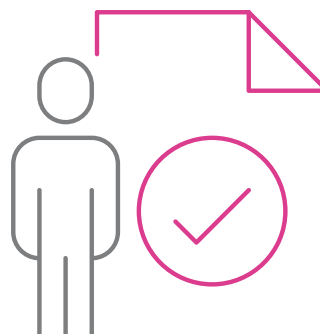
- are aware of and agree to comply with the relevant aspects of this Framework
- agree to provide their services in accordance with the Child and Youth Safe Organisations Framework and legislation⁴¹, as applicable
- agree to advise the department within one business day of any notification of a reportable allegation or conviction under the *Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023* and/or any non-compliance or potential non-compliance with that legislation
- comply with their legal, organisational and ethical obligations to safeguard children and young people from abuse.

Where applicable, these requirements will be incorporated into the relevant contractual documents, funding agreements and/or fee-for-service offerings.

Engaging other contractors and subcontractors

The department will ensure that third-party contractors, subcontractors and other individuals who routinely attend child-facing services and/or sites for which the department has lead responsibility are subject to the same Registration to Work with Vulnerable People, [conduct and behaviour requirements](#) as workers. More information is provided under [Standard 5: Engaging New Workers](#).

The department will ensure that all relevant contracts and agreements document the department's legal, organisational and ethical requirements to keep children and young people safe.



⁴⁰ as defined in the *Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023*

⁴¹ *Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023*

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

STANDARD

9

Implementation of the Child and Youth Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.

- 9.1** The department regularly reviews, evaluates and improves child safe practices.
- 9.2** Complaints, concerns and safety incidents are analysed to identify causes and systemic failures so as to inform continuous improvement.
- 9.3** The department reports on the findings of relevant reviews to staff, volunteers, communities, families and children and young people.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Monitoring and evaluation

The department is committed to the process of continuous improvement to ensure that our policies, procedures and arrangements to enhance the wellbeing and safety of children and young people are best practice, effective and nationally consistent.

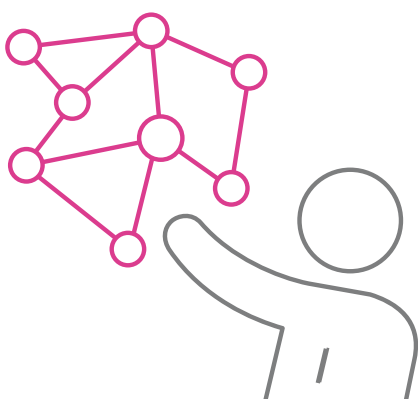
We have monitoring systems and liaison mechanisms in place so we can learn from the abuse-related experiences of children, young people, families, caregivers, workers and others in the broader community and other jurisdictions.

The department participates in and contributes to national initiatives and strategies for the prevention of child abuse. The Executive Board ensures that suitably qualified and experienced staff are nominated to represent the department at relevant national and interjurisdictional forums, including active participation in committees and working groups led by the National Office for Child Safety.

From time to time, the department may share extracts of deidentified, anonymised information with relevant national and state authorities and government agencies for statistical reporting, risk management, trend identification, monitoring and evaluation purposes.

We proactively monitor complaints, concerns and safety incidents to identify root causes and failures. This includes developing tools to help us identify emerging issues and prominent and recurring risks.

Children and young people will be consulted and invited to give their opinions freely in the evaluation of safeguarding arrangements and issues that affect them. We will listen to them and take their views seriously.



Learning and improving

The department works in partnership with families and communities, external entities and national partners to stay informed and ensure contemporary, trauma-informed practice.

***If you always do what
you've always done,
you'll always get what
you've always got***

We will invite and encourage children and young people to help us learn from their experiences as we strive to improve the way we keep them safe from harm. We will learn from suspicions, allegations, disclosures and incidents of child abuse, and use those learnings to continuously improve our Safeguarding Framework.

We will conduct system reviews after all critical incidents and develop strategies to address any systemic issues that adversely impact the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

We will continue to monitor how well we are safeguarding children and young people and transparently identify, learn from and communicate our failures and successes.

Development of our internal audit program will consider reviews of the safeguarding risk management, control and governance processes implemented under this Framework.

Strategic oversight

The Child and Youth Safe Governance Group will direct and oversee continuous improvement of the department's safeguarding policies and procedures and the Framework to ensure ongoing relevance and effectiveness.

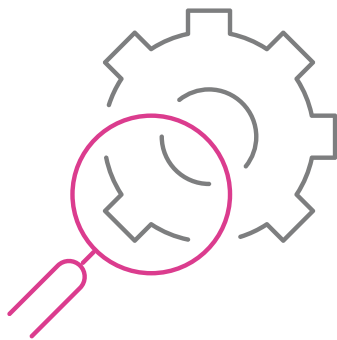
The Child and Youth Safe Governance Group will also review the outcomes, learnings and recommendations of all continuous improvement activities and system reviews.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Exploring hypothetical scenarios

The department will explore the use of hypothetical scenarios to identify gaps, improve processes and build the knowledge and confidence of staff in their ability to respond – and support other workers to respond – appropriately and quickly to concerns and incidents of child abuse.

In this way, we will be better placed to identify potential threats and [signs of abuse](#), institute early intervention and response, and recognise and fulfil our statutory obligations to report and respond to child abuse.



Performance review

The department's performance against the indicators referenced in the National Principles and Tasmania's Child and Youth Safe Standards will be measured and evaluated as part of annual internal review of the Framework.

