



# National Safeguarding Guidance

Putting our Safeguarding Children  
and Young People Framework into  
Practical Guidance

Version 4 - October 2021

**Y Safeguarding**

Feel Safe, Be Safe

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## Introduction - Safeguarding Framework

We believe in the power of inspired young people. For young people to be inspired they must feel safe and be safe.

We care about children and young people and supporting them lead active and fulfilled roles within our community, that's why we are committed to listening to and amplifying their voices. At the Y we have developed our own Feel Safe, Be Safe Framework which aspires to ensure that all children and young people are safe and feel safe at the Y, in their families and in their communities.

**Our Safeguarding Framework aims to develop:**

**A safe culture nationally which empowers children and young people by promoting children and young person focused leadership and governance;**

**Safe operations to ensure Y People have the right policies, processes and practices to keep children and young people safe; and**

**Safe environments at the Y and in communities which empower children and young people to thrive.**



This guidance document was developed by Y Safeguarding in consultation with the National Safeguarding Consultative Group. The purpose of this guidance is to support all Member Y's to achieve best practice safeguarding by implementing the Feel Safe Be Safe Framework which aligns to the ten National Child Safe Principles and Y Australia's Safeguarding Children and Young People Licensing Standards.

## A Message From Our CEO



At the Y, we are committed to safeguarding all children and young people and actively promote their safety and welfare in everything we do. This guidance document shows us how all Y People have a role to play and that we are all responsible for keeping children and young people safe no matter what our work or engagement is at the Y. Together we can all provide an environment and opportunities in which children and young people feel and are respected, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melinda Crole".

Melinda Crole, CEO Y Australia

## A Message From Y Safeguarding

We believe in the power of inspired young people. Children and young people told us, that to be inspired, they need to feel safe and be safe. Therefore, we are extremely pleased to launch this comprehensive safeguarding guidance to help keep all children and young people safe. The resource contains practical guidance, tips and templates to help everyone from Lifeguards to Board Directors to ensure safeguarding remains a priority in their Y. Y Safeguarding have produced short bite sized videos to support Member Y's implement this Safeguarding Guidance.



You can watch a short introduction video from Y Safeguarding [here](#). We hope that you find the resource useful and we would love to hear your views and opinions, so please do reach out to us with your feedback by emailing [safe@ymca.org.au](mailto:safe@ymca.org.au)

Stay safe and well,

**Phil, Laura, Brent, Teri and Kim**



## Guidance

This guidance document is set out into three chapters that align with our Safeguarding Framework – culture, operations and environment. Within each chapter, there are several elements that are colour coded to that relevant section. To assist with meeting the the 10 National Child Safe Principles and Safeguarding Children and Young People Licensing Standards, each element highlights exactly which principle and licence standards it relates to. Whilst some principles may sit across multiple elements and therefore chapters, each will reference where else in the document you can find more information.

This document is written for all Y People so they can easily find information that is relevant for them and their work at the Y. Use the table of contents to navigate to the chapter or section that you need to refer to or use. Contents tab on each page allows you to get back to the table of contents at any time.

We have included local Y case studies, quick tips for all Y People and practical tools that all Y's can implement. If you are after specific information, using the Ctrl + F function may assist to search for keywords or terms, for example 'recruitment'.

If you prefer to listen rather than read, Y Safeguarding have developed short videos on each element which can be viewed at this link. You can also find the link at the bottom of each page through this guidance.

## Common Terms

### Y People



YMCA People include all YMCA Board Directors, staff and volunteers (this includes school, university and TAFE students on placement with YMCAs).

### The Movement



The YMCA Movement in Australia is a federation of Licensed Member Associations. Each Licensed Member Association is a member of the National Council of YMCAs of Australia. Each Licensed Member Association is a party to a YMCA Licence Agreement and is subject to abiding by the Constitution of the National Council of YMCAs of Australia.

### Member Ys



It is a constitutional requirement of the YMCA Movement in Australia that to be a YMCA, the entity must have entered into a Licensing Agreement with YMCA Australia.

### Safeguarding Children and Young People Licensing Standards



Each YMCA Licensee must comply with the Safeguarding Children and Young People Licensing Standards in existence at the time. The Safeguarding Children and Young People Licensing Standards outline the requirement and responsibilities of a YMCA Licensee.

### Safeguarding



The actions taken to protect children and young people from harm and promote their welfare, enables children and young people to live safely, free from abuse and neglect.

### 10 National Principals



The National Principles, based on the Royal Commission's Child Safe Standards, are endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG). They drive the implementation of a child safe culture across multiple sectors providing services to children and young people to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people across Australia.

### Y Profiles



Any online and social media profiles that have been approved to communicate Y programs and services (not personal profiles).



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## Culture

Culture describes the way we do things at the Y. This includes things like how we behave, the values we stand for, how we support one another and how we bring our mission to life. When organisations have good culture, people feel empowered to speak up when something doesn't seem right and people understand what is expected of them.

At the Y our values and mission should be at the forefront of everything we do – it is part of who we are what we do. The elements under this chapter show practical ways that you can develop a good safeguarding culture at your Y that helps keep children and young people safe.

## 1.1 Leadership

**Introduction:** Our commitment to safeguarding is embedded across all levels at the Y, it is part of who we are and what we do. In order to keep children and young people safe in any organisation, strong leadership is essential.

[National Principle 1: Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.](#)

[Safeguarding Children and Young People Licensing Standards 1.13](#)

### Advocates

Our goal at the Y is to keep children and young people safe at all times. You can have all the policies and procedures in place however you must have a deep understanding and the commitment to drive the culture of an organisation for long term change in knowledge and practice.

Keeping children and young people safe in any organisation must have genuine buy in and commitment from its leaders and at the Y, this begins with our Board. Ensuring safeguarding children and young people is a standing Board, Executive and Senior Management agenda item is essential to keeping safeguarding children and young people front of mind and regularly communicated.

To understand more about how to put this into practice within your Member Y, refer to the Youth Voice Principle and Practice Statement ([Appendix 1](#)) and the Intergenerational Leadership and Principle Practice Statement ([Appendix 2](#)). You can also hear more on leadership and empowerment from the Y's inspiring [National Treasurer, Tom Stephenson](#) here.



An example of leadership best practice is Y Victoria have appointed a Young Person on their Board of Directors.

The Y has also nominated Safeguarding Leads across the Movement whom you can speak to for further advice and support on safeguarding matters. Licence Standard 1.1 states that all Member Ys must appoint a Safeguarding Board Sponsor as leadership and governance best practice. An example Position Description can be found [here](#).



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Y Safeguarding has also being established and are available for support and guidance as part of the Y's commitment to safeguarding children and young people.

## Leaders Actions

More than this though, safeguarding children and young people is about actions, not just words. Our leaders at the Y need to live our values and behaviours and role model such behaviours for all Y People. This shows that safeguarding is embedded and reflected in our culture and is demonstrated by the values and actions of all Y People.



At the Y we strive for and uphold a culture where all Y People understand and live by their shared responsibility to safeguarding children and young people. Whilst we know that safeguarding children and young people is a shared responsibility, it is the leaders of the Y who must ensure it is at the heart of what we do and how we operate. There are three (3) safeguarding leadership pillars which include:

- Being values led;
- Modelling ethical behaviour; and
- Nurturing a culture of continuous improvement.

We are also committed to removing all barriers to reporting safeguarding matters. Our leaders need to be talking to Y People about what may prevent them from speaking up and look at ways to empower them. This can happen during one on one supervision sessions, team meetings or through employee engagement strategies such as surveys.



## Communication

At the Y our commitment to safeguarding children and young people is demonstrated through our public Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Commitment Statements. These should also be referenced in all job descriptions and position advertisements to show potential and current Y People our leading position – please refer to section [2.1 People](#) of this document for further guidance.

Regular promotion of the Y's commitment to safeguarding children and young people should be done in a variety of formats. For example at the reception area of sites, in newsletters, on the website etc. There should also be opportunities for open and transparent communication and feedback when it comes to safeguarding children and young people and it is the leaders of the Y who must facilitate this and ensure our culture allows this to occur.

This is our journey, we will continually review and improve in order to meet our requirements and most importantly, keep our children, young people, Y People and volunteers safe.

### **Appendices:**

1. [Youth Voice Principle and Practice Statement](#)
2. [Intergenerational Leadership and Principle Practice Statement](#)



**Appendix 1:**

## Principle and Practice Statement - Youth Voice

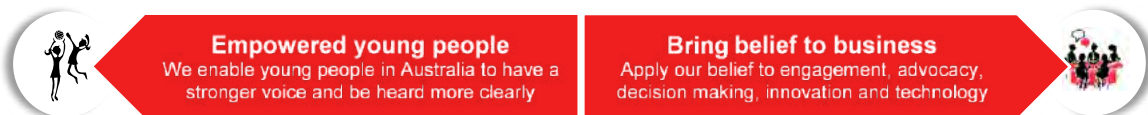
**Purpose:**

This principle and practice statement is intended to articulate our collective principles regarding youth voice and ways in which this may be implemented and inform our practice.

**Introduction:**

**Our Ambitions**

**Our Priorities**



Our collective ambition to empower young people specifies that we enable young people in Australia to have a stronger voice and be heard more clearly.

In 2019, the Office for Young People and Community Impact held workshops and consultations with all Association CEOs and staff, receiving input from more than 200 individuals.

The consultations focused on building a collective understanding of what we mean when we talk about the voice of young people and what this means for the Y. Specifically, we focused on how we understand the voice of young people in terms of our staff and volunteers, our work with young people in programs and services, the voice of young people in the broader community and also in our governance structures. The following principles emerged through our consultations with the Movement.



## PRINCIPLES

## In practice, this means:

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### Being listened to and being heard

We commit to ensuring that not only are young people listened to, but they feel genuinely heard and outcomes are communicated transparently to young people.

We will check in with young people to ensure we have understood what we have heard, and work together on what the outcomes should be. We will ensure young people are informed about any decisions that are taken and the reasons why. We also make sure our listening is supported by behaviours that promote integrity and credibility to bring about visible change. In our practice, we recognise that young people already have a voice, and we all share a responsibility to create the space and opportunity for that voice to be heard.

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### Embracing diversity

We commit to valuing and recognising the diversity of young people's perspectives and we commit to ensuring inclusion of all young people and diverse forms of engagement.

We recognise that young people hold diverse views and perspectives and we will actively seek out, hear and value the voice of all young people. In our practice, this means engaging in deep listening with young people, embedding empathy and flexibility in our behaviours. We will also ensure our practice is culturally welcoming and accessible. We will meet young people where they are at and we acknowledge that diverse forms of engagement and communication are critical for inclusion of all young people.

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### Being valued, respected and understood

We commit to ensuring that young people feel valued and our engagement is non-judgemental, respectful and builds trust.

We will engage with respect and understanding, ensuring young people feel and are valued. This means being non-judgemental and setting pre-conceived notions and perceptions aside. We recognise that creating a sense of belonging and equality where trust is placed in the voice of young people is essential to being valued. This also means that young people must have choice about how, where, when and with whom to have a voice. Most importantly, we recognise that young people are the experts of their world.



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**Opportunity to influence**

We commit to ensuring young people have opportunities for self-expression and the ability to influence their world.

We will actively provide young people with the space, ability and opportunity to express their views, beliefs, and opinions through a variety of mechanisms and platforms. We understand that for some young people this is about engaging in activism and for others it may represent the opportunity to make a contribution to their organisation and community.

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**Creating safe spaces**

We commit to creating an enabling environment in which young people feel safe to have a voice and raise issues of concern to them.

We will intentionally support the voice of young people, through taking the time and creating safe spaces for young people to challenge, be challenged and to have their voices heard. This may include a range of elements from supportive structures and governance, to creating dialogue and multiple platforms for participation. Creating safe spaces also means addressing power imbalances, building confidence in young people and building trusting and honest relationships. This also means the creation of spaces and opportunities to share knowledge, learn from one another and encourage ideas through genuine and authentic co-design.



**Appendix 2:**

## Principle and Practice Statement – Intergenerational Leadership

**Purpose:**

This principle and practice statement is intended to articulate our collective principles regarding intergenerational leadership and ways in which this may be implemented and inform our practice.

**Introduction:**

**Our Ambitions**

**Our Priorities**



**Empowered young people**

We enable young people in Australia to have a stronger voice and be heard more clearly

**Bring belief to business**

Apply our belief to engagement, advocacy, decision making, innovation and technology



Our collective ambition to empower young people specifies that we enable young people in Australia to have a stronger voice and be heard more clearly.

