

## Child Safe Standards

### Objective

Cire Services is committed to uphold the child safe standards introduced by the Victorian Government. Cire will implement the child safe standards to improve the way Cire provides services for children and to prevent and respond to child abuse that may occur within the organisation within the guidelines of the standards. Cire has adopted a zero tolerance for child abuse.

### Scope

Committee of Management  
Chief Executive Officer  
Managers  
Educators  
Cire employees  
Volunteers  
Students

### Policy

#### Overview

This policy recognises that the safety of all children who attend services provided by Cire are covered by the policy and is the responsibility of the Committee of Management. Cire is committed to uphold the child safe standards introduced by the Victorian Government.

Cire will prevent and respond to child abuse that may occur within the organisation within the guidelines of the standards. In fulfilling this responsibility, the Committee of Management has a duty to provide and maintain, so far as reasonably practicable, an environment that is without risk to potential child abuse situations.

The child safe standards have been introduced by the Victorian Government to improve the way organisations that provide services for children prevent and respond, to child abuse that may occur within their organisation.

The standards are compulsory for all organisations providing services to children, and aim to drive cultural change in organisations so that protecting children from abuse is embedded in the everyday thinking and practice of leaders, staff and volunteers.

This will assist organisations to:

- prevent child abuse
- encourage reporting of any abuse that does occur
- improve responses to any allegations of child abuse.

## Definitions

### **The Act**

Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005

### **Aboriginal child**

A person under the age of 18 who:

- is of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent
- identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, and
- is accepted as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander by an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community.

### **Child Abuse**

For the purposes of these standards, abuse constitutes any act committed against a child involving:

- physical violence
- sexual offences
- serious emotional or psychological abuse
- serious neglect

### **Children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds**

A child or young person who identifies as having particular cultural or linguistic affiliations by virtue of their place of birth, ancestry or ethnic origin, religion, preferred language or language spoken at home or because of their parents' identification on a similar basis.

### **Child**

A person who is under the age of eighteen (18) years.

### **Child safety**

In the context of the child safe standards, child safety means measures to protect children from abuse.

### **Child safe organisation**

In the context of the child safe standards, a child safe organisation is one that meets the child safe standards by proactively taking measures to protect children from abuse.

### **Cultural competency**

A set of congruent behaviours, attitudes and policies that come together in a system, agency or among professionals that enable them to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.

### **Cultural abuse**

Actions and attitudes that deliberately ignore denigrate or attack the culture of a person or community.

### **Cultural safety for Aboriginal children**

The positive recognition and celebration of cultures. It is more than just the absence of racism or discrimination, and more than cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity.

A culturally safe environment does not ignore, challenge or deny cultural identity. Cultural safety upholds the rights of Aboriginal children to:

- identify as Aboriginal without fear of retribution or questioning
- have an education that strengthens their culture and identity
- maintain connections to their land and country
- maintain their strong kinship ties and social obligations
- be taught their cultural heritage by their Elders
- receive information in a culturally sensitive, relevant and accessible manner
- be involved in services that are culturally respectful.

### **Cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds**

An environment which is spiritually, socially and emotionally safe, as well as physically safe for children; where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their cultural or linguistic identity, of who they are and what they need. Efforts need to be made to ensure the culturally and/or linguistically diverse children and their families receive information in a culturally sensitive, relevant and accessible manner, including in relevant community languages.

### **Children with a disability**

A disability can be any physical, sensory, neurological disability, acquired brain injury or intellectual disability or developmental delay that affects a child's ability to undertake everyday activities. A disability can occur at any time in life. Children can be born with a disability or acquire a disability suddenly through an injury or illness. Some disabilities may be obvious while others are hidden.

### **Organisation**

The Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005 (the Act) will provide that the standards apply to 'applicable entities', which are defined in the Act as:

- an incorporated body or association
- an unincorporated body or association (however structured)
- an individual who carries on a business and engages contractors, employees or volunteers to assist in the business in providing services or facilities.

## Related Documents

Child Safe Standards Procedure  
Code of Conduct Agreement  
Confidentiality Policy  
Legislative compliance Policy  
Risk Management Policy  
Whistle-blower policy  
Termination of Employment Policy  
Misconduct Policy

## Related Legislation

Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005  
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011  
Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010  
Child, Youth and Families Act 2005

**Organisational area**

All Cire departments

**Approved by:**

Committee of Management

Sign:..... Date: .....

**Operative date:**

January 2016

**Review date:**

January 2018