The internal review process will be complemented by periodic independent assessment, as and when recommended by the Child and Youth Safe Governance Group.

Debriefing and system reviews

Debriefings will be held after all situations involving reports of significant concerns, disclosures or incidents of child abuse at sites or settings for which the department has lead responsibility.

After any significant incident of child sexual abuse, the department will initiate a formal system review. The review process may include individual and group debriefings to identify and record observations on what worked well and why, what did not work well and why, and develop recommendations for the improvement of plans, procedures and arrangements.

Formal debriefings involve structured, supportive meetings and discussion with the people directly involved. Debriefings will focus on understanding how existing systems can be improved to mitigate the risk of similar circumstances occurring in the future. The department will facilitate formal debriefings within two weeks of initiating a system review.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

STANDARD

10

Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

- 10.1** Policies and procedures address all the Child and Youth Safe Standards.
- 10.2** Policies and procedures are documented and easy to understand.
- 10.3** Best practice models and stakeholder consultation informs the development of policies and procedures.
- 10.4** Leaders champion and model compliance with policies and procedures.
- 10.5** Staff and volunteers understand and implement policies and procedures.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

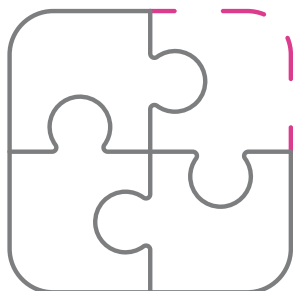
Overarching practice

In accordance with the department's commitment to continuous improvement, our policies and practices are subject to regular and ongoing review and refinement.

As part of this process, we will ensure that our safeguarding policies and procedures are:

- aligned with and address the Child and Youth Safe Standards
- informed by stakeholder consultation, including through formal and informal feedback by children and young people, families, caregivers and communities
- championed and modelled by leaders
- put into practice
- publicly accessible and easy to understand
- clearly describe:
 - how we meet our statutory, organisational and ethical obligations for ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children and young people
 - how we manage and respond to concerns about the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, including complaints about the department or its workers
 - how children and young people, their families and caregivers and members of the community can contribute to the ongoing refinement and effectiveness of the Framework, policies and procedures.

All safeguarding policy and procedure documents are available for internal reference and use by staff and volunteers through the department's intranet-based Policy Library. Many policy documents are also available for public access through the department's website.



Maintaining policies and procedures

This Framework is owned by the Child and Youth Safe Governance Group and maintained by the Office of Safeguarding Children and Young People.

The department's Strategic Policy and Projects unit institutes and manages processes that help policy owners to regularly review and update the policies and procedures that support the Framework, including ensuring that these resources reflect safeguarding considerations, are consistent with emerging best practice safeguarding models, and are fit-for-purpose.

The department portfolio areas with lead responsibility for each policy document are required to review and update the relevant resources according to the prescribed review schedule and/or when there are changes to legislative requirements, overarching government policy, systems and departmental arrangements, or in response to the findings of system reviews after significant incidents involving child abuse.

Policies with significant relevance to safeguarding children and young people from abuse are required to include and/or consider including the following, as appropriate:

- the underpinning Child and Youth Safe Standards
- definition of relevant safeguarding terms and abbreviations
- information (or links to information) about how to recognise child abuse and comply with mandatory reporting obligations, including clear description of the reporting process, who and what is involved
- reference to trauma-informed practice and information resources
- links to relevant policies and procedures for reporting, recording and handling all concerns, suspicions, complaints, allegations, disclosures and knowledge of child abuse
- education and training requirements for workers, where relevant.

Adherence to the following elements of standard departmental policies and procedures is also required:

- clear definition of purpose and scope, including the scope of application (to whom the policy applies and when and where it applies)
- roles and responsibilities of key individuals/groups (leaders, managers, workers)
- dates on which the policy comes into effect and is due for review
- approval details
- contact details for more information/support
- references to related documents.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Implementing policies and procedures

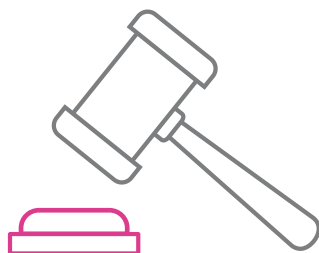
All staff are required to be familiar with and abide by this Framework and the underpinning policies and procedures, particularly as they relate to keeping children and young people safe from harm.

On induction, staff and volunteers must be provided with access to this Framework and information about the department's expectations and requirements for workplace behaviour, professional standards and safeguarding children and young people, including the legal obligation and procedures for mandatory reporting and recording and sharing information about all concerns and situations involving child abuse.

Relevant legislation

This Safeguarding Framework is underpinned by Tasmanian legislation, which includes but is not limited to:

- *Adoption Act 1988*
- *Anti-Discrimination Act 1998*
- *Archives Act 1983*
- *Child Care Act 2001*
- *Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023*
- *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997*
- *Community Protection (Offender Reporting) Act 2005*
- *Criminal Code Act 1924*
- *Education Act 2016*
- *Education and Care Services National Law (Tasmania)*
- *Family Violence Act 2004*
- *Limitation Act 1974*
- *Personal Information Protection Act 2004*
- *Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013*
- *Right to Information Act 2009*
- *State Service Act 2000*
- *Teachers Registration Act 2000*
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2012*
- *Youth Justice Act 1997*



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KEEPING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SAFE

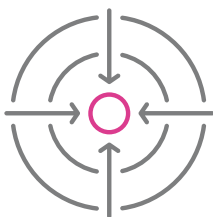


The Safeguarding Framework directly aligns with and will support the Department for Education, Children and Young People's implementation of Tasmania's Child and Youth Safe Standards, underpinned by our commitment to upholding the rights of children and young people and developing a culture that empowers and keeps them safe.