In 2019, the Office for Young People and Community Impact held workshops and consultations with all Association CEOs and staff, receiving input from more than 200 individuals.

The consultations focused on building a collective understanding of what we mean when we talk about intergenerational leadership and what this means for the Y. Our focus on intergenerational leadership recognises the valuable role that everyone in the Y plays in relation to youth empowerment and that we can optimise our belief in the power of inspired young people when we understand what intergenerational leadership means for us in practice, strategy and culture. The following principles emerged through our consultations with the Movement.



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## PRINCIPLES

## In practice, this means:

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### Thinking differently

We commit to an approach by which we actively embrace difference and celebrate multiple perspectives.

We will not only embrace different generations, but embrace different cultures and values. This means not only valuing experience, knowledge and our history but also embracing innovative ideas and new insights and perspectives. We will also place a strong emphasis on working collectively and deepening our understanding of how and why we see things differently. This involves a maturing of our ideas and embodies a different and interconnected way of thinking that celebrates our multiple perspectives.

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### Valuing all of us

We commit to an approach that values everyone and avoids an 'us' and 'them' mindset.

We will actively work to challenge generational stereotypes that attribute a set of characteristics and values to particular generations. We will challenge an 'us' and 'them' mindset and understand that intergenerational leadership is multi-dimensional. This means acknowledging the qualities of all ages and recognising that our perspectives should be informed by what an individual says and does, rather than their age.

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### Connecting and learning

We commit to connecting and learning from one another and finding strength in our shared goals.

We will explore opportunities to connect and learn from one another through communication and building two-way relationships. This may mean establishing mentoring or buddying and role modelling collaboration in decision-making. We will focus our efforts on creating a sense of belonging and finding common ground, working side by side towards goals and solutions. Our practice will be characterised by learning and exchanging ideas and perspectives, putting ourselves in one another's shoes and finding the strength in our shared passions.



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**Respect and empathy**

We commit to an approach that emphasises engaging with respect, empathy and building trust.

We will respect each other's voices and opinions and respect each other's uniqueness, experiences and contributions. This means being non-judgemental and building understanding and empathy as essential leadership characteristics.

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**Adaptive and purposeful leadership**

We commit to an approach that values shared and collective notions of leadership.

We will intentionally support leadership that is not necessarily derived from formal authority structures, but leadership that values shared goals and collaboration. This means exploring adaptive leadership and in particular being comfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity and holding an adaptive growth mindset. Leadership that is purposeful and intentional around being open to different perspectives and thinking is also required, in addition to a willingness to challenge and empower others.

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**Risk and reward**

We commit to being bold, taking risks and celebrating reward.

We will recognise that genuinely embedding intergenerational leadership requires us to take risks and be brave, and also requires us to be prepared to give and to compromise. In taking risks, this also means being uncomfortable and challenging our own biases, having humility and acknowledging that we don't know it all. We will also celebrate the reward that integrating the quality of difference voices and perspectives can bring, adding to the richness of our engagement and what we can achieve collectively.



## 1.2 Governance

**Introduction:** Governance includes all processes and frameworks used by an organisation to ensure accountability in its decision-making and operations. This includes a variety of business areas and functions including committees, policies and procedures, risk management, business planning as well as leadership and culture. At the Y, it is important that safeguarding risks and opportunities are considered at all levels of decision making.

Good governance practice is also supported as a Y Priority One Licence Standard.

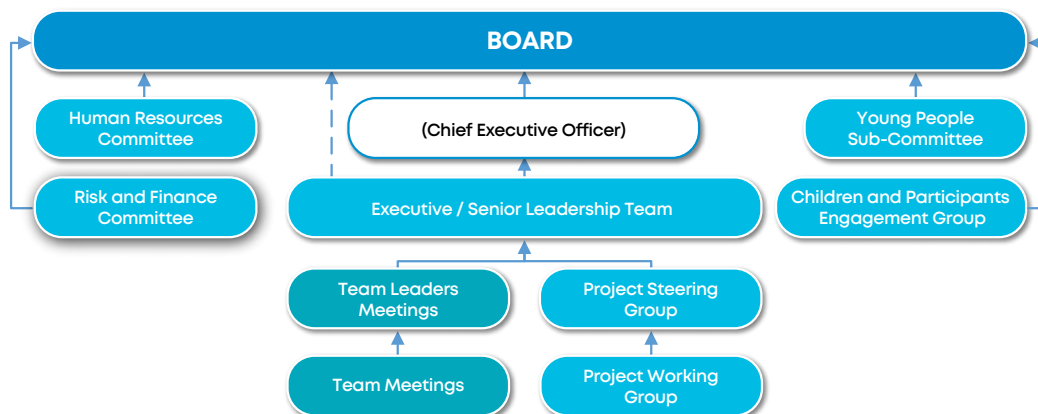
[National Principle 1: Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.](#)

[Safeguarding Children and Young People Licensing Standards 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10, 1.11, 1.12 and 1.13.](#)

### Decision Making and Oversight

Governance includes the structure of decision making bodies within an organisation- such as the Board, Sub-Committees, Senior Executive Team, Area Managers' meetings and team meetings. Member Y's can ensure that the right decisions are made by recruiting knowledgeable people with a variety of expertise.

An example of best practice governance can be found below.



This structure demonstrates how the lighter boxes communicate operational activities and requirements upwards to the strategic Committees. These strategic Committees then provide oversight and guidance for the next steps.

It is important that safeguarding children and young people is considered at all of these levels. Member Y's can achieve this by reserving time in each meeting for the discussion of all programs, projects and services that may affect the participation, health and welfare of children and young people.



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Member Y's must also consider the effects of new program or project initiatives that will have implications for participating children and young people, at the early scoping and budgeting stages.

As per the graphic above, the best way to do this is to directly involve children and young people in their decision making processes by inviting children and young people to become Board Members or by standing up a sub-committee or engagement group of children and/or young people to inform their Board. Including children and young people not only ensures that their voice is directly heard and considered, but also ensures that the larger Board is made aware of new trends that may affect the younger generations. An example Sub-Committee Terms of Reference can be found in [Appendix 2](#) below.

When considering and appointing a Safeguarding Board Sponsor you will want to ensure there is a clear position description so they are aware of their role and responsibility as well as the appropriate skills and capability. An example Position Description can be found in [Appendix 1](#) below.

It is also important Member Y's Board's publish their safeguarding commitment on their public facing website. For some tips on what to include in this commitment, please refer to Appendix 4.

## Business Planning

To ensure accountability and continuous improvement, organisations may use business planning techniques to determine deliverables in advance. This process ensures agreement on what the organisation will achieve as well as how and when it will achieve this.

In short, an organisation's Strategic Plan determines the long-term goals of the entire organisation. Business Plans and Project Plans detail the unique goals of a specific business area or project. Position Descriptions (PDs) and Individual Performance Agreements (Workplans) describe the requirements of each Y Person's role and ensures that they are achieved- this is supported by performance appraisals and reviews. All of these documents must be continuously reviewed to ensure that they are fit for purpose and that they can be monitored and achieved.

Whilst each member Y uses a variation of this process, best practice business planning is achieved when the three levels in the following pyramid are aligned as it allows Y People to see where they fit and how their individual actions support the achievement of collective goals. It is important that safeguarding children and young people is considered at all levels to ensure that Y People understand their individual and collective responsibilities.

The best way to do this is to include safeguarding responsibilities in each position description before commencement, then following this up with regular performance appraisals that track progress against these core requirements of the role. Refer to section [2.1 People](#) for further information.



When integrating safeguarding within business plans, project plans and the larger Strategic Plan, it is important to define key goals in advance so that you can track your progress and monitor any gaps. For example, if your Association wants to increase the amount of recreation centres that you run, a key goal would be to ensure that the spaces are safe for young people.

As well as good business planning it is also important Member Y's have a specific Safeguarding Action Plan. A template can be found in [Appendix 3](#).

Using a business, project or strategic plan template will allow you to track each individual step on the way to achieving your goals.

For further information about integrating safeguarding into individual position descriptions, please see section [2.1 People](#).

## Risk Management

For risk management in centres, please see section [3.2 Physical](#).

When considering the goals that we want to achieve through the business planning process, risk considers the things that might get in our way (or the opportunities that might help us). To reduce the effects of risks and to increase the potential of opportunities, the Y embraces best practice risk management approaches. This includes the identification, assessment, treatment and communication of risks.



Best practice risk management considers three levels of risk.

1. **Strategic Risks** are those which may affect the achievement of organisation-wide long-term goals. (i.e. A national increase in stand downs of Y People as this means that we cannot continue to build upon our services and secure a stronger financial position for the future.)
2. **Enterprise Risks** are Operational Risks that affect more than one business area- or are rated high enough that they may have enterprise wide consequences. (i.e. A common physical risk such as bushfires or an increase in region-wide stand downs of Y People.) It is quite common to see the same risks on both the Operational and Enterprise Risk Registers, as the Enterprise Risk Register should be fed from the individual risks of each Operational Risk Register.
3. **Operational Risks** are risks that are relevant to the individual business areas such as a specific child care or recreation centre. (i.e. A physical risk like a broken swing, or an increase in site-specific stand downs of Y People.)



Remember: There are two umbrella categories when identifying safeguarding risks- risks to the health and welfare of children and young people and risks to the safeguarding program itself- such as funding and training of Safeguarding Leads.

The easiest way to manage your risks is to use a risk register. From left to right, the register is a step by step process that supports you to tell the risk's story. The following is an example with the basic information that you will need to consider (and includes examples of how each level may relate to safeguarding children and young people):

| Level       | Causes<br>Actions or events that may lead to the risk.               | Risk  | Consequences<br>What will happen if we cannot effectively manage the risk?   | Inherent Risk Rating | Controls<br>What are you currently doing to manage the risk?   | Residual Risk Rating | Treatments<br>If the risk rating is still not acceptable, what further actions are required to manage the risk? |
|-------------|--|---|--|----------------------|--|----------------------|---|
| Strategic   | -Poor safeguarding practice.<br>-Increase in safeguarding concerns.  | <b>The Y cannot guarantee financial growth due to reduction in participants.</b>  | -The Y becomes insolvent.  | High                 | - Ongoing training of Y People.<br>- Policy review.<br>- Concerns reporting  | Med                  | - Improved concerns management process to ensure that participants feel heard and are safe.                     |
| Enterprise  | - Poor recruitment processes including screening.<br>-Poor training. | <b>The Y cannot recruit and engage Y People with the appropriate passion and knowledge to ensure the safety of children and young people.</b> | - Inability to appropriately manage disclosures.<br>- Increase in safeguarding concerns.<br>- Failure to meet reporting obligations. | High                 | - Ongoing training.<br>-Policy Review.<br>- Working with Children (and Vulnerable People) Checks.<br>- Police Checks.<br>- Engagement activities to increase morale. | Med                  | - Reference checks.   |
| Operational | -Distracted Y People.<br>-High equipment.<br>-Hard floors.           | <b>Y People cannot guarantee the safety of children playing on the playground.</b>  | -Injury to children.<br>-Diverted Y People during injury incidents.  | High                 | -Bars along high sections.<br>-Rotation approach to supervision.   | High                 |   |

In addition to this, it is important to identify a risk owner. This should be a Y Person with the appropriate knowledge and skills to monitor and manage the specific risk- including the controls and treatments.



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The rating is determined using your Member Y's Risk Matrix. The rating is determined by considering the likelihood/ probability of the risk happening and the severity of the consequences if it does happen. It is important to note that your risk rating doesn't always have to change- in some instances, the consequences of the risk happening will be impossible to effectively manage. In these instances, it is important to focus on monitoring the risks and try to reduce the likelihood.



### **DON'T HIDE YOUR RED RISKS!**

Transparently reporting red risks (risks with a high rating) allows your leadership team or Board to understand elements of your operations that they may not have known previously. It also allows them to step in and support you, if required, before the risks gets even worse!

(These are also opportunities for you to show off your crisis management skills. Consider proposing a few solutions when you report the risk, think of the good news story when you save the day!)

For environmental risk management, please visit sections [3.1 Online](#) and [3.2 Physical](#).

## **Project Governance**

Y People must ensure that safeguarding is integrated into every step of the project management cycle, including planning, consultation, implementation and closure. This includes determining risks and benefits to children and young people at the beginning of the process to ensure that risks are managed and benefits are maximised.

As the project progresses, it is important to maintain oversight of these risks and benefits and to identify new risks that may emerge during the project life-cycle.

The best way to achieve this is to ensure that all relevant project management templates are updated to allow for the identification of risks, barriers and opportunities that relate to the safety of children and young people.

