



ISSUES PAPER 3

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CHILD SAFE INSTITUTIONS

ISSUE

Conducting employment screening checks is only one aspect of keeping children safe from sexual abuse in institutions. Good child safe policies and practices are needed to reduce potential risks and keep children safer in institutions.

Examples of child safe policies and practices might include codes of conduct, complaints handling procedures, and the recruitment, education, training and supervision of staff, including volunteers. Good child safe practices may also include promoting an organisational culture that is committed to child safety, and ensuring that children are able to express concerns about safety or disclose harm.

SUBMISSIONS

The Royal Commission seeks submissions from interested individuals, institutions, government and non-government organisations about the content and effectiveness of strategies aimed at creating 'child safe organisations'.

The Royal Commission is concerned with child sexual abuse in an institutional context. Submissions may address any aspect of the concept or delivery of a 'child safe organisation' that is free of child sexual abuse. Of particular interest to the Royal Commission is:

1. The essential elements of establishing a 'child safe organisation' that protects children from sexual abuse in an institutional context. In particular, are there core strategies that should be present and others that are less critical?
2. The evidence base for the range of strategies associated with making an organisation 'child safe'. Does this evidence base extend to the physical environment?
3. How should the effectiveness of 'child safe' strategies be tested?
4. How 'child safe' policies and procedures work in practice.
5. Should there be a universal framework for a 'child safe organisation' or should strategies be specifically tailored to particular types of institutional settings?

6. The role of staff performance management systems and disciplinary processes in a 'child safe organisation'.
7. The role and characteristics of governance and management leadership in creating and maintaining a 'child safe' organisational culture.
8. Should there be any additional enforceable requirements for institutions or particular institutions to maintain a 'child safe' environment?

Submissions will be made public unless the person making the submission requests that it not be made public or the Royal Commission considers that it should not be made public. That will usually only occur for reasons associated with fairness.

Examples of 'child safe organisation' frameworks and checklists in Australia can be found at:
Queensland: <http://www.ccytg.qld.gov.au/pdf/bluecard/rmst/RMS-toolkit-update-081012.pdf>

NSW: <http://www.kids.nsw.gov.au/Working-with-children/Become-a-Child-Safe-Organisation/Become-a-Childsafe-Organisation>

Western Australia: <http://www.checkwwc.wa.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/D783A393-347E-45A8-AAC0-085F941C1989/0/ChildSafeandFriendlyOrganisations.pdf>

Victoria: <http://www.ccyt.vic.gov.au/childsafetycommissioner/downloads/childsafe-organisation.pdf>

Submissions should be made by **Friday 11 October 2013**, preferably electronically, to solicitor@childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au, otherwise in writing to GPO Box 5283, Sydney NSW 2001