This resource describes how all workers can collectively contribute to this important commitment.

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KEEPING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SAFE



1 *Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in leadership, governance and culture*

- ☐ Prioritise the best interests of children and young people in your daily work
- ☐ Understand your duty of care for protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people
- ☐ Know the rights of children and young people
- ☐ Create a welcoming, inclusive and supportive environment for children and young people
- ☐ Understand and comply with the department's child safe policies and procedures to make sure you know how you can keep them safe
- ☐ Be open, transparent and willing to listen
- ☐ Be aware of and understand the governance structures and reporting lines that exist for child safety and wellbeing
- ☐ Understand your responsibilities and legal obligations for recordkeeping and information sharing
- ☐ Stay informed and openly discuss issues involving the safety and wellbeing of children and young people
- ☐ Help identify and mitigate risks to children and young people



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

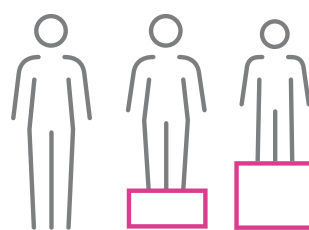
- ☐ Support children and young people to understand their rights and the department's commitment to their safety and wellbeing
- ☐ Help children and young people to find information about their rights and the different ways they can raise concerns
- ☐ Check in regularly with children and young people
- ☐ Let children and young people know who they can go to if they need to talk to someone
- ☐ Encourage and empower children and young people to ask questions and participate in decision-making about the things that affect them
- ☐ Support children and young people to know what they can expect from you and the people around you, and what is safe and unsafe behaviour both in-person and online
- ☐ Teach children and young people about the signs of harm and the role that they can take in protecting themselves and their peers
- ☐ Do what you say you will do
- ☐ Use inclusive and empowering child-friendly language in everyday activities
- ☐ Develop your skills to engage effectively and appropriately with children and young people

KEEPING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SAFE



3 Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing

- ☐ Respect that families and caregivers have primary responsibility for keeping their child or young person safe
- ☐ Encourage and support families and caregivers to talk to their child or young person about safety and wellbeing
- ☐ Help families and caregivers find information about rights and the different ways they can raise concerns
- ☐ Help families and caregivers know what they can expect from you and the people around you, and about what is safe and unsafe behaviour
- ☐ Support families and caregivers to understand the rights of their child or young person
- ☐ Involve families and caregivers in the care of their child or young person
- ☐ Provide families and caregivers with information that is accessible and tailored to their needs
- ☐ Encourage and empower families and caregivers to provide feedback
- ☐ Consider that a child or young person's competence to make decisions increases as they get older when making decisions that affect them



4 Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice

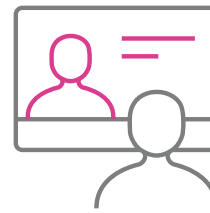
- ☐ Recognise the diverse backgrounds, circumstances and needs of children and young people and be alert to challenges they may face due to their diversity
- ☐ Tailor your communication to suit the different cultural backgrounds, needs and abilities of children and young people, and their families and caregivers
- ☐ Make sure information and communication is age-appropriate and provided in an appropriate language and format
- ☐ Stay up to date with training, education, strategies and resources to help you meet the diverse needs of children and young people, their families and caregivers
- ☐ Understand and comply with the department's policy directives on Aboriginal cultural respect, diversity, inclusion and respectful behaviour

KEEPING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SAFE



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

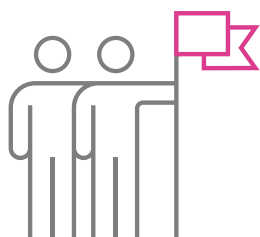
- ☐ Undertake obligatory and voluntary training to better understand how you can keep children and young people safe and well
- ☐ Undergo appropriate background checks and communicate relevant information if anything changes
- ☐ Understand and practise safe behaviours when providing care to children and young people
- ☐ Understand your reporting obligations and know where and when to report concerns
- ☐ Normalise and encourage appropriate behaviour between children and young people and the people around them
- ☐ Maintain current knowledge and understanding of child development where relevant to your role
- ☐ Maintain experience in working with children and young people where relevant to your role
- ☐ Understand and follow policies and procedures and know your responsibilities



6 Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused

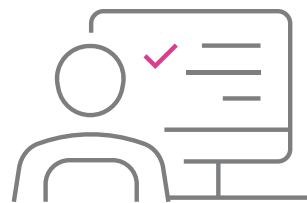
- ☐ Take children and young people seriously when they raise concerns, provide feedback and take action to keep them safe
- ☐ Remain alert to the signs of harm and risks to children and young people and the ways different children and young people may disclose
- ☐ Always raise and address concerns as soon as you recognise them
- ☐ Normalise and encourage a culture of reporting and learning from all safety concerns
- ☐ Understand and comply with the department's safeguarding policies and procedures
- ☐ Understand and comply with your legal obligations to report harm to children and young people
- ☐ Raise awareness about safety and wellbeing and how to raise concerns
- ☐ Let children and young people, their families and caregivers know how to raise concerns, and what will happen when a concern is reported
- ☐ Be transparent about your information sharing responsibilities and situations where you may have to tell someone else about a concern