For further information on the Good Governance Priority One Standard, please search on the [Y Extranet](#).

### **Appendix:**

1. [Safeguarding Board Sponsor Position Description](#)
2. [Safeguarding Children and Young People Sub-Committee Terms of Reference](#)
3. [Safeguarding Action Plan Template](#)
4. [Board Safeguarding Commitment Statement](#)



## Position Description – Safeguarding Board Sponsor

*We believe in the power of inspired young people*

***Our Safeguarding vision is that all Children and Young People are empowered to feel safe and be safe at the Y, in their families and their communities.***

### PURPOSE OF POSITION

In order for young people to be inspired, they must Feel Safe and Be Safe. As part of our Safeguarding Strategy at the Y, we have developed our Safeguarding Framework which aspires to ensure that all Children and Young People are safe and feel safe at the Y, in their families and in their communities.

Our Safeguarding Framework aims to develop:

- A safe **culture** nationally which empowers Children and Young People by promoting Children and Young Person focused leadership and governance;
- Safe **operations** to ensure Y People have the right policies, processes and practices to keep Children and Young People safe; and
- Safe **environments** at the Y and in communities which empower Children and Young People to thrive.

A Safeguarding Board Sponsor is integral to ensuring the implementation of our Safeguarding Framework across the Y.

### DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Safeguarding Board Sponsor is responsible for the below:

- Advocate for Safeguarding across the organisation
- Provide high level support and advocacy for the Member Y Association's Safeguarding Lead
- Support best practices in Safeguarding where relevant in the Y's Safeguarding Framework
- Facilitate regular communication between the Member Y Association's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Safeguarding Lead to review the implementation of

the Safeguarding Framework and best practices in Safeguarding (this includes reviewing the organisation's safeguarding risks)

- Ensure Safeguarding is appropriately considered at Board Meetings including any Safeguarding reports that may arise
- Ensure Safeguarding updates are included in the Annual Report and any feedback or consultation completed is reported back to the Board of Directors
- Consider the Member Y Association's strategic plan and ensure Safeguarding is adequately reflected and incorporated
- Be identified within their Member Y Association as a point of contact should any Y Person feel a Safeguarding allegation has not been handled correctly
- Support Member Y Association's CEO and Safeguarding Lead with Safeguarding allegations relating to their Y People
- Work with the Member Y Association's President, CEO, Safeguarding Lead and communications team in the event of a Safeguarding critical incident

## **QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS**

The Safeguarding Board Sponsor should have the necessary skills, experience and confidence in Safeguarding. These include:

- Understanding of their state or territory Safeguarding legislation
- Understanding of Safeguarding policies, procedures and best practices
- Values-based work ethic and ethos
- Experience in Safeguarding or organisation with a strong Child or Young Person focus
- Confidence to challenge poor practice and/or behaviours
- Understanding of our Safe Behaviours and role model these

Whilst they are the Safeguarding Sponsor for the Member Y Association's Board, they are not the only Board Director who must understand Safeguarding – it is everyone's responsibility. The Safeguarding Board Sponsor can however support their fellow Board Directors in further developing their understanding of Safeguarding.

**SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

The Safeguarding Board Sponsor must:

- Declare anything they become aware of through the course of their engagement with the Y which a reasonable person would consider could impede their suitability to fulfill their responsibilities (including declaring any conflicts of interest and past or ongoing investigations/allegations)
- Undertake a National Police Check (or International Police Check) and maintain a valid Working with Children Check
- Adhere to all policies and procedures relating to Safeguarding Children and Young People and the Y Safe Behaviours
- Update their contact details whenever these change, with the relevant department administering the Working with Children Check (or equivalent) in your state or territory, as required by applicable laws
- Report any suspicions, concerns, allegations or disclosures of alleged child abuse or neglect in line with procedures
- Participate in the required Safeguarding Children and Young People training

**APPROVAL AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Date PD created:</b>  |  |
| <b>PD created by</b>     |  |
| <b>PD approved by:</b>   |  |
| <b>Date of approval:</b> |  |

**Board Director - I have read, understood and accept the above requirements of this position description**

.....

Board Director Name

.....

Board Director Signature

.....

Date

## Safeguarding Sub-Committee

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Chair                       |  |
| Establishment Date          |  |
| Terms of Reference Approved |  |
| Secretariat                 |  |

### Purpose

The *[insert Member Y]* Safeguarding Sub-Committee is responsible for providing strategic advice, oversight, and guidance for all safeguarding initiatives within *[insert Member Y]* and for enabling the growth of safeguarding maturity and capability throughout *[insert Member Y]*.

### Key Activities

The *[insert Member Y]* Safeguarding Sub-Committee will:

- Ensure that the safeguarding function of *[insert Member Y]* is appropriately resourced and supported to ensure continuous growth of safeguarding knowledge and capability throughout the workforce
- Maintain knowledge of contemporary safeguarding practice and make informed decisions
- Provide oversight of safeguarding concerns and associated lessons learnt to steward continuous improvement
- Oversee and steward the development of the Annual Safeguarding Action Plan

### Membership

The *[insert Member Y]* Safeguarding Sub-Committee membership will be formed by equal members of the *[insert Member Y]* Board, relevant third-party advisors and operational safeguarding subject matter experts from within *[insert Member Y]*.

Members will be invited onto the Sub-Committee by the *[insert Member Y]* Board.

Members who are unavailable or are otherwise unable to attend, are encouraged to nominate a suitable proxy or to provide a report regarding the topics listed in each Agenda.

### Secretariat

Agenda and Minutes to be developed and issued to members by the Chair of the Sub-Committee.



**Appendix 3:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| <i>Safeguarding Action Plans are living documents and must be updated to reflect any changes in legislation or within your Association's operating environment. Please provide details of any amendments made within the current financial year below:</i> |  |  |  |  |
| <b>EXAMPLE</b><br>10 September 2021  | <b>EXAMPLE</b><br>Deliverables achieved for Policies and Procedures. New Transport policy approved by Board on 01 September 2021 and new safeguarding procedure produced in child friendly format. |  |  |  |
| <i>For support or further information to complete this template, please reach out to Y Safeguarding by emailing <a href="mailto:safe@ymca.org.au">safe@ymca.org.au</a></i>   |  |  |  |  |

*Outline the purpose, major functions, priorities, responsibilities and key stakeholders for your Association.*

*Outline the context within which your Association operates. Consider strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats- both internally and externally- and how these may affect your ability to deliver the priorities detailed above. These may include competitors, capability, systems and the legislative environment.*

*Provide exhaustive detail about the Services and Programs that your Association offers for Children and Young People.*

*Provide an estimate of the amount of Children and Young People involved in your Association's Services and Programs.*

*Outline your Association's planned safeguarding deliverables for the coming financial year in alignment with the elements of the Safeguarding Framework.*

|             |                          |  |  |  |  |  |
|-------------|--------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| Culture     | Governance               |  |  |  |  |  |
|             | Leadership               |  |  |  |  |  |
|             | Empowerment              |  |  |  |  |  |
|             | Values and Behaviours    |  |  |  |  |  |
| Operations  | Education and Training   |  |  |  |  |  |
|             | Continuous Improvement   |  |  |  |  |  |
|             | Policies                 |  |  |  |  |  |
|             | Procedures               |  |  |  |  |  |
|             | Practices                |  |  |  |  |  |
|             | People                   |  |  |  |  |  |
|             | Complaints and Concerns  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Environment | eSafety                  |  |  |  |  |  |
|             | Physical                 |  |  |  |  |  |
|             | Families and Communities |  |  |  |  |  |
|             | Diversity                |  |  |  |  |  |

Outline relevant risks that may affect your Association's ability to achieve the deliverables listed in Section 2. For guidance on assessing your risk ratings, please refer to your Association's Risk Framework and Matrix.

|            |  |  |   |   |                                      |  |                                      |
|------------|--|--|---|---|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| Eg. People | Insufficient vetting processes or poorly resourced onboarding and recruitment teams. | Y XXX may recruit inappropriate or unqualified candidates. | Increased risk of misconduct relating to children and young people. | National Safeguarding License Standards, Safeguarding Guidance Document, Recruitment and Screening Policy and Procedures. | Likelihood: Medium<br>Severity: High | Implement Recruitment and Vetting Register to ensure all ID, WWCC (or equivalent), Police Checks and qualifications have been met. | General Manager, People and Culture. |
|            |  |  |   |   |                                      |  |                                      |
|            |  |  |   |   |                                      |  |                                      |
|            |  |  |   |   |                                      |  |                                      |
|            |  |  |   |   |                                      |  |                                      |
|            |  |  |   |   |                                      |  |                                      |
|            |  |  |   |   |                                      |  |                                      |
|            |  |  |   |   |                                      |  |                                      |



the

## Member Y Board Commitment Statement – Tips

Safeguarding Children and Young People Licensing Standard 1.19 - Member Ys publish their Board's commitment to safeguarding children and young people on the Member Y's external facing website.

When developing your Member Y's Board Commitment Statement, it is important to ensure that it is genuine, authentic and represents your Member Y. The Statement should be developed by your Board in collaboration with key people from across the organisation. These could include your communications team, governance staff and of course your Safeguarding Lead.

Y Safeguarding have developed a list of recommended key messages that may be considered when developing your Statement. These are not made with the intention of being used exactly word for word however do provide general themes and key messages to consider.

Key messages that your Statement may include are:

- We believe in the power of inspired Young People, and for Young People to be inspired they must be safe, and they must feel safe
- We are committed to amplifying the voices of Children and Young People – and truly listening to them
- Our Safeguarding Vision is that all children and young people are empowered to feel safe and be safe at the Y, in their families and in their communities
- To achieve our Safeguarding Vision, we have developed our Safeguarding Framework. At the heart of our Safeguarding Framework is our Safeguarding Vision, to 'feel safe, be safe'.
- Our Safeguarding Vision stands on three Pillars: Culture, Operations and Environment which form our Safeguarding Framework
- Our Safeguarding Framework aims to develop: A safe culture which empowers children and young people by promoting children and young person focused leadership and governance; Safe operations to ensure Y People have the right policies, processes and practices to keep children and young people safe; and Safe environments at the Y and in communities which empower children and young people to thrive

In addition to these key points, it is recommended that each Member of the Board (or a suitable representative such as the President) signs the Statement (either physically or digitally).

Once it is endorsed, the Statement must be published on your Member Y external webpage – for example [ymca.org.au](http://ymca.org.au).

If there are local programs or services that are unique to your Member Y, this is a great place to include these and highlight them. The Statement should be developed with your Member Y and community in mind so it really speaks to them and demonstrates your outstanding commitment to keeping children and young people safe.

## 1.3 Empowerment

**Introduction:** We care about children and young people and helping them lead active and fulfilled roles within our community. We believe that children and young people are unique and diverse, and we seek to support and empower them. To us, an empowered child or young person feels in control of their life. They are confident in their ability to contribute to the world around them, they overcome challenges and realise their potential.

*“Children are safer when institutions acknowledge and teach them about their rights to be heard, listened to and taken seriously.” (Royal Commission, 2017).*

[National Principle 2 - Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.](#)

[Safeguarding Children and Young People Licensing Standards: 1.14, 1.15, 1.16 and 1.17](#)

Children, like adults, have human rights - and this includes being safe. The main international agreement on children’s rights is the [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) (CRC). As a party to the CRC, Australia has a duty to make sure that all children and young people in Australia enjoy the rights set out in the agreement. There is also a dedicated resource for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children which can be found here - <https://www.supportingcarers.snaicc.org.au/rights-of-the-child/rights-of-the-child/>

A child friendly version of the report can be found [here](#) – Y People should engage with children and young people and use posters such as the child friendly version of the CRC report to start a conversation about their rights.

Empowerment is about helping children and young people to have their say. Children and young people have a right to be listened to and give their views - particularly on matters that affect them.

Activities relating to the empowerment of children and young people at the Y should not be a one off event, it is an approach that needs to be part of our culture. Acting to empower children and young people will always guide our work at the Y and we regularly review these activities for their effectiveness.

A great example of this is [World Vision’s Child and Youth Statement](#) which was developed in 2020. The Statement provides a summary of the consultation and engagement World Vision did with Children and Young People and how they have listened and heard their voices.



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WATCH THE VIDEO

## Why is empowerment important?

Empowerment is important as when children and young people are heard, valued and listened to they are more likely to tell someone when they are worried or concerned.

Empowered children and young people are:

- Less vulnerable and therefore less likely to be targeted by unsafe adults;
- More confident to speak up when they are worried or concerned;
- More likely to tell someone and talk to a trusted adult when something is wrong; and
- More confident, resilient and self-assured.

