

1.12 Child Safe Awareness Policy

Policy Owner	Chief Executive Officer
Responsible Officer(s)	Manager Community Relations Manager People and Culture
Date of Approval	01/07/2025
Amended/Revised	03/07/2025

Objective

This Child Safe Awareness Policy has been developed in response to recommendation 6.12 of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

The Policy recognises that the City of Albany is uniquely placed within the local community to demonstrate leadership in child safety and the protection of children and young people from harm and/or abuse, and to support local organisations to be child safe.

Consistent with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (Appendix 1) and Commonwealth Child Safe Framework, this policy outlines:

- The City's commitment to creating an environment where child safety and wellbeing, and the respect and inclusion of children and young people, is embedded across our organisation; and
- The City's role in supporting local organisations to be child safe through access to resources, awareness raising and sharing relevant information.

Specifically, this Policy seeks to uphold the following objectives taken from the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations listed at Appendix 1:

- The rights of children and young people are upheld;
- Children and young people are respected, listened to, and informed about their rights.
- Children and young people have the fundamental right to be safe and cared for.
- Children and young people have the right to speak up, be heard and be taken seriously without the threat of negative consequences.
- The safety and best interests of children and young people are a primary consideration when making decisions that concern them.
- Access to trusted and reliable information, including the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, helps support organisations to understand what they must do to help reduce the risk of harm and abuse.
- Communities are informed and involved in promoting the safety and well-being of children and young people, including protection from harm.
- Collaboration with the community and our partners promotes the safety, participation and empowerment of all children and young people.

Scope

The safety and well-being of children are a whole-of-community responsibility.

This Child Safe Awareness Policy applies to all employees, volunteers, trainees, work experience students and anyone else who undertakes work on behalf of the City, regardless of whether their work relates directly to children or young people.

This Policy also applies to occupants of City of Albany facilities and venues, including visitors, contractors or contracted organisations and suppliers.

Individuals who are employed by contractors, contracted organisations or suppliers are not considered employees of the City under this Policy.

Additional child safety-related guidelines and reporting requirements may be in place and vary across business units to meet different operational and compliance needs.

Policy Statement

The City of Albany is committed to promoting and protecting the rights and interests of children and young people.

Our commitment is to create and maintain a child-safe and child-friendly organisation where all children and young people are valued and protected from abuse, harm and neglect.

The safety and well-being of all children and young people is our priority, and we will consciously, incrementally and systematically take steps that will:

- Create environments where children and young people's rights, needs and interests are met, and their safety and wellbeing are the focus of organisational values and actions;
- Provide opportunities for children and young people to have their voices heard and participate in decisions that affect them.
- Create conditions that reduce the likelihood of harm to children and young people;
- Implement mechanisms that support the early identification of harm, and prompt appropriate responses to disclosures, allegations or concerns regarding children and young people's safety and wellbeing;
- Enhance the skills of City employees and local service providers to collaborate with children, young people and families in a respectful, inclusive, ethical and genuine way; and
- Empower children, young people and families to maximise their potential as they participate and grow in the Albany community.

The City of Albany will also encourage and support local organisations to be child safe.

The City of Albany will require contractors, contracted organisations or suppliers, and entertainers to comply with the child safe legislation where relevant, as part of their contractual agreements.

Policy Function

The City of Albany will ensure the following functions of this policy are resourced and assigned to the relevant officers for implementation:

- Develop a process to deliver child safe messages (for example at City of Albany venues, grounds and facilities or events);
- Connect and support local community groups, organisations, and stakeholders to child safe resources (including culturally safe and inclusive resources); and
- Provide staff with access to training to support the delivery of this policy and associated guidelines and processes.

Responsibilities

The City of Albany will:

- Undertake a leadership role in the community to support relevant organisations to educate and promote child safe practices;
- Take any reasonable steps to ensure that City employees and any persons who participate in City programs, activities and events operate in alignment with this Child Safe Awareness Policy;
- The City will develop a process to deliver child safe messages to organisations who deliver events and activities targeting children and young people.
- Ensure City programs, activities and events operate in accordance with this Child Safe Awareness Policy; and
- Determine which roles across the organisation will directly support the implementation of the Child Safe Awareness Policy and any associated plans and processes.

Legislative and Strategic Context

City of Albany Strategic Community Plan 2032:

- **Outcome 1:** A diverse and inclusive community
- **Outcome 2:** A happy, healthy and resilient community
- **Outcome 3:** A safe community
- **Outcome 15:** A well-informed and engaged community

Commonwealth Legislation

- Age Discrimination Act 2004
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Family Law Act 1975
- Privacy Act 1988
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984

Western Australian Legislation

- Child Care Services Act 2007
- Children and Community Services Act 2004
- Civil Liability Act 2002
- Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003
- Equal Opportunity Act 1984
- Freedom of Information Act 1997
- Local Government Act 1995
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 2003
- Work Health and Safety Act 2020
- Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004

Commonwealth Standards

- National Principles for Child Safety Organisations (Appendix 1)
- Australian Privacy Principles
- National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021-2031

International Standards

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

Review Position and Date

This policy is to be reviewed by the document owner annually.

Associated Documents

Related strategies, procedures, references, guidelines or other documents that have a bearing on this policy and that may be useful reference material for users of this policy, follow:

- Employee Code of Conduct
- Code of Conduct for Council Members, Committee Members and Candidates
- Bullying, Harassment, Anti-Discrimination and Equal Employment Opportunity Policy
- Access and Inclusion Plan 2022-2027
- Working with Children and National Criminal History Checks Procedure

Definitions

Abuse	Abuse is an act, or a failure to act, towards or on behalf of a child that may result in harm. It can occur on one occasion or multiple occasions. Sometimes, the impact of multiple events leads to harm that becomes cumulative in nature. Types of abuse include physical, emotional and sexual abuse and neglect.
Child/Children	Means a person under 18 years of age, and in the absence of positive evidence as to age, means a person who appears to be under 18 years of age.
Child Safe Organisation	<p>A Child Safe Organisation is defined in the Royal Commission Final Report as one that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• creates an environment where children's safety and wellbeing are at the centre of thought, values, and actions;• places emphasis on genuine engagement with and valuing of children and young people;• creates conditions that reduce the likelihood of harm to children and young people; and• creates conditions that increase the likelihood of identifying any harm, and responds to any concerns, disclosures, allegations, or suspicions of harm. <p>Note: in the context of local government, this would involve referring concerns to the Department of Communities or WA Police to respond as appropriate. Implementation of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations give effect to the above.</p>
Child safe	Means protecting the rights of children and young people to be safe by taking actions that can help prevent harm and abuse.
Harm	Means any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's wellbeing, whether caused by a single act, omission or circumstance; or a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances.
Wellbeing	Wellbeing of children and young people includes the care, development, education, health and safety of children and young people.

National Principles for Child Safe Organisations



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



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



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



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



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



6 Processes to respond to **complaints** and **concerns** are child focused.



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



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



9 Implementation of the national child safe principles is **regularly reviewed** and **improved**.



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

National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, Australian Human Rights Commission – childdsafe.humanrights.gov.au