KEEPING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SAFE



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

- Complete annual refresher training and new learning and development opportunities to enhance your knowledge, skills and awareness of ways to keep children and young people safe and well
- Be aware of local support services and resources to help support children and young people, their families and caregivers
- Stay up to date with the latest evidence and best practice relevant to your role
- Speak with your manager about professional and performance development and supervision strategies that can help you better keep children and young people safe and well
- Speak with your colleagues about how to best uphold child safety and wellbeing in practice
- Join a professional association or peak body and encourage your peers to do the same where relevant to your practice



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

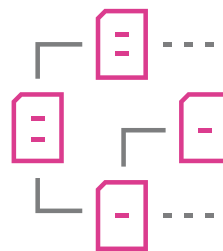
- Consider risks in your work environment and if there's anything more we can do to improve the wellbeing and safety of children and young people
- Help children and young people to understand what a safe environment looks like and encourage them to seek help if they come across something that makes them feel unsafe
- Support children and young people to engage safely online
- Let children and young people know about spaces that are off-limits or out of bounds, such as storerooms, dark areas or staff room
- Comply with the department's policy directives regarding online environments, images and media
- Understand what information and facilities you are allowed to access and what is restricted

KEEPING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SAFE



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

- ☐ Stay up to date with any new or changed child safe policies and procedures or legal requirements that may affect your obligations
- ☐ Make suggestions if you feel something could be improved
- ☐ Stay open to suggestions for improvement and seek advice from relevant experts if you are unsure about the best approach



10 *Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people*

- ☐ Understand and comply with the department's child safe policies and procedures to make sure you know how you can keep them safe
- ☐ Make sure the department's child safe policies and procedures can help you uphold the safety and wellbeing of children and young people and make suggestions if something could be improved

RECOGNISING SIGNS OF ABUSE



This resource provides practical guidance to help workers recognise possible behavioural, psychological and physical signs of harm that may emerge suddenly or over time. The indicators summarised below are not exhaustive and are intended as a guide only. It is important to note that individual signs of harm do not necessarily indicate abuse and must be considered in the context of other indicators and the particular circumstances of each child or young person.

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INDICATORS OF PHYSICAL HARM

Context

The more reliant a child or young person is on adults or caregivers, the more vulnerable they are to abuse. Children and young people with a disability and those with mental health issues are particularly at risk of harm through restrictive practices. It is particularly important to be alert to signs of abuse in those who are less able to communicate experiences of harm. Physical injury to a child or young person may present after a single or repeated incidents. Perpetrators may perform harmful acts on a child or young person in a way that is difficult to detect. Even small injuries may be significant and a possible sign that another hidden injury is present.

Physical indicators – children and young people

Repeated or delayed presentations of the child or young person to health or other services with injuries, swallowing of non-food substances or minor complaints

Facial, head and neck bruising, or other bruising and marks that show the shape of an object used (example: handprint, belt buckle)

Multiple bruises or injuries, unspecified internal pains, ingestion of poisonous substances, alcohol or drugs

Head injuries

Lacerations and welts, bite marks, scratches, burns and scalds (a burn with a clear outline may be suspicious)

Dislocations and fractures of bones, especially in children under three years of age

Recurrent injuries or 'accidents' over a period of time or multiple injuries of different sizes in various stages of healing (including injuries not consistent with the child's age and development)

Behavioural indicators – children and young people

Unusually deferent to adults, overly compliant, eager to please

Aggressive and violent behaviour towards others, particularly younger children, or explosive temper that is out of proportion to an event

Unable to recall how injuries occurred or offers an inconsistent, vague or variable explanation

Depicts abusive behaviour and language themes in their artwork, stories or play

Describes themselves as bad and deserving to be punished

Wears layers of clothing or baggy clothes to hide or disguise body, gender, body shape, bruises or injuries (example: keeps jacket on in class)

Physical indicators – perpetrators

Apparent use of any form of corporal punishment, excessive discipline or aggressive behaviour (examples: smacking, other forms of physical discipline)

Inappropriate, unlawful or unauthorised use of physical restraint to restrict movement (example: tied to chair)

Making a child or young person purposefully uncomfortable (example: removing blankets)

Use of involuntary isolation or confinement

Misuse of or failure to administer medication as prescribed (example: oversedation)

Display of aggressive behaviour in the presence of a child or young person (examples: threatening to harm the child or another person, intimidation, yelling, isolating or dismissive behaviour)

Visible rough handling of a child or young person

Withholding food or force feeding

Physical signs of a child or young person fighting back (examples: facial scratches and injuries to hands)

Behavioural indicators – perpetrators

Disclosing or expressing intention of any form of physical punishment, excessive discipline or aggressive behaviour (examples: smacking, other forms of physical discipline)

Admitting to some violence, but minimising its frequency and severity

Showing little concern about the welfare of a child or young person, or the severity, extent, treatment and care of an injury

Isolating a child or young person from contact with school, services, etc in order to hid injuries or prevent disclosure

Exaggeration or trivialisation of the subject of child abuse, child safety concerns or feedback (example: telling jokes that make light of children being hurt)

Inability to control angry outbursts

Explanation of an injury that is vague, absent or inconsistent with physical signs in a child or young person

INDICATORS OF EMOTIONAL HARM

Context

Emotional abuse may include repeatedly isolating, rejecting or excluding a child or young person, putting them down and calling them demeaning names. Some aspects of emotional abuse are strongly interrelated to neglect. It is also emotionally abusive when a family member or caregiver neglects to provide the stable, appropriate, available and responsive attachment relationships that are necessary for a child or young person's emotional and psychological development. Harm to children and young people may also occur when they are directly or indirectly exposed to family violence. Perpetrators may think or believe that there is no relationship between their abusive behaviour and the behaviour of the child or young person.