Children and young people understand and experience safety differently to adults. To be able to best support children and young people we need to understand what safety means to them and respond appropriately.

Including children and young people in the development of strategies and responses for their own safety results in a greater likelihood that they will utilise and feel positive about them. Children and young people need adults and peers they can trust, and these adults must be accessible, physically present and available when needed. Raising concerns with an adult can be difficult and uncomfortable for children and young people. Adults need to assure children and young people and respond respectfully and appropriately to alleviate any concerns they may have.

### CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE SAID THAT THEY FEEL SAFE AND WELCOME WHEN:

- People care about them
- People include them and listen to them
- The rules and their rights are explained to them
- They have choices
- They have fun and are happy
- They can talk to someone about any worries they may have



### QUICK TIP!

A 'safety plan' is important for young people to know what to do when they feel worried or concerned. Lifeline have some great resources and templates on how you can develop a safety plan with young people. Head to the below website for more information.

<https://www.lifeline.org.au/real-experiences/community-perspectives/young-people/>



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## What does empowerment look like?

Empowerment is more than just a feedback form or a catchy phrase in a mission statement. It is making time to hear the needs of children and young people, listening to what they think is important, and incorporating the learnings into how your Y is run.

This can be through both formal and informal communication methods. For example surveys are a great tool and easy to administer to children and young people, more information on how to administer surveys and things to be mindful of can be found in [Appendix 1](#).

Focus groups are another great way to hear from children and young people and can provide the opportunity for Y People to explore ideas and conversations further than surveys. For more information on how to run a focus group see [Appendix 2](#).

The Victorian Commission for Children and Young People shows an empowerment model which is outlined below.

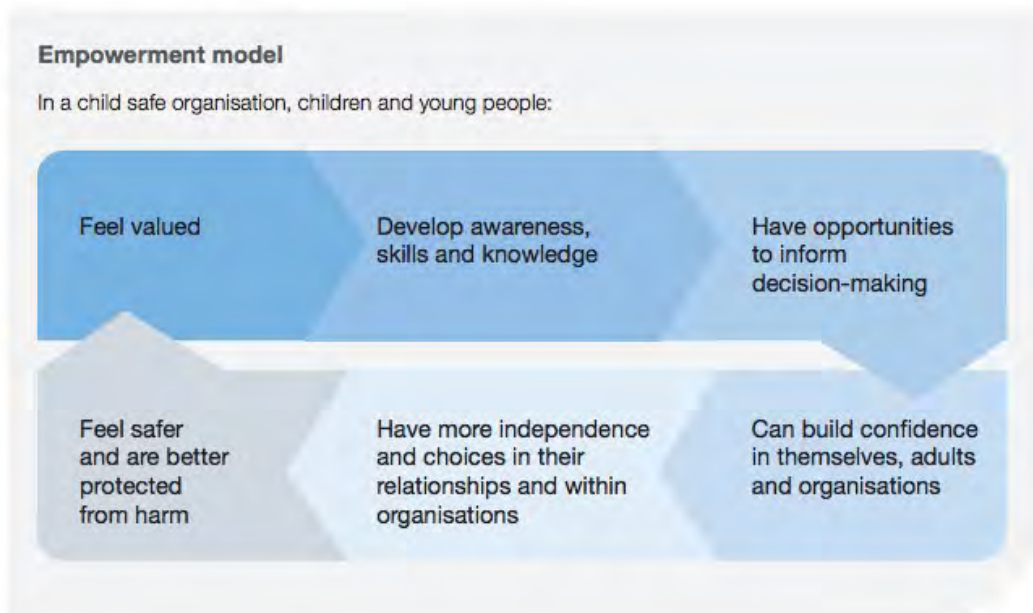


Image from the Victorian Commission for Children and Young People Empowerment and Participation Guide.



## Example

A full list of empowerment tips and strategies at the Y can be found in [Appendix 3](#). Empowerment activities should:

- Be ethical;
- Be age appropriate and child-friendly;
- Have a range of ways for children and young people to express themselves (verbal, drawing, writing);
- Be culturally respectful;
- Be inclusive of a diverse range of children and young people, demonstrating respect for all ages, abilities, social and cultural backgrounds;
- Be positive and fun; and
- Be voluntary and with informed consent (see [Appendix 4](#)).

For empowerment at the Y to be successful it needs to be supported by the whole organisation and at all levels of management. Any conversations about safety need to be ongoing and built into as many interactions between adults and children and young people as possible.

At the Y we spoke to children and young people and they told us that they need to feel safe in order to be empowered. From these sessions the children and young people informed the development of the Stay Safe, Tell Someone Program ([Appendix 5](#)). This program highlights to children and young people that if they see something, hear something or feel something that worries or concerns them - tell someone. The program consists of a short explanatory video and posters ([Appendix 5](#)). This Program should underpin all the work we do when empowering children and young people – for more information see section [1.5 Education and Training](#) and [2.5 Complaints](#).

Lastly, where Children and Young People do share their views and opinions, the Y must ensure these are valued and taken seriously. Y People should provide feedback to children and young people about how their views and opinions will be used.



### QUICK TIP!

Healthy sexual development is another important factor to consider when empowering children and young people. Examples of resources to support you do this can be found below:

<http://www.wbsass.com.au/themes/default/basemedia/content/files/Traffic-LightsBrochure.pdf>

<https://apps.apple.com/au/app/traffic-lights-sexual-behaviours-of-children-young-people/id999193423>

<https://www.true.org.au/Resources/shop#!/Traffic-Lights-brochure/p/57318729/category=18401031>



## QUICK TIP!

Another great empowerment tip when working with children and young people is to ask them to identify five (5) adults they trust whom they can speak to if they feel worried or concerned. This can be done as part of a 'safety hand' activity. The image to the right is a good example.

[https://www.rainbowfamilies.com.au/helping\\_hand\\_activity](https://www.rainbowfamilies.com.au/helping_hand_activity)



### References:

<https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/assets/resources/tipsheet-empower-participation-children.pdf>

[The Victoria Commission for Children and Young People's Empowerment and Participation Guide](#)

### Appendices:

- 1: [Surveys](#)
- 2: [How to run a focus group](#)
- 3: [Empowerment tips for children and young people at the Y](#)
- 4: [Consent template](#)
- 5: [Stay Safe, Tell Someone Poster](#)



## **Appendix 1:**

### **Surveys**

If focus groups are not possible or practical for your Y centre, surveys are a good alternative to engage with children and young people and collect their feedback and opinions. Surveys can be emailed directly out to parents/carers, sent via your Y newsletters or other communications or provided hardcopy and collected back at a central point.

Much like focus groups it is important children and young people know their participation is voluntary, the aim of the survey and how the information will be used is clearly stated. Children and young people should be made aware that their feedback can be anonymous and they do not have to answer all questions if they do not wish to.

Survey Monkey is a great, easy tool to use to set up your survey. Alternatively you can also print your survey and distribute accordingly. If this method is used, ensure there is a central or designated collection point to minimize the chance of some not being returned or being lost.

Below is an example survey of questions you can ask children and young people in relation to empowerment and safety.

1. What does the word 'safety' mean to you?
2. What things would make you feel safer when here/at the Y?
3. How safe on a scale of 1-10 do you feel?
4. What would you like to see more of at the Y that would help you feel safe?
5. Is there anything you would like to see less of at the Y to help you feel safe?



## **Appendix 2:**

### **How to run a focus group**

When facilitating a focus group for children and young people the below points will assist you to create a safe, welcoming environment that encourages active participation.

#### **Step 1 – before the session**

- The session should be around 30 minutes maximum and shouldn't have a wide range of ages. A 2-3 year age span is ideal.
- Obtain written consent from parents/carers for their child or young person's participation (Appendix 4).
- Promote the session by posting signs around the facility, sending out communication in newsletters or information home with parents/carers.
- Ensure that the children and young people know that participation is voluntary and the sessions aim is really about hearing and valuing their opinions, thoughts and feelings.

#### **Step 2 – setting up the session**

- Pick a room that is quiet, has limited distractions and provides a warm, welcoming environment.
- Ensure there are water and refreshments provided as well as adequate stationery such as pens, coloured markers, pencils, butchers paper etc. as some participants may wish to write or draw their feedback.

#### **Step 3 – running the session**

- Have at least two (2) facilitators present in the session, one is designated to listen whilst the other takes detailed notes.
- Use staff members or facilitators that have good rapport and relationships with the children and young people.
- Ensure you set out some ground rules for participation and let participants know that there are no right or wrong answers.
- Be open and transparent about what the goal of the session is and how the information will be used.
- Encourage all to participate and ensure that the group understands there may be differing views and opinions and they must respect one another's opinions and input.
- Try to engage all participants, not just the vocal ones. If this is challenging you can open up questions to the group with questions such as 'what does everyone else think' or ask participants to quietly reflect on the question or statements first and write down their answers before sharing. If some participants do not wish to engage verbally they should still be encouraged to participate either by writing or drawing their feedback on the sheets provided in this resource.



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#### Step 4 – after the session

- Ensure the resources and help line handouts are provided to each participant so they can seek further information or support after the session as some of the content discussed may be triggering.
- Report back to parents/carers and children and young people on how the information will be used to ensure they feel valued and hears.
- Thank the children and young people for their input and participation, let them know how valuable it is.



### Appendix 3:

## Empowerment tips for children and young people at the Y

Sitting down with children and young people to and involving them in the development of rules, guidelines, policy etc. – asking them about what makes them feel safe and unsafe?  
For example: Draw a map of your site/camp/school  
Ask children to show where the safe areas are and identify if there are any unsafe areas.

Working together to planning and identifying the risks involved in an overnight camp – it is important to be aware that your views about safety may be different from those held by children and young people.  
For example: during your briefing prior to camp, brainstorm with those attending and ask them what some of the risks could be. You can do this in a group as well as using sticky notes where they can write things down in private and put them into a box.

Set up small groups and ask children/young people how we at the Y can ensure that we hear children/young people's thoughts, ideas, and voices.  
(Their ideas may impress you)  
For example: at the commencement of a program ask participants if they have any ideas in relation to activities, food served or celebrations that they would like to be part of during the time.

Create or involve young people to set up a poll through their favourite social media platform to gather the views of others.  
For example: ask the young people to develop a questionnaire that will help gather the views of others, support them to drive it.

Develop feedback boards in different ways that are fun and interesting  
For example: drawings, pictures, speech bubbles  
Ask children and young people what ideas they have to find out how they feel.

Set up an advisory group that can have a range of functions  
For example: a group that can provide advice to management, representing important issues, organising child friendly events or contributing to projects.



## **Appendix 4:**

### **Consent Template**

At the Y we value and respect the opinions of children and young people and want them to feel and be heard. This is why we are conducting focus groups around the <insert topic>. We would like to know how children and young people think and feel about the <insert topic>.

The <insert Y Association/Centre> will be speaking to children and young people on <insert date and time> and run for <insert duration>.

The topics discussed will be age appropriate and will allow the children and young people an opportunity to participate in whichever way they feel comfortable.

**\*\*If sensitive topics\*\*** We understand that some children and young people may find these topics sensitive, if any child or young person becomes overwhelmed or upset they will be assisted by the facilitator(s) and appropriate support measures put in place following the session.

The information collected from these sessions will be collated and sent to <insert Y Association/Centre>.

I give permission to the Y, to discuss the above topics with my children in a sensitive and productive manner. Children and young people will be given the opportunity to leave the session if they feel overwhelmed or need assistance and will be made aware their participation is voluntary. The Y will provide take home resources should they wish to receive further support or assistance.

Participant Name \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Carer Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Number \_\_\_\_\_

### **PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS FORM MUST BE RETURNED TO <insert Y Centre> PRIOR TO ATTENDANCE**

Privacy Statement: The YMCA acknowledges and respects the privacy of individuals. The information that is being collected on this form is for the purpose of permitting the YMCA to discuss the above topics with your child. The information collected will not be used for any marketing, mail out or other use. The intended recipients of this form are the YMCA, its authorised staff and service providers. You have the right to access and alter personal information concerning yourself, your children and/or team members whose details appear on this standard release form.

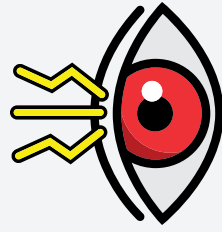
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Office Use Only



EVERYONE HAS THE RIGHT TO FEEL AND BE SAFE.

