



In February 2019, the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations were endorsed by all state and territory governments and the Australian Government. The principles aim to provide a nationally consistent approach to creating organisational cultures that foster child safety and wellbeing.

The National Principles reflect 10 child safe standards recommended by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

The Australian, state and territory Education Ministers have agreed to changes to the National Quality Framework (NQF) in relation to the National Child Safe Principles.

EMBEDDING THE NATIONAL CHILD SAFE PRINCIPLES



This information sheet supports approved providers and their services to increase awareness, foster positive cultural change, and promote and support child safe environments in children's education and care environments.

WHEN DO THE CHANGES START?

Changes to the *Education and Care Services National Law* and *National Regulations* relating to embedding Child Safe Principles will commence from 1 October 2023.

Please check the legislation for commencement date in Western Australia.

WHY ARE THE REQUIREMENTS CHANGING?

Children's education and care is already subject to a robust regulatory scheme to ensure and promote the safety, health, and wellbeing of children. A number of gaps were identified through the NQF Review, in response to which governments decided to introduce some additional specific measures to improve child safety and meet community expectations for the wellbeing of children.

The changes ensure the NQF remains current and approved providers and services embed the Child Safe

Principles into their organisations and service operations. Services that implement a child safe culture demonstrate their leadership and commitment to child safety and wellbeing. This promotes confidence for children, families, and communities that the service provides safe environments where children's rights, needs and interests are of paramount consideration.

WHAT CHANGES ARE BEING MADE?

Approved providers and services must review and update existing policies to comply with new requirements under *Education and Care Services National Regulations* (regulations [84](#), [149](#) and [168](#)). Approved providers must ensure:

- volunteers and students are advised of the existence and application of the current child protection law in the relevant state or territory and understand any obligations held under that law
- all family day care coordinators have successfully completed child protection training (if any) required in their state or territory
- working with vulnerable people/ children check details are included on volunteer and student staff records

- services' child safe environment policies and procedures include matters relating to the promotion of a culture of child safety and wellbeing and the safe use of online environments
- services' complaint handling policies and procedures include the provision of a complaint handling system at the service that is child focused
- services' complaint handling policies also include matters relating to the management of a complaint that alleges a child is exhibiting harmful sexual behaviours.

WHERE CAN I GET FURTHER INFORMATION?

When reviewing and updating your policies, the following recognised guidance may help.

For child safe requirements, initiatives and resources in each state or territory, approved providers can access the [Australian Human Rights Commission](#) 'Child Safe Organisations' at humanrights.gov.au.

[The Australian Institute of Family Studies](#) provides a brief overview of child protection legislation across state and territory jurisdictions in Australia. All serious concerns should be reported by phone rather than online or via email. Serious concerns include when you suspect a child or young person is in imminent or immediate danger of serious harm, serious injury or chronic neglect. Please ensure you are familiar with the requirements in your state or territory.

For information on the NQF changes relating to the Child Safe Standards in your state or territory contact your [regulatory authority](#).

For further information in your state and territory on the Child Safe Standards please go to the relevant link below:

- ACT – [Making institutions child safe, ACT Government](#)
- NSW – [Child Safe Standards, NSW Department of Education](#)
- NT – [Child Safety Policy, NT Department of Education](#)
- QLD – [Queensland Government Response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs](#)
- SA – [National Principles for child safe organisations, Human Services, Government of South Australia](#)
- TAS – [Creating Child and Youth Safe Organisations, Tas Department of Justice](#)
- VIC – [The Child Safe Standards - Early childhood services, Vic Government](#)
- WA – [Child Safe Organisations WA, Commissioner for Children and Young People, Western Australia](#)

REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

For additional information download the [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#).

Visit the [ACECQA website](#) to download:

- [National Law and National Regulations](#)
- Policy and Procedure Guidelines
 - [Dealing with complaints](#)
 - [Providing a child safe environment](#)
 - [Interactions with Children](#)

Find other useful resources at:

- Royal Commissions – [Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse](#)
- National Office for Child Safety – [Lead the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#)

The National Principles align with the Child Safe Standards.

Acknowledgment: The information in this publication is accurate pending the Australian, state and territory education ministers' agreement of the amended law and regulations.