Physical indicators – children and young people

Dressed differently from other children in the family

Deprived physical living conditions, compared with other children in the family

Behavioural indicators – children and young people

Unusually deferent to adults, overly compliant, eager to please, too well-mannered, excessively neat and clean

Describes themselves as bad and deserving to be punished

Fears the consequences of actions, often leading to lying

Has difficulty maintaining long-term, significant relationships

Expresses deep loneliness, feelings of isolation, anxiousness or despairing

Behaves aggressively and violently towards others, particularly younger children, or explosive temper that is out of proportion to a precipitating event

Behavioural indicators – perpetrators

Constantly criticises, shames, humiliates, belittles, degrades, teases a child or young person

Addresses a child or young person in a dismissive, patronising or infantilising way

Ignores or withholds praise and affection

Persistently hostile, negative and verbally abusive, rejects, scapegoats and unnecessarily blames the child or young person

Makes excessive or unreasonable demands

Believes that a particular child or young person is bad or evil, including treating them less favourably than others

Isolates and/or prevents the child or young person from having contact with other people or engaging in normal peer relationships, interferes with their personal correspondence or communication

Enforces social isolation, preventing them from accessing services and opportunities and seeing friends, refuses access for visitors, discourages visits or the involvement of relatives or friends

Displays unequal treatment or care, harasses, verbally abuses, uses derogatory remarks or inappropriate use of language related to gender, race, religion and beliefs, culture, sexual orientation, age, disability, relationship status, pregnancy and maternity

Intimidates, coerces, harasses, threatens, humiliates, bullies, swears or verbally abuses

Exploits a child or young person's money, assets, documents or identity

Displays aggressive behaviour or attitudes in the presence of a child or young person (examples: threats to harm or abandon the child or another person, intimidation, yelling, isolating or dismissive behaviour)

Exposes the child or young person to violence, either by perpetrating the violence or not protecting them from violence

Prevents the expression of choice and opinion, preventing the child or young person from making or participating in their own age-appropriate decisions

Provides care in a way that the child or young person dislikes, with lack of respect for dignity and privacy, intentional neglect

Behaves in a way that diminishes, demeans, disempowers or discriminates against a child or young person, including not taking account of or allowing them to meet their cultural, religious, ethnic, educational, social and recreational needs

Uses hurtful, discriminatory or offensive behaviour or language towards or in the presence of a child or young person

Engages in cyberbullying

Prevents a child or young person from accessing their own money, benefits or assets, denies them assistance to access benefits

INDICATORS OF NEGLECT

Context

Neglect of a child or young person involves failing to meet their essential needs through inadequate care, supervision and support, to the extent that it causes a significant adverse impact on the child or young person's safety, welfare or wellbeing. Neglect may occur as a single omission or failure to act, or as a pattern over time. Upholding the rights and wellbeing of children and young people is an important component of protecting them from neglect. Failure to uphold these rights may constitute abuse, particularly in an organisational setting.

Physical indicators – children and young people

Standard of hygiene and self-care is poor (examples: matted hair, persistently untreated head lice, dirty skin, strong body odour)

Frequent or persistent illness, low-grade infections, skin conditions (example: significant, ongoing nappy rash)

Poor primary health care, untreated physical or medical problems, not receiving recommended medication or treatment for diagnosed conditions (examples: untreated sores, serious nappy rash, significant dental decay)

Neonatal withdrawal from drugs or alcohol

Inappropriate dress for weather conditions

Signs of poor nutrition or malnutrition (examples: pale, emaciated, sunken cheeks, low body fat ratio, dry skin due to dehydration, excessive weight for age)

Abandoned, unsupervised or not adequately supervised for their age, which may lead to additional indicators (examples: physical injuries, ingestion of poisons such as cleaning fluids/medicines, severe sunburn, near-drowning, road traffic accidents, becoming lost)

Chaotic, unkempt, dirty unhygienic environment (examples: house overrun with pets, faeces not cleaned up)

Behavioural indicators – children and young people

Constantly tired, listless, overly passive, unresponsive, emotionless

Reports that no caregiver is at home, is without parental participation and interest

Not registered at school, irregular attendance, frequent lateness or absence

Takes over adult caring role or appears to have sense of parental responsibility for own parents or siblings

Hungry, scavenging, stealing or hoarding food

Stays at the homes of friends and acquaintances for prolonged periods, rather than at their own home

Attends parent/caregiver's appointment during school hours or provides care to parent/caregiver/ other family member with chronic or complex health needs

Isolated from relatives, other adults, social supports

Poor impulse control, unpredictable behaviour, plans only for the moment

Physical indicators – perpetrators

Parent/carer demonstrates little concern about the welfare/ wellbeing of a child or young person when it would be reasonably expected

Apparent chaotic life of parent/carer, or overwhelmed with other problems (examples: mental health issues, substance abuse)

Parent/caregiver drug or alcohol use/dependence that has a negative impact on a child's physical social and/or psychological health

Parent/caregiver ill health that has a negative impact on a child's physical, social and/or psychological health

Behavioural indicators – perpetrators

Does not offer choice or promote the independence and participation of a child or young person

Fails to respect the privacy of a child or young person, their family or caregiver

Unable/unwilling to provide/arrange adequate shelter, food, clothing, education, medical attention or safe home