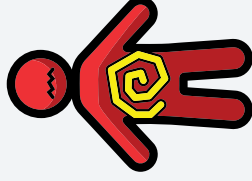
IF YOU:



**SEE**  
SOMETHING



**HEAR**  
SOMETHING



**FEEL**  
SOMETHING



**TELL SOMEONE**



Talk to someone you trust at the YMCA  
Write it down, Send a text, call or Email



133 000 777

PO BOX 123 YMCA



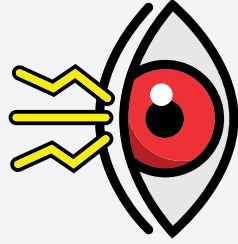
Janedoe@ymca.gov.au

03 123 456

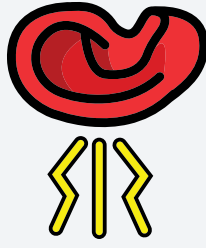


EVERYONE HAS THE RIGHT TO FEEL AND BE SAFE.

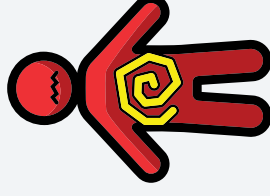
IF YOU



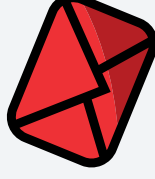
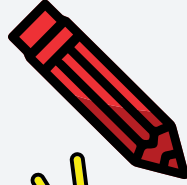
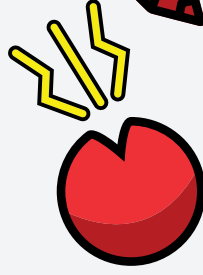
**SEE**  
SOMETHING



**HEAR**  
SOMETHING



**FEEL**  
SOMETHING



**TELL SOMEONE**



Talk to someone you trust at the YMCA  
Write it down, Send a text, call or Email



133 000 777



PO BOX 123 YMCA



Janedoe@ymca.gov.au

03 123 456

## 1.4 Values and Behaviours

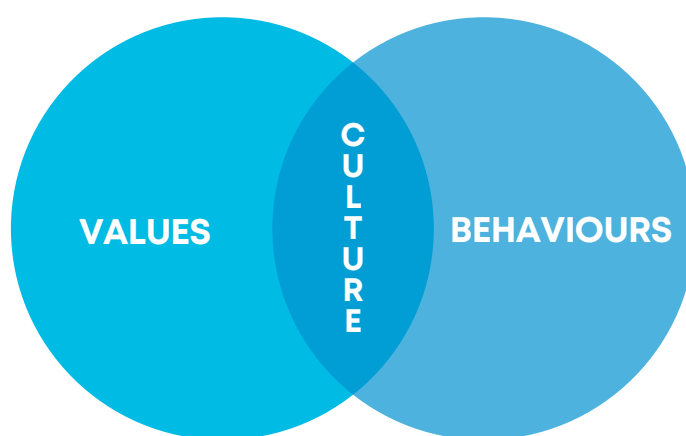
**Introduction:** At the Y we provide opportunities for children and young people to grow in mind, body and spirit. Our values and behaviours underpin this and ensure we are always doing things the Y way.

[National Principle 10 - policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.](#)

[Safeguarding Children and Young People Licensing Standards: 1.18, 1.19 and 1.20.](#)

Values – our beliefs, at the core of how we behave and act, not necessarily visible.

Behaviours – actions, what we do to turn our values into reality, hold us accountable and are visible.



At the Y we have six (6) values that drive what we do and how we turn our belief in the power of inspired young into a reality. These values are:

- The whole person, consisting of a body, a mind and a spirit each of which is of equal importance;
- The dignity and intrinsic worth of all people regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, belief or other difference;
- Diversity of people, communities and nations;
- Equality of opportunity and justice for all people;
- Healthy communities based on relationships between people which are characterised by love, understanding and mutual respect; and
- Acceptance of personal responsibility.

These values underpin our behaviours and build our culture at the Y – it is part of who we are and what we do. These values, and in turn our behaviours guide everything we do at the Y and are embedded in our policies, procedures and practices to ensure we are all accountable to our actions.



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WATCH THE  
VIDEO

Each Member Y should have a Code of Conduct (including Safe Behaviours) that reflects these values and embeds our safeguarding commitment. However we know that a Code of Conduct alone does not build culture, the below also needs to sit alongside this for good culture to occur.

- Clear language that explains what is appropriate behaviour and how Y People are expected to behave in their role at the Y;
- Y People need to feel empowered to speak up when someone behaviour doesn't align with our values and/or is against their Code of Conduct/Safe Behaviours e.g. this can be as simple as dressing outside of the required uniform or dress code all the way up to reporting safeguarding concerns ;
- Y People feel and are supported when they challenge behaviour that is against our values and/or their Code of Conduct (Safe Behaviours);
- Appropriate boundaries should be defined around how Y People communicate with children and young people on social media, by phone or SMS etc;
- Education and training see ['Training' section of this chapter](#);
- Regular communication and reference to our values and/or your Y Code of Conduct across all levels of the Y – this includes children and young people and their families; and
- Performance management against our values (and behaviours) and/or Code of Conduct ([See People section 2.1 of the operations chapter](#)).



### QUICK TIP!

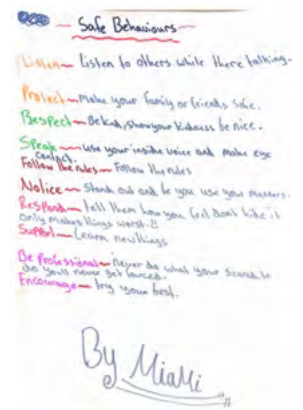
Y Safeguarding have developed our national Safe Behaviours that align with our values and safeguarding commitment. There are three posters for Y People to use including a child and teen friendly version. Please see the Appendices below.





## CASE STUDY

In 2020, Y Ballarat ran a project to test the Safe Behaviours with Children and Young People. They gained some extremely valuable feedback that helped shape the final Safe Behaviours posters. Take a look at some of the great artwork they produced below!



### Appendices:

1. [Safe Behaviours Poster](#)
2. [Safe Behaviours Poster \(child friendly version\)](#)
3. [Safe Behaviours Poster \(teen version\)](#)





# Safe Behaviours



At the Y we expect all Y People to:

- **Listen** and **respond** to the views of children, young people and their families. Hear what they have to say, no matter how big or small and always take them seriously
- **Protect** children and young people, put their safety first and do not cause harm in any environment – this includes online
- **Respect** and **support** all children and young people regardless of their backgrounds, everyone should be made to feel welcome and included
- **Speak** using clear language that is appropriate to children and young people
- **Act** within the laws, regulations, policies and procedures and set a positive example for others
- **Be aware** of signs that may indicate abuse or harm to children and young people and notice if they aren't themselves or things don't seem right
- **Respond** appropriately to any suspected or disclosed abuse or harm to children and young people (and reporting concerns to relevant government agencies as required by law)
- **Empower** children and young people - this includes allowing them to do personal things for themselves
- **Encourage** children and young people to be the best they can be without showing any favouritism
- **Be professional** and **respect the boundaries** of your role at the Y – Y People should not be left alone with a child or young person (this includes transportation) or have any contact outside the Y's programs or facility-unless approved by their Member Y's Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Version 2 - Aug, 2021



# Safe Behaviours



At the Y, you can expect adults who work here to:

**Listen** carefully to you, and always take what you say seriously

**Protect** you, and keep you safe from harm - anywhere, and at any time

**Respect** and **support** you, and always make you feel welcome and included

**Speak** to you using words that you can understand

**Follow the rules**, and set a good example for others

**Notice** if you are not feeling ok, or if you have been hurt

**Respond** quickly if they think you have been hurt, or need help

**Support** you to feel good about yourself by giving you new things to do and learn

**Be professional** and never do anything that makes you feel scared or uncomfortable

**Encourage** you to be the best you can



Version 2 - Aug, 2021

**Y Safeguarding**  
Feel Safe, Be Safe

e: [safe@ymca.org.au](mailto:safe@ymca.org.au) w: [ymca.org.au/safe](http://ymca.org.au/safe)





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## 1.5 Education and Training

**Introduction:** At the Y we ensure all Y People are equipped with the knowledge, skills and behaviours required for the work or engagement they do. All Y People must be aware of their responsibilities to ensure we keep children and young people safe. This element will provide an overview of the levels of education and training required for various roles at the Y.

[National Principle 7 - staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.](#)

[Safeguarding Children and Young People Licensing Standards: 1.21 and 1.22.](#)

### Education and Training at the Y

To protect children and young people from harm, and help improve their wellbeing, all Y People must receive education and training incorporating the relevant training competencies for their role. The competencies relate to an individual's role and apply to all Y People delivering, or working in settings which provide services to children and young people.

Safeguarding competencies are the set of abilities that enable Y People to effectively safeguard, protect and promote the welfare of children and young people. They are a combination of skills, knowledge, behaviours and values that are required for safe and effective practice. Different groups require different levels of competence depending on their role, their level of contact with children and young people, the nature of their work and their level of responsibility.

The Y's Safeguarding Competency Model ([Appendix 1](#)), Workforce Training Summary ([Appendix 2](#)) and Workforce Training Plan ([Appendix 3](#)) outlines the competencies required by all Y People. The Model outlines the skills, knowledge and behaviours needed of Y People to safeguard, support and empower children and young people when in our programs and services. All Y People must complete the [Feel Safe Be Safe Training](#) (online) and those with direct contact with children and young people must complete the Safe Behaviours training (face to face).

Y Safeguarding have also developed the [Stay Safe Online Tell Someone](#) Program thanks to grant funding received from the eSafety Commissioner. This is a great program that Y People can either complete themselves or promote to children and young people about how to stay safe online.

In 2021 Y Safeguarding ran a pilot of the Safe Behaviours training. If your Member Y would like further details of this training, please contact your local Safeguarding Lead or Y Safeguarding at [safe@ymca.org.au](mailto:safe@ymca.org.au).



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WATCH THE  
VIDEO

## Our Education & Training Priorities

### Y People live our values

Y Safeguarding, have developed world class, educational programs that reflect our values we are heroic, we are creative, we are nurturing and are rights based focused to empower all children and young people to feel safe and be safe at the Y, in their families and in their communities.



### Learning Culture

At the Y, we encourage all our Y People to learn from others within our movement and outside of our movement. We foster safe physical and psychological environments that promote ongoing reflective practice and learning for all. Forums and mentoring opportunities allow us to share effective practices and maximise impact.



### Evidence Informed Continual Improvement

At the Y, we recognise the value of continuous improvement and learning. So we take time to consult with our Member Y's to ensure we are providing the right training for our Y people to have the right knowledge and skills to uphold their legal responsibilities and perform their roles.



## Education and Training Model

### Governance System

Our Education and Training Model is underpinned by our Governance system. Our governance system is principle and rights based and embeds:

- UN Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child;
- National Child Safe Principles;
- the Y Safeguarding Children and Young People Licensing Standards; and
- the Y Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy.

### The Ecological System

The Social Ecological Model brings together the cultural factors that frames the four (4) levels of societal influences that interact to actively participate in preventing abuse and championing the rights of all Children and Young People.



Figure 1: Social Ecological Model



## Our Commitment

We are committed to creating a safe culture that empowers Children and Young People and promotes intergenerational leadership and governance.

Our commitment to achieving a safeguarding culture comprises of:

### Education and Training

We commit to providing high quality Safeguarding Training by:

- Inducting all Y People appropriately using our Safeguarding Framework;
- Providing regular training, including refresher training to our Y People on how to keep Children and Young People safe using our Safeguarding Training Model as informed by our Safe Behaviours;
- Undertaking cultural sensitivity and awareness training as required by our role within the Y; and
- Encouraging our Y People to speak up and ask questions when they are unsure of their responsibilities.

### Empowering

We commit to empowering all Children and Young People that we come in to contact with by:

- Listening to and consulting with them;
- Delivering our stay safe Tell Someone Program;
- Amplifying their voice in a true, genuine intergenerational approach; and
- Providing them information about Safeguarding commitments.

### Continuous Improvement

We commit to continuous improvement by:

- Learning form international and national best practice;
- Sharing safeguarding data and reviewing safeguarding cases to reduce future risk and inform future practice; and
- Regularly reviewing all our safeguarding practices.



## Education and Training Systems

Our training systems and educational delivery model comprises of a mix of:

- Face to Face;
- Online; and
- Communities of Impact.

We acknowledge the lasting trauma that abuse and harm may have on some Y People and have developed adaptive modules to ensure an empathetic approach to the sensitive nature of material and content is accessible for any Y Person if needed.

