

Policy number	Policy 118
Policy title	Child Safe Awareness
Strategic outcomes supported	CL2 Communication and engagement with community

Policy objective:

The Town of Victoria Park (the Town) supports and values all children and young people. The Town is committed to supporting the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people, including protection from abuse. This Child Safe Awareness Policy demonstrates the Town's commitment to becoming child safe and taking a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse.

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 Town is uniquely placed within the local community to demonstrate leadership through distribution of child safe messaging.

Consistent with the [National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#) and the [Commonwealth Child Safe Framework](#), this policy aims to reduce the risk of harm and child sexual abuse within our community through distribution and provision of child safe messages. The Town is committed to encouraging both internal service areas and local organisations to promote child safety.

Policy scope:

The safety and wellbeing of children is everyone's responsibility. This Child Safe Awareness policy applies to all employees, volunteers, trainees, work experience students, interns, and anyone else who undertakes work on behalf of the Town regardless of their work related to children or young people.

Policy definitions:

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 are persons 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 is defined in the Royal Commission Final Report as one that:

- 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.
- creates conditions that increase the likelihood of identifying any harm.
- responds to any concerns, disclosures, allegations, or suspicions of harm.

Implementation of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations give effect to the above.

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 in relation to a child, 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 of children and young people includes the care, development, education, health and safety of children and young people.

Policy principles:

1. The rights of children and young people are upheld.
2. Children and young people are respected, listened to, and informed about their rights.
3. Children and young people have the fundamental right to be safe and cared for.
4. Children and young people have the right to speak up, be heard and taken seriously without the threat of negative consequences.
5. The safety and best interests of children and young people are a primary consideration when making decisions that concern them.
6. 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.
7. Communities are informed and involved in promoting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people including protection from harm.
8. Collaboration with the community and our partners promotes the safety, participation and empowerment of all children and young people.

Policy functions

The Town will develop a Child Safe Awareness Implementation Plan to ensure the following functions of this policy are resourced and assigned to the relevant officers for implementation:

- Developing a process to deliver child safe messages (e.g., across Town venues, facilities and events).
- Connecting and supporting local community groups, organisations, and stakeholders to child safe resources.

Responsibilities

The Town has a leadership role in our community to support relevant organisations to be child safe and promote child safe practices.

Although the Town is not legally responsible for providing oversight of compliance with child safe practices, it will take any reasonable steps to engage with persons who utilise the Town's facilities to operate in alignment with the Child Safe Awareness policy.

The Town will determine which roles across the organisation will directly support the implementation of the Child Safe Awareness policy.

Related documents

Related Town Policies and Documents

- [Strategic Community Plan](#)
- [Public Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#)
- [Youth Action Plan](#)
- [Policy 103 Communication and Engagement](#)

Related State Legislation and Policy

- [National Principles for Child Safety Organisations](#)
- [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(CRC\)](#)
- [Child Care Services Act 2007](#)

- [Children and Community Services Act 2004](#)
- [Working with Children \(Criminal Record Checking\) Act 2004](#)

Responsible officers	Community Development (Youth & Diversity)
Policy manager	Manager Community
Approval authority	Council
Next evaluation date	April 2027

Revision history

Version	Action	Date	Authority	Resolution number	Report number
1	Adopted	21/05/2024	Council	84/2024	Item 11.3