Appears unable to comprehend the child or young person's needs to the extent that they are unable to take actions necessary to provide the necessary intervention, care and/or supervision

Abandons or leaves the child or young person inappropriately and without supervision

Unresponsive to a child or young person's emotional/psychological needs, withholding physical contact or psychological nurturing or stimulation, being emotionally unavailable to the child

Fails to keep health appointments when child or young person has health care needs

Prioritises work and adult interests over essential needs of the child or young person

Responds inappropriately to complaints/disclosure/abuse

INDICATORS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

Context

Child sexual abuse is the involvement of a child or young person under the age of 18 years in sexual activity that they do not fully comprehend, are unable to give informed consent to, for which they are not developmentally prepared or that violates the laws or social taboos of society. Children and young people can be sexually abused by adults or by other children or young people, including those who may be in a position of responsibility, trust or power over them.

Physical indicators – children and young people

Trauma to the mouth, genital or anal regions, including bruising, bleeding, tearing, swelling, sores infection

Bruising or other injury to the breasts, buttocks, thighs or lower abdomen, including bite/burn marks

Complaints about soreness around genital or anal area, or difficulty in walking or sitting

Diagnosed sexually transmitted infection

Discomfort/fear/avoidance of urinating or defecating

Unusual/excessive itching in the genital or anal area due to infection, including recurrent urinary tract infection

Torn, stained or bloody underwear

Pregnancy, including reluctance to identify the father

Behavioural indicators – children and young people

Persistently talking about sexual activity and/or using sexually explicit, age-inappropriate terms, drawings and/or descriptions

Having unexplained money or gifts

Change or loss of appetite, sudden weight change

Contact with an alleged or known sex offender

Behavioural indicators – younger children

Age-inappropriate sexual behaviour (examples: excessive masturbation, rubbing genitals against others, insertion of objects into the vagina or rectum, simulation of sexual acts, playing games portraying a sexually abusive event)

Sexual themes in artwork, stories, play

Repeated playing with or smearing of faeces

Taking clothes off, refusing to put clothes on, showing body, revealing/showing genitals to people

Going to bed fully clothed, reluctance to undress for usual activity

Wanting to play 'doctors' with other children by inspecting or touching genitals

Behavioural indicators – older children

Academic difficulties or performance suddenly deteriorates

Hostile towards authority figures

Demonstrates poor personal hygiene and self-care

Sexualised presentation/behaviour (example: wearing provocative clothing, excessive flirting, overwhelming interest in sexual activities)

Wears layers or baggy clothing to disguise body, gender, body shape, bruises, injuries (example: keeps jacket on in class)

Age-inappropriate or indiscriminate sexual relationships

Sexually provocative, engages in, talks about sexual acts, including violent sexual acts

Physical indicators – perpetrators

Sexual behaviour, sexualised comments/innuendo, including flirtatious/intimate behaviour towards a child or young person

Entering or using facilities allocated to unsupervised children and young people, or undressing in their presence, such as in changerooms or toilets

Unwarranted/unwanted physical contact with a child or young person, directly or with objects (examples: kissing, tickling, undertaking a personal task that they can do themselves such as changing clothes, feeding, toileting, personal grooming)

Being alone or attempting to be alone with a child or young person unnecessarily, including travelling alone with them or spending time with them in a secluded environment without supervision

Demonstrating physically intrusive and/or unsupervised forms of comfort/encouragement (example: unsupervised hugs)

Acts of indecent exposure

Sexual touching between children and young people where there is an age difference of three or more years or they are very different in size/development

Behavioural indicators – perpetrators

Grooming behaviour (see below)

Controlling or overly critical attitude or behaviour towards a child, young person, family, caregiver, partner

Minimisation of disclosure or defence against accusations about sexual abuse by blaming or claiming the child or young person is lying

TYPICAL GROOMING BEHAVIOUR

Context

Grooming is generally a planned, subtle and progressive process that allows a perpetrator to gain the trust of a child or young person (often also their family members and caregivers) with the intention of sexually abusing or exploiting them. Perpetrators may identify and target children and young people with additional vulnerabilities.

It may be difficult to identify when someone is being groomed until after the abuse occurs, as some grooming can look like 'normal' caring behaviour. Perpetrators often rely on secrecy, achieved through threats, coercion, bribery or inducement. Recognising the subtle indicators of grooming is crucial to identifying patterns and trends that may constitute a grooming process. While many of these behaviours may be innocent, intentional harm may become more visible over time with increased reporting and monitoring.

Behavioural indicators – perpetrators

Overly familiar language and interactions, including inappropriate nicknames

Inappropriate comments about a child or young person's appearance, including excessive flattering comments

Facilitating situations that unnecessarily result in close or unsupervised physical contact with a child or young person

Developing inappropriate or 'special' relationships with children, including overservicing (example: giving preferential treatment or inappropriate gifts)

Giving or offering a child or young person gifts, food, money, attention or affection with the intention of, or in exchange for, any form of ingratiation of self or others

Inappropriately extending a relationship with a child or their family outside work, inviting/allowing/encouraging children to attend home or other private gatherings or attending a child's home or private gathering where no pre-existing relationship applies

Facilitating situations that unnecessarily result in unsupervised time with a child or young person, such as babysitting, offering to provide tutoring, coaching or other activities and outings

Isolating a child or young person from contact with other people, preventing them from engaging in normal peer relationships, interfering with their personal correspondence or communication

Making sexual comments to a child or young person, including asking unwarranted questions about their sexual experience, discussing their own sexual experience, unwarranted reference to sexual matters, showing unwarranted sexual images or sexual material