### Best Practice

We will consult with and engage leading experts and people with lived experience to offer best practice approaches and up to date information.

### Workforce Training Plan

We commit to up-skilling all our Y People to be leaders in the protection and prevention of harm and abuse of any child or young person.

The training plan embeds the highest standards of behaviour and conduct required by all our Y People and reflects our values:

- Heroic;
- Creative; and
- Nurturing.

Through the design and delivery of our training our Y People are up skilled to act as prevention agents at all levels of the organisation.

The Y Safeguarding Workforce Training Plan aligns with the:

- Y Safeguarding Children and Young People Licensing Standard 1.22; and
- Y Safeguarding Competency Model.



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## Mandatory Training

Our Y People are required to complete all mandatory training within designated time frames. The following mandatory training modules have been developed and are required to be refreshed within each designated cycle.

### Year 1

- Induction
- Feel Safe Be Safe (refreshed every three-year cycle)
  - Core Module
  - State/Territory Reporting Module
  - Service Line Module
- Stay Safe Tell Someone
- Board Safeguarding (Board Members Only)

### Year 2

- Safe Behaviours

### Year 3

- Online Advanced Safeguarding

## Ongoing training

Our ongoing commitment is intrinsically linked to our Education and Training Priorities. The following professional development training modules have been developed and shall be agreed and written into Y people's Annual Performance Plan respective of their role and time at the Y.

The training suite comprises of:

- Stay Safe Online Tell Someone
- Safe Recruitment
- Complaint Handling and Risk Assessment
- Advanced Safeguarding (Train the Trainer)



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## Record Keeping

All Member Y's should keep records of participation to ensure all Y People attend induction and refresher safeguarding training. We also ensure that Y People who have specific child safeguarding responsibilities, such as those appointed to the role of Safeguarding Leads receive ongoing support and professional development relevant to their role.

### **References:**

[Responding to children and young people's disclosures of abuse | Child Family Community Australia \(aifs.gov.au\)](https://aifs.gov.au)

### **Appendices:**

1. [The Y's Safeguarding Competency Model](#)
2. [Workforce Training Summary Table](#)
3. [Workforce Training Plan Model](#)
4. [Responding to a child or young person's disclosure of abuse](#)
5. [Signs and indicators of abuse](#)





## Competency Model

All Y People are required to promote the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people, even when their role does not come into contact with children and young people. The Model below outlines the required competency Y People are expected to meet. Y People can meet the competency through a range of methods including, e-learning, face to face learning, shadowing/mentoring, reflective practice, reading and many other means.

| Group  | Competency   |   |
|--|--|---|
| <b>A – all Y People</b>  | A1   | Recognise the Y's Safeguarding Framework  |
|  | A2   | State the forms and indicators of abuse   |
|  | A3   | State the impact of abuse on children, young people and the Y   |
|  | A4   | Able to manage a disclosure of abuse  |
|  | A5   | Demonstrates an awareness and understanding of reporting and reportable conduct schemes and their obligations under these schemes (where applicable - ACT, NSW and VIC) |
|  | A6   | Knowledge of the safeguarding structure at the Y, including YI Safeguarding and Local Safeguarding Lead   |
|  | A7   | Knowledge of Case Study 2 from the Royal Commission   |
|  | A8   | Can document safeguarding concerns effectively  |
| <b>B – Y People who have direct contact with children and young people</b> | <b>Group B must meet all of the competencies listed in Group A and B</b> |   |
|  | B1   | Knowledge and understanding of safe behaviours and importance of boundaries when working with children and young people   |
|  | B2   | Recognise the importance of listening to, and empowering children and young people at the Y   |
|  | B3   | Understand the dynamics of offenders  |
|  | B4   | Ability and willingness to constructively, challenge processes or decisions so that the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people is promoted               |
|  | B5   | Know how to implement the Stay Safe, Tell Someone Program   |
|  | B6   | Be able to complete detailed safeguarding risk assessments including the development and implementation of suitable controls and treatments to reduce risks             |
|  | B7   | Know how to respond to complaints by prioritising the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people   |



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### C – Y Managers

#### Group C must meet all of the competencies listed in Group A, B and C

|    |  |
|----|--|
| C1 | Demonstrates an awareness and understanding of effective arrangements in place for the safer recruitment and appointment of Y People, contractors and volunteers, as well as safe whistleblowing |
| C2 | Ability to undertake safe recruitment practices including safer interviewing   |
| C3 | Ability to support or undertake a safeguarding workplace investigation including the ability to interview children and young people in a safe and evidential way (where applicable)              |
| C4 | Demonstrates clear lines of safeguarding accountability and governance within and across the Y   |
| C5 | Know how to undertake documented reviews of your own (and/or team) safeguarding practice as appropriate to the role (where applicable)   |
| C6 | Ability to ensure that the views of children, young people and their families are central to all programs and services   |
| C7 | Ability to deliver safeguarding training to the workforce (where applicable)   |

### D – Executive Leaders and Board Members

#### Group D must meet all of the competencies listed in Group A, B, C and D

|    |  |
|----|--|
| D1 | Have a strategic understanding of safeguarding across the Y and ensuring safeguarding is embedded at the strategic level across the Member Y Association             |
| D2 | Ensures children, young people, families and communities are involved in key strategic decision making   |
| D3 | Ability to develop and implement comprehensive strategic safeguarding risk management policies and processes   |
| D4 | Ability to promote intergenerational leadership  |
| D5 | Lead or oversee safeguarding quality assurance and improvement processes   |
| D6 | Understands how to commission providers and services in line with good safeguarding governance and that contractual arrangements adhere to the Y Safeguarding Policy |
| D7 | Demonstrates an awareness and understanding of effective board level leadership for the organisations safeguarding arrangements (where applicable)                   |

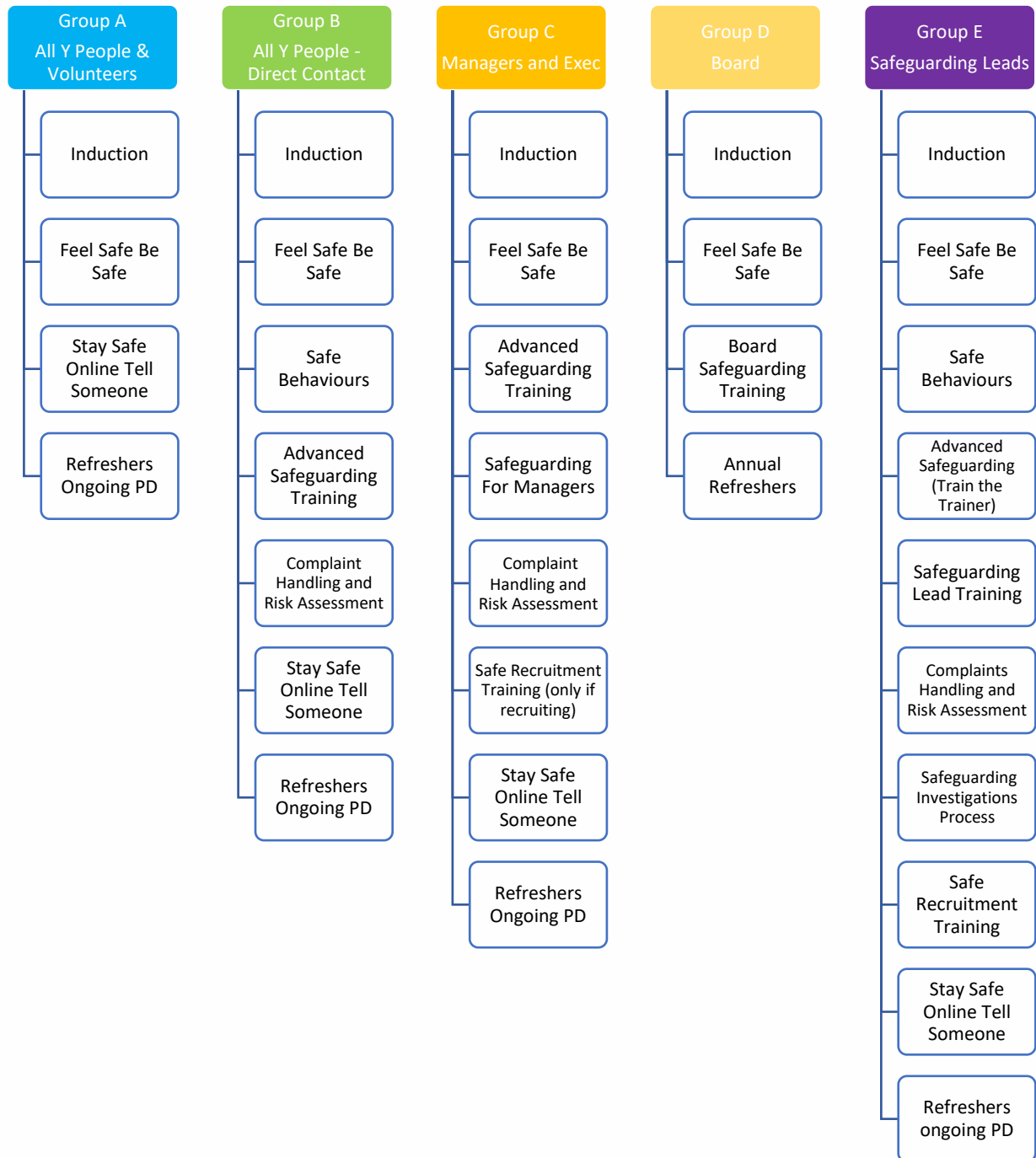


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# Safeguarding Workforce Training Plan

| Training Module Name  | Who completes it  | Course Summary  | Competencies   | When needs to be completed   | Training Delivery   |
|---|---|---|--|--|---|
| Feel Safe Be Safe<br><i>(Including the Supported Delivery and On-site Deliver Alternatives)</i><br><br>*Including U18s, those living with a disability and volunteers | All Y People  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Core Module covering 6 R's of Safeguarding</li> <li>Reporting Responsibilities</li> <li>Service specific scenarios and assessments</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A1</li> <li>A2</li> <li>A4</li> <li>A5</li> <li>A6</li> <li>A8</li> </ul> | Mandatory<br>Within 30 days from start date<br>week of employment<br>Refreshed within every three year cycle | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Online</li> <li>U18, those living with a disability and volunteers have face to face option</li> </ul> |
| Safe Behaviors  | Y People in child facing roles (direct contract with children and young people) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finkelhor Model</li> <li>Expected Safe Behaviours</li> <li>Code of Conduct</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>B1</li> <li>B2</li> <li>B3</li> <li>B4</li> </ul>                         | Additional Training<br>Within first 12 months of employment  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Face to Face</li> </ul>  |
| Stay Safe Tell Someone  | All Y People  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nudge Theory</li> <li>See Something, Hear Something, Feel Something – Tell Someone</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>B1</li> <li>B2</li> </ul>   | Mandatory<br>Within first week of employment, then at least annually   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Video</li> <li>Posters</li> <li>Session Plans</li> </ul>   |
| Stay Safe Online Tell Someone   | Children and Young People, Y People, Families and Communities                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Education and awareness of eSafety in English and Chinese</li> <li>Age specific training               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8-12yrs</li> <li>13-17yrs</li> <li>Adults</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A5</li> </ul>   | Optional<br>Ongoing PD   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Online</li> </ul>  |

## Appendix 3 – Workforce Training Plan Model



## **Appendix 4: Responding to disclosures of child abuse**

### **Responding to a child or young person's disclosure of abuse**

If a child or young person discloses abuse that has been perpetrated by someone associated with the Y it is important to follow your local Y's responding to safeguarding concerns protocol as well as make a report to the relevant statutory child protection department in your state/territory. The reporting requirements do differ between each state/territory so ensure you are across your local legislation.

For example, in the Northern Territory all adults are required to report their concerns when they have reasonable grounds to believe that a child has suffered or is suffering maltreatment.

When a child or young person discloses abuse it is important to understand their needs and welfare take priority over any perceived threat to the reputation of the organisation or associated individuals (Irenyi et al., 2006). The main objective is to support them and prevent any further harm.

If a child or young person discloses abuse that is occurring, or has occurred, outside of the Y, you should support the child or young person by believing them and reassuring them that telling you was the right thing to do. You should keep information confidential, only those people who must know should be informed of the disclosure.

It is important to remember that while it is your role to be a supportive listener, it is not your role to counsel the child or young person or investigate their claims. Child protection workers will undertake investigations and professional counsellors are available to provide counselling.