Previous suspicion or conviction of child sexual abuse or child sexual exploitation, tolerance of sexualised behaviour, intentional exposure of child or young person to sexual behaviour of others

Inappropriately hindering development of the child or young person's age-appropriate independence from family or caregivers

Unwarranted or inappropriate searching, access, use or discussion of personal or sensitive information about a child or family where no care context applies, or this information is outside the worker's scope of work (including information related to other workers who work with children and their families)

Personal disclosures – discussing personal lifestyle details or opinions of self, other workers or children and young people not directly relevant to approved care, and without the individual's consent

Facilitating or permitting a child or young person's access to age-inappropriate images or materials

Exchanging or permitting a child or young person to have access to a worker's personal contact details, such as phone number, social networking site or email addresses, where no pre-existing relationship applies

Correspondence of a personal nature via any medium (examples: phone, text message, letter, email, social media, internet posts) that is unrelated to the worker's role or where communication is unavoidable, such as a safety or urgent matter

Engaging in communication related to the role but carried out via private personal devices

Exposing a child or young person to circumstances in which there is risk that they may be sexually abused

Condoning, facilitating or engaging in the possession, viewing or distribution of child sexual exploitation material, exposure to or use of a child or young person for prostitution, pornography or witnessing of sexual acts

Testing of and/or disregard for professional boundaries or practice standards

CHILD AND YOUTH SAFE GOVERNANCE GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Version	Draft V0.C, 10 January 2023
Purpose	The purpose of the Child and Youth Safe Governance Group is to provide strategic direction and oversight of the department's safeguarding responsibilities, projects, policies and systems.
Chairperson	Secretary, Department for Education, Children and Young People (or Associate/Deputy Secretary Delegate)
Membership	Membership comprises the incumbents of executive-level positions with significant and ongoing strategic and operational responsibility for safeguarding children and young people from abuse.
Functions	<p>The functions of the Child and Youth Safe Governance Group are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• provide strategic direction and oversight of implementation of the <i>Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023</i> and the department's Safeguarding Framework, including related initiatives and commitments, annual reviews and continuous improvement processes• monitor and coordinate responses to overarching national and state developments, initiatives and imperatives involving the safety and wellbeing of children and young people• provide strategic advice to the department's Executive Board on safeguarding policies, practices and emerging issues, including advice on the acquittal of recommendations from national and state commissions and inquiries, strategies, working groups and frameworks• champion a child safe, trauma-informed culture that strives for zero tolerance of child abuse and a rights-based approach to involving children in decision-making• oversee and monitor the capacity, capability and preparedness of the department and its workers to respond quickly and effectively to concerns and reports of child abuse, including the implementation of post-incident system reviews as/when required• direct and oversee transparent internal processes and specialist resources to support children, young people and others adversely affected by child abuse
Meetings	Quarterly meetings will be scheduled in advance at the beginning of each calendar year. Extraordinary meetings may be scheduled as directed by the Chair, including in response to critical incidents. From time to time, papers may be distributed for consideration and/or decision out-of-session.
Quorum	A minimum of four members (including the Chair or Deputy Chair) is required to progress recommendations and endorse decisions.
Proxies	If members are unable to attend a meeting or contribute to the fulfilment of functions under these terms of reference, an alternative representative may be nominated as a short-term proxy. The proxy should be of suitable seniority, briefed and authorised to speak on behalf of the member and portfolio they represent. Whenever possible, the Secretariat should be advised of the proxy prior to a meeting.
Secretariat	<p>Secretariat support is provided by the Office of Safeguarding Children and Young People. Secretariat responsibilities include scheduling meetings, developing meeting agendas, maintaining records and circulating papers as required.</p> <p>Members are invited and encouraged to propose agenda items at any time between and prior to meetings. Meeting agendas and other papers will be circulated at least three business days before each meeting. Minutes and actions will be distributed no more than ten business days after a meeting.</p>

SAFEGUARDING POLICY RESOURCES BY CATEGORY




SAFEGUARDING POLICY RESOURCES BY CATEGORY

This categorised list of policies, procedures and guidelines is by no means exhaustive; it is intended for use as a ready reference guide to key resources and information to help workers better understand and gain confidence in complying with their statutory, organisational and moral obligations to protect children and young people from harm.

Explanatory notes:

 Where the department's policy resources are publicly available, hyperlinks are generally directed to the [Public Document Centre](#) on the department's website: www.decyp.tas.gov.au, searchable by alphabetical listing or topic.

 Some resources are designed for internal use only and are not publicly available due to security and/or operational reasons. A complete catalogue of policy resources is available and accessible for staff to view and download through the internal [Policy Library](#) on the intranet, searchable by alphabetical listing, topic, business unit, document type, audience and file type.

1. GOVERNANCE AND CULTURE


1.1 Child safe culture

 [Tasmania's Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy – It takes a Tasmanian village](#)

 [Child and Student Wellbeing Strategy](#)

1.2 Legal obligation to report abuse

 [Mandatory Reporting – Procedure](#)

 [Responding to incidents, disclosures and suspicions of child sexual abuse – Guidance](#)

1.3 Worker conduct and professional behaviour Department

 [Appropriate Relationships between Employees and Young People – Information](#)

 [Conduct and Behaviour Standards – Policy](#)

Learning

 [Professional Standards for Staff – Policy](#)

 [Professional Standards for Staff – Guidelines](#)

Child safety and out-of-home care

 [Child Safe Code of Conduct – Policy](#)

 [Services for Children and Young People – Practice Manual](#)

Youth justice


 [Youth Justice – Practice Manual](#)

1.4 Duty of care

 [Duty of Care on Educational Sites – Procedure](#)

1.5 Risk management


 [Risk Management – Policy](#)

 [Safeguarding Risk Management Procedure for Schools](#)

1.6 Information sharing

 [Personal Information Protection – Policy](#)

 [Keeping Children Safe – Memorandum of Understanding](#)

 [Memorandum of Understanding – \[former\] Department of Education and Tasmania Police](#)

1.7 Recordkeeping

 [Records Management – Policy](#)



SAFEGUARDING POLICY RESOURCES BY CATEGORY

2. RIGHTS OF THE CHILD



2.1 Empowering through formal learning

-  [Respectful Relationships Education – Information](#)
-  [Respectful Relationships – Teaching and Learning Package](#)
-  [Respectful Relationships Education in Tasmanian Government Schools – Information](#)
-  [Teaching and Learning Centre – Personal and Social Capability – Information](#)
-  [Teaching and Learning Centre – Supportive and Safe Learning Environments – Information](#)




2.2 Information and communication

-  [Strong Families Safe Kids Advice and Referral Line – Information](#)
-  [Guide to Student Voice and Agency – Information](#)




2.3 Child and youth wellbeing needs

-  [ARACY Child and Youth Wellbeing – Information](#)
-  [Tasmanian Child and Youth Wellbeing Framework – Information](#)








2.3 Safeguarding in care

-  [Charter of Rights for children and young people in out-of-home care](#)
-  [Wellbeing in Care – Practice Advice](#)
-  [Wellbeing in Care – Procedure](#)

2.4 Safeguarding in youth justice

-  [Charter of Rights for children and young people in youth justice facilities](#)
-  [Youth justice reform – Information](#)
-  [Ashley Youth Detention Centre – Practice Framework](#)

2.5 Safeguarding in learning

-  [Learner Health Care and Safety – Policy](#)
-  [Good Teaching: Trauma Informed Practice – Guidance](#)
-  [Student Behaviour in Tasmanian Government Schools – Information](#)
-  [Unacceptable Behaviour at a State School – Secretary's Instruction No.3](#)
-  [Safeguarding Leads in schools – Information](#)
-  [Student Behaviour Management – Policy](#)
-  [Unattended Children \(Libraries Tasmania\) – Guidance](#)

2.6 Child sexual abuse prevention

-  [Office of Safeguarding Children and Young People – Information](#)





3. FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

-  [Strong families Safe kids – Information](#)
-  [Together with Families – Information](#)
-  [Reporting Child Safety Concerns – Information](#)
-  [Public Document Library – Search category: parents and school community](#)
-  [Respectful School Visitor and Volunteer Behaviour – Procedure](#)
-  [Working with External Support Providers – Procedure](#)
-  [Family Violence – Policy](#)

4. EQUITY AND DIVERSITY

-  [Diversity in Tasmanian Government Schools – Information](#)
-  [Supporting Sexuality, Sex, and Gender Diversity in Schools – Policy](#)
-  [Diversity and Inclusion \(Libraries Tasmania\) – Policy](#)
-  [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Services – Information](#)
-  [Inclusive Language – Guidelines](#)
-  [LGBTIQA+ Equality and Inclusion in Education – Information](#)
-  [Public document library – Search category: access and equity](#)
-  [Conduct and Behaviour Standards for NDIS Providers in Government Schools – Information](#)





5. ENGAGING NEW WORKERS

-  [Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Policy](#)
-  [Selection – Procedures](#)
-  [Induction – Procedures](#)
-  [Induction – Policy](#)

SAFEGUARDING POLICY RESOURCES BY CATEGORY

6. INTERVENTION AND RESPONSE




6.1 Complaints management

-  [Enquiries and Complaints – Information](#)
-  [Enquiries and Complaints Management – Policy](#)
-  [Child safety and youth justice – Complaints Management – Information](#)
-  [Learning environments – Complaints Management – Information](#)

6.2 Harmful behaviour by children and young people

-  [Restrictive Practices – Policy](#)
-  [Harmful Sexual Behaviour – Guidance](#)

6.3 Responding to abuse and disclosures

-  [Supporting Students Impacted by Trauma – Information](#)
-  [Mandatory Reporting – Procedure](#)
-  [Responding to incidents, disclosures and suspicions of child sexual abuse – Guidance](#)

6.4 Trauma-informed support


-  [Good Teaching: Trauma-informed practice in action – Practice Workbook](#)

7. TRAINING OUR WORKFORCE


-  [Mandatory Reporting – Training Module](#)
-  [Safeguarding Children and Young People – Training Module \(under development\)](#)

8. SAFE ENVIRONMENTS




8.1 Safe physical environments

-  [Restrictive Practices – Policy](#)
-  [Restrictive Practices – Procedure](#)

8.2 Safe online environments

-  [Online Safety in Tasmanian Government Schools – Information](#)
-  [Online Child Sexual Abuse Material: Response flowchart for staff](#)
-  [ICT Conditions of Use – Policy](#)
-  [Social Media – Policy](#)

8.3 Engaging other contractors and subcontractors

-  [Working with External Support Providers – Procedure](#)
-  [Contractor Management and Responsibilities Guideline](#)
-  [Programs and Events \(Libraries Tasmania\) – Policy](#)



**SAFEGUARDING
CHILDREN &
YOUNG
PEOPLE**

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