### **At the point of disclosure**

When a child discloses that they have been abused, it is an opportunity for you to provide immediate support and comfort. It is also a chance to help the child or young person connect to professional services that can keep them safe, provide support and facilitate their recovery from trauma. Disclosure is about seeking support and your response can have a great impact on the child or young person's ability to seek further help and recover from the trauma.

### **When might a child or young person disclose**

Children and young people can disclose abuse at any time. If the abuse is ongoing over a period of weeks, months or years, they may disclose while the abuse is happening. Others might disclose after the abuse has ended or years later. Many children and young people do not disclose abuse at all during childhood (London, Bruck, Ceci, & Shuman, 2005; Ullman, 2003). Delays in disclosure may be linked to a range of factors including concerns regarding the consequences of disclosing, such as continued physical harm or threats of death.



It is important to remember that an initial, informal disclosure is important and may help with trust and any future investigation as well as future disclosures if handled appropriately.

## **How children and young people disclose abuse**

A child or young person's disclosure is rarely straightforward and they can disclose abuse in several ways. Many of the ways children and young people disclose abuse are indirect or accidental. Changes in behaviour or vague statements can be attempts to disclose.

Examples include a child or young person suddenly refusing to attend the house of a previously loved relative, or saying and doing sexual things that are inappropriate for their age, self-harming, and suicidal behaviour or disordered eating.

Some children and young people may disclose when asked or after participating in a personal safety education program. Others may initially deny that they have been abused if asked directly, or say that they forget, only to disclose later. Children and young people may disclose, only to retract what they have said later due to the pressure and reactions of the people around them, however, this is relatively uncommon.

There are a number of reasons for children and young people to retract or delay their disclosure, including:

- pressure or threats from the perpetrator;
- relationship to the perpetrator;
- expected consequences of telling (e.g., physical injury/death, family separation, parental distress);
- pressure from the child's family;
- fear of negative reactions from parents or family;
- fear of not being believed;
- feelings of embarrassment, shame and self-blame; and/or
- for males specifically: fears of stigmatisation, being labelled a victim or being labelled homosexual.

If you have suspicions that abuse is occurring, even if you are unsure, it is better to report your suspicions than to do nothing.

## **What to do during the disclosure**

A child or young person might not always choose the best location to begin talking about what happened to them. If you are in a busy and/or noisy place, ask the child or young person if you can move to a place where you can hear them properly. While remaining sensitive to the child or young person's needs, let them know that you want to be able to give them your full attention and follow the below points.



## **1. Maintain a calm appearance**

A disclosure of child abuse may evoke strong feelings for you, it can be overwhelming. Although it may be difficult, it is important you remain calm and be patient. Allow time for the child or young person to trust that they will be listened to and helped. If the child or young person becomes aware of your distress, reassure them that they are not the cause of the distress. You can explain that you are upset because adults are meant to care for children and young people and you are sad because some adults hurt children.

## **2. Don't be afraid of saying the "wrong" thing**

If a child or young person has revealed to you that they have been or are being abused, it is a sign that they trust you and that simply speaking to you will be helpful. Try not to be distracted by needing to know exactly the "right" thing to say. As long as you listen supportively then the child or young person will benefit from talking to you.

## **3. Reassure the child or young person that it is right to tell**

Address any concerns about the child or young person's safety, particularly if they fear potential consequences of disclosing. It is vital that the child or young person knows that the abuse, and anything that happens afterwards, are the responsibility of the perpetrator for committing the abuse, not them for disclosing. For example, if parents separate after a disclosure of child abuse, the child or young person needs frequent reassurance it was not their fault.

## **4. Accept that the child or young person will disclose only what is comfortable and recognise the bravery/strength of the child for talking about something that is difficult**

It is important that children and young people disclosing abuse feel in control of their situation. This is to counter the experience and loss of control caused by the abuse. It is also important to acknowledge the child's bravery and strength in talking about something that is difficult. It is possible to gently prompt with questions such as: "Can you tell me more about that?" but it is best not to press the child or young person for details.

## **5. Let the child or young person take his or her time**

Disclosing is difficult for children and young people and something they may only be able to do a little at a time. Allow the child or young person to take their time to speak. It is important that the child or young person does not feel rushed or panicked and that you have plenty of time to soothe and reassure them. For those who disclose indirectly, be mindful that this process may take several days or weeks. During this time it is possible to gently and occasionally let them know that you will listen to anything they have to say when they are ready.



While it is important that the child or young person has control over the process, this must also be balanced with their safety, and the safety of other children or young people. If the child or young person has not disclosed but you have reasonable grounds to suspect abuse, you may need to go to the police or child protection authorities in your state/territory. You do not necessarily have to have a full disclosure to go to the authorities and can discuss concerns without making a formal report.

## **6. Let the child or young person use his or her words**

Children and young people have their own way of describing their experiences. It can be useful to clarify what they mean but it is important not to assume you and the child or young person mean exactly the same thing. Let the child or young person know it is okay to use any words they want to or to say whatever they need to.

Quizzing the child or young person for details or asking them to repeat their story a number of times can create the impression you doubt what they have said. Any questions asked should be relatively general and aimed at prompting just enough information in order to work out what action is required and which authority should be contacted.

## **7. Don't make promises you can't keep**

A child or young person might ask you to promise secrecy before disclosing. Such a promise should not be made. By telling the child or young person: "I can't make that promise, but I can tell you I will do my best to keep you safe", you can reassure them, manage expectations, and encourage them to speak out about abuse.

## **8. Let the child or young person know what you will do next**

When explaining to a child or young person what you will do next, it is important to ensure they understand. Advise the child or young person that in order for them to be safe they will need to talk to another person (police or child protection) about their experience and that you will support them through that experience. Let the child or young person know they can ask about what will happen next as often as needed.

In an overwhelming situation, information can be hard for children and young people to retain and they may need reminding. Only reveal the disclosure to others where it is absolutely necessary. If you believe that you need to discuss the disclosure with others outside the police or child protection authority (e.g., a school counsellor, the school principal, etc.) let the child or young person know. Child abuse often leaves children and young people feeling disempowered and lacking control in their own life. Making sure the child or young person is fully aware of each step can make the process less intimidating and can help return a sense of power and safety.



## 9. Do not confront the perpetrator

Remember, it is the role of the authorities to investigate. Your role is to support the child or young person. It is imperative you do not confront the perpetrator of any type of abuse or discuss the child or young person's disclosure with them. This could create a potential risk for the child or young person's safety. Confronting an alleged perpetrator of sexual or other types of abuse should only be done by professional child protection workers or the police.

### In summary, it is important to:

1. listen to and support the child or young person;
2. reassure the child or young person they did the right thing;
3. not make promises you can't keep; and
4. contact the appropriate authorities.



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## Appendix 5: Signs and indicators of abuse

| Physical Abuse   | Emotional abuse  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bruises in unlikely places (face, back, ears, hands, buttocks, upper thighs and soft parts of the body) (any bruising on a baby)</li><li>• Inconsistent or absent explanation of bruises</li><li>• Pressure marks from fingers on the face, chest or back</li><li>• Skull fracture, subdural bleeding, multiple fractures of different ages</li><li>• Suspicious burns</li><li>• Ingestion of poisonous substances including alcohol or drugs</li><li>• The child or young person seems frightened of a parent or carer, or seems afraid to go home</li><li>• Delay between being injured and getting medical help</li><li>• The child or young person seems frightened of a parent or carer, or seems afraid to go home</li><li>• Female Genital Mutilation</li><li>• The child or young person reports intentional injury by their parent or carer</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Avoiding home (particularly if the abuser is in the family home)</li><li>• Running away or continually staying at friend's houses</li><li>• Fear of the dark, not wanting to go to bed, bedwetting or nightmares</li><li>• Lying or stealing</li><li>• Lack of trust in adults</li><li>• Poor self-image/self-esteem, poor academic performance, poor peer relationships</li><li>• Secretive, demanding or disruptive behaviour.</li></ul> <p>Possible signs of psychological abuse are similar to the ones for emotional abuse.</p>   |
| Neglect  | Sexual Abuse   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Failure to thrive</li><li>• Developmental delay</li><li>• Prone to illness</li><li>• Shallow or sickly appearance</li><li>• Abnormally high appetite, stealing or hoarding food</li><li>• Smelly or dirty appearance</li><li>• Untreated medical conditions</li><li>• Being left unsupervised for long periods</li><li>• Frequent illness, infections or sores</li></ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fear of being alone with a particular person</li><li>• Child or young person implies that they have to keep secrets</li><li>• Inappropriate knowledge about sex for their age or inappropriate sexual behaviour</li><li>• Genital injuries</li><li>• They tell you</li><li>• Fearful of having their nappy changed.</li><li>• Sexually transmitted diseases</li><li>• Persistent soiling or bed wetting</li><li>• Sleep disturbance</li><li>• Promiscuous affection seeking behaviour</li><li>• Excessive masturbation which does not respond to boundaries or discipline</li><li>• Obsessive and compulsive washing</li></ul> |



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## Family and Domestic Violence

- Depression, crying, low self-esteem
- Low self-esteem
- Anxiety
- Poor coping mechanisms
- Suicidal thoughts
- Eating disorders
- Self-harm
- Substance abuse
- Injuries which are excused as 'accidents'
- Constant and abrupt absences from school
- Receiving recurrent, troublesome phone calls from the parent(s)
- A fear of the parent
- Changes in personal behaviours (e.g. an outgoing student becomes withdrawn)
- an extreme fear of conflict
- The need for assertiveness
- Tendencies towards isolation and avoidance of friends and family
- Insufficient means to live (money, food, clothing)

Family and domestic violence is strongly associated with child abuse and neglect.

It is more likely that a child's basic needs will not be met in a family where there is domestic violence occurs.

## Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is a type of sexual abuse involving control of a child through force, threats or manipulation. It can happen to both boys and girls. Often, the first step is someone befriending a young person to gain their trust or have control over them.

Children can be groomed online or in the real world, by a stranger or by someone they know.

An abuser can be any age, even the same age as the child.

Victims are often tricked into thinking their abuser is a friend or even a 'boyfriend'.

1. Unhealthy or inappropriate sexual behaviour
2. Being frightened of some people, places or situations
3. Bring secretive
4. Sharp changes in mood or character
5. Having money or things they can't or won't explain
6. Physical signs of abuse, like bruises or bleeding in their genital or anal area
7. Alcohol or drug misuse
8. Sexually transmitted infections
9. Pregnancy

When a child is sexually exploited online they might be persuaded or forced to:

- Send or post sexually explicit images of themselves
- Film or stream sexual activities
- Have sexual conversations.



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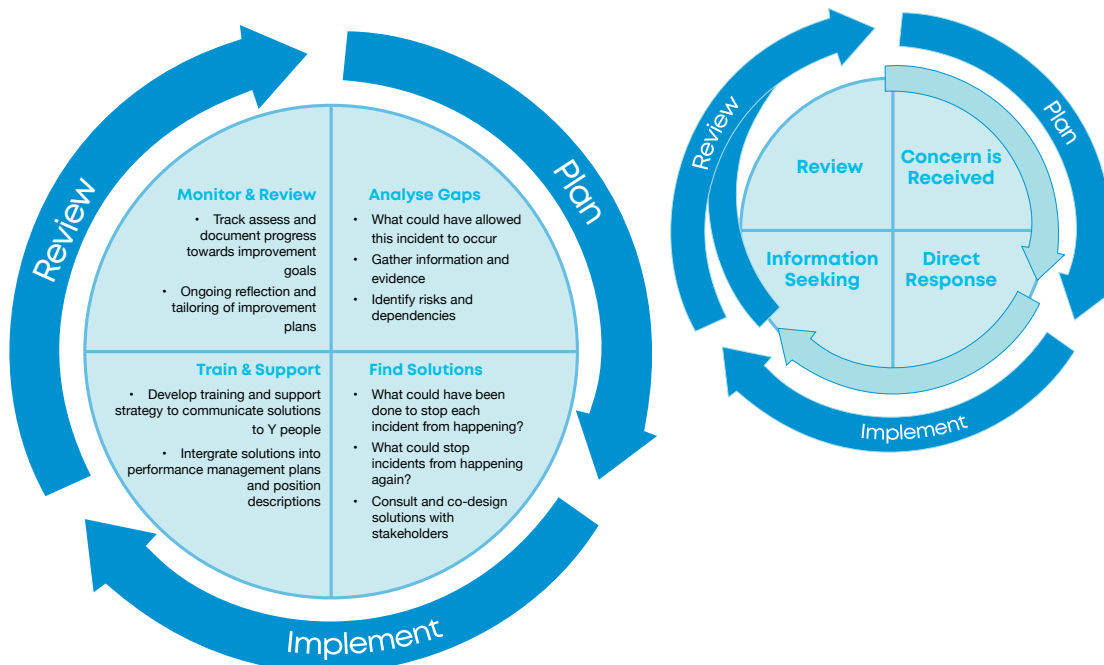
## 1.6 Continuous Improvement

**Introduction:** At the Y, we embrace all opportunities to improve our processes, programs and services. As informed by feedback from Y People, children and young people and the community, the Y takes a collaborative approach to lessons learnt.

National Principle 9 - implementation of the National Child Safe Principles is regularly reviewed and improved.

Children and Young People Licensing Standards: 1.23 and 1.24.

Safeguarding is a contemporary and constantly changing field in Australia and we are all striving to build upon the great work of our Member Ys to ensure that we are consistently growing to meet our evolving operating environments. This includes learning from previous complaints and concerns. The following is the foundation of the Y National Continuous Improvement Framework:



For information on how to manage disclosures, please see [Appendix 2](#) under section [1.5 Education and Training](#).

The information submitted by children and young people about their experiences is invaluable to the continuous assessment and review of our programs and services.

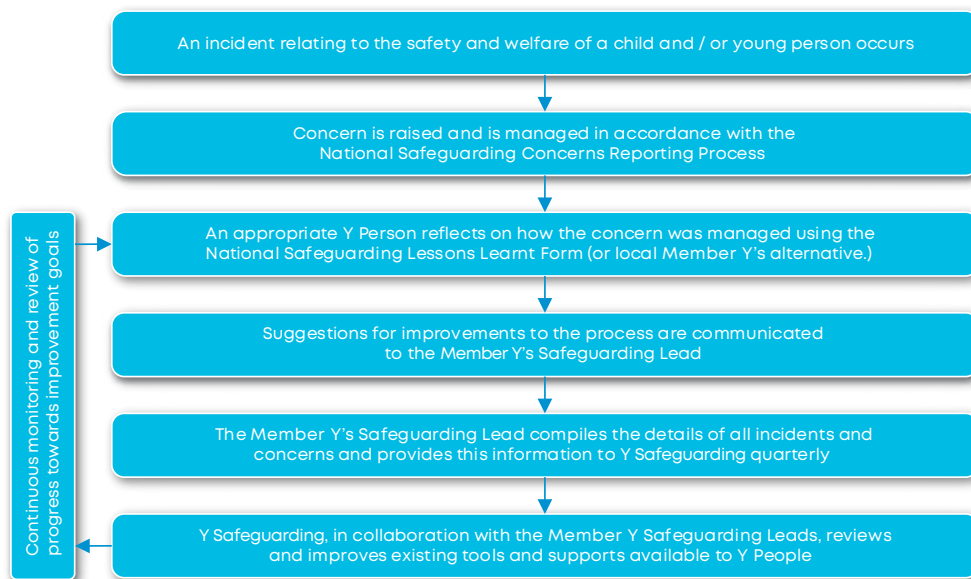


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## Continuous Improvement Process



## Lessons Learnt Template

Y Safeguarding has developed a Continuous Improvement and Lessons Learnt Template to support Y People to consider the right information when reviewing how a concern has been managed. This also supports Y People to determine areas of improvement. Please see the Lessons Learnt Template at [Appendix 1](#).

## Tips and Tricks

For complaints or concerns that relate to a Y Person, continuous improvement is achieved by reviewing the Y Person's behaviour with their management.

Under a performance management process, the Manager is encouraged to engage with the Y Person to discuss the incident. During this process, the Y Person will be supported to identify what they had done that resulted in the concern or complaint- and how they can avoid repeating it.

If this is a severe complaint or concern and this results in the termination of the Y Person's employment or engagement with the Y, the Manager will explain why this has happened. This allows for complete transparency and allows the former Y Person to improve their behaviour elsewhere.

To take a national approach to continuous improvement within safeguarding, the Safeguarding Children and Young People Licensing Standards require Member Ys are to report complaints and concerns to Y Safeguarding each quarter. This allows Y Safeguarding to identify areas for improvement nationally and to address these through the development of tailored resources and training.



**Appendix 1:**

## **Continuous Improvement and Lessons Learnt Form Safeguarding Concerns Procedure**

The Y is committed to safeguarding all children and young people. We strive to ensure all children and young people can be safe and feel safe, valued, heard and respected at the Y, in their families and their communities.

This review form helps us to continuously build upon our safeguarding processes to ensure that we are always improving.

Member Ys are encouraged to use this form to review all Critical and Major Concerns.

The form includes macros, including drop down boxes, to make it easier to complete. Instructions between these symbols [ ] let you know what needs to be entered into each box- these can be replaced by clicking on them to highlight, then entering in the information.

If you would like support in completing this form, please contact [Y Safeguarding](#).

|                                |                              |                                |                            |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Date:                          | Select date here             | ConcernReference No:           | [Y Safeguarding to insert] |
| Member Y Association:          | Select Association           | Location:                      |                            |
| Submitted by:                  | [Insert your name here]      | [Insert your title here]       |                            |
| Contact Details:               | [Insert phone number here]   | [Insert email address here]    |                            |
| Date of Concern:               | Select date here.            |                                |                            |
| Description of Concern:        | [Y Safeguarding to complete] |                                |                            |
| Original contact for Incident: | [Insert your name here]      | [Insert title of contact here] |                            |
| Contact Details:               | [Insert phone number here]   | [Insert email address here]    |                            |
| Description of Event:          |                              |                                |                            |
|                                |                              |                                |                            |



|  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| What actions were taken when the concern occurred:   |                  |
| •  |                  |
| Was this referred to any third parties?  |                  |
| [Choose an item]   |                  |
| •  |                  |
| What follow-up or longer term action was taken?  |                  |
| •  |                  |
| How do you feel you responded to the event?  |                  |
| •  |                  |
| Please rate your response to the event:  | [Choose an item] |
| Do you feel you were given adequate tools or support to manage this concern?                             |                  |
| Include details of any forms, guidance documents or fact sheets that helped you through the process      |                  |
| •  |                  |
| Please rate your response to the event:  | [Choose an item] |
| What have you put in place to prevent similar concerns from occurring again?                             |                  |
| •  |                  |
| What additional tools or support could better support you to manage this process?                        |                  |
| •  |                  |
| Would you like a member of Y Safeguarding to contact you to discuss your responses?                      |                  |
| [Choose an item]   |                  |
| Please note that we may need to call you either way depending on the information submitted in this form. |                  |





## Operations

This chapter covers the practical things we do to keep children and young people safe across the Y. This includes the people we hire, policies, procedures and practices as well as what to do when something goes wrong.

The elements under this chapter cover some day to day aspects of what we do at the Y to keep children and young people safe, and things to consider when performing these operations.

## 2.1 People

**Introduction:** To keep children and young people safe we need to make sure our team are the right fit for the job. This is why we have developed the below practices to ensure we find the right people to join our Y community.

[National Principle 5 - people working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing in practice.](#)

[Safeguarding Children and Young People Licensing Standards: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9, 2.10, 2.11, 2.12, 2.13, 2.14 and 2.15.](#)

### Recruitment

There are steps you can take before you bring someone on board that can help safeguard children and young people, this begins right back at the start when advertising the role.

It should be noted when recruiting volunteers, the volunteer matrix should be used and applied accordingly. This matrix sets the minimum standards when recruiting and vetting a volunteer at the Y, however Member Y's can always apply higher standards if they feel this is more suitable. You can view the volunteer matrix by clicking [here](#).

### Advertising the Role

When advertising the role it is important to show the Y's commitment to and promote safeguarding. The Y's Safeguarding Commitment Statement should be included in the advert to not only demonstrate we take safeguarding seriously, but to also deter any potential unsuitable candidates from applying.

The relevant background checks required for the role should also be included along with reference to our Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and any local Code of Conduct (Safe Behaviours), refer to [Appendix 1](#) for the Y's Safeguarding Commitment Statement for advertisements.

### Position Description

All staff and volunteers should have a clear position description that outlines their roles and responsibilities, qualifications, experience and attributes required for the particular role. It is also important to include the level of engagement that would be required when working with children and young people and emphasise their role as part of the Y in keeping all children and young people safe.

All position descriptions must include mandatory safeguarding responsibilities, please see [Appendix 2](#).



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PART 2

## Screening

Prior to interviewing potential candidates we need to see if they could be the right fit for the Y. An example vetting register template is available in [Appendix 13](#) - this template shows the minimum requirements however is not required to be used by Member Y's - a suitable alternative can be approved by Y Safeguarding.

## CV and Cover Letters

When shortlisting potential candidates, this is a good opportunity to look for 'red flags'. We need to be curious about any gaps in employment and question any potential boundary issues identified. If there are any parts of their working history that require further clarification, ensure these are raised in the next phase of the recruitment process with the candidate. We shouldn't make assumptions, there may be valid reasons for some areas of concern. An example CV with identified 'red flags' is available in [Appendix 3](#).



### CASE STUDY

Y Whittlesea have also developed a Recruitment Tip Sheet that you can adopt in your local Y – refer to [Appendix 4](#).

## Selection Criteria

Developing appropriate selection criteria ensures candidates have the required knowledge and skills for the position. The criteria should be child focused and provide opportunity for the candidate to demonstrate their understanding of appropriate behaviours when working with children and young people. This is also a good opportunity to introduce working with diverse needs of children and young people i.e. experience working with children and young people with a disability, culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds, into your selection criteria.



## Working with Children Checks (WWCC)

Prior to commencement all new staff and volunteers must hold a current WWCC in the state or territory they will be working in - If the relevant State or Territory allows them to apply. WWCC's are a good screening measure, however alone do not safeguard children and young people and is only one part of creating a child safe environment. The majority of offenders will not have previously detected records preventing them from working with children.

If a Y Person is legally allowed to start work with only the application of a WWCC, the associated risks should be managed accordingly using the template provided in [Appendix 5](#).

## National Police Check

A police check differs from the WWCC, it provides a list of any offences a person has committed prior to the date the certificate is granted.

Member Y's must ensure that a Police Check, obtained no earlier than 6 months prior, is obtained for each and all Y People, and is verified prior to their commencement. Where the Police Check is not obtained and verified prior to commencement, Member Y's are required to follow risk management strategies as set out in [Appendix 5](#) (i.e. limited child related duties or supervision). Details relating to the Y Person's attempt to obtain the check must also be recorded in their file.

If there is an adverse check that involves a child or young person related offence, this candidate is not suitable and this is non-negotiable. If there is another type of adverse check returned then a risk assessment must be completed using the appropriate risk assessment template ([Appendix 8](#)) as to whether the recruitment of the staff or volunteer continues. If it does, appropriate strategies must then be put in place to manage this risk.

## Things to consider regarding an adverse check include:

- The offence type
- Age of the applicant at the time of offence
- Time lapse since offence was committed
- Frequency of offences
- Individuals explanation of the offence



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## International Police Check

If a staff or volunteer has lived overseas for at least three (3) months in the last five (5) years, they are required to complete an international police check. This check should be obtained before they commence at the Y. Australia Post provides an online portal to support applications for international police checks for over 190 countries and territories here. <https://auspost.com.au/police-checks/international>

It is important to inform Y People who are required to obtain international police checks that the check should be translated into English and that that translation is verified as appropriate.

If an international police check cannot be obtained from a particular country, the candidate must obtain a statutory declaration that outlines effort made to obtain the check and the candidate must disclose any charges or convictions related to child abuse and exploitation.

In addition, in such circumstances, the relevant Member Y must:

- Ensure that appropriate checks are applied (i.e. these are not simply accepted without question)
- Periodically review the eligibility for the exemption (i.e. periodically checks that the country is still not providing checks)
- Ensure that, in the instance that a country may commence providing checks, a check is applied for within the week
- Ensure that recruitment of such candidates is approved at the Executive or CEO level with the understanding that the approver is responsible for determining any further risk controls relevant to the specific role
- Ensure that the candidate is supervised for the extent of their probation (minimum 3 months)
- Maintain a list of Y People whom the exemption applies
- Inform Y Australia of any changes relating to this consideration.

If there is an adverse result from this check, much like a National Police Check, a risk assessment form must be completed. Please visit the Feel Safe, Be Safe section of the Towards One Y page to view this form. Further information on managing an adverse check can also be found here - <https://www.nacro.org.uk/resettlement-advice-service/support-for-practitioners>

## Identity Check

Additional checks include verifying the candidate's identity to ensure they are who they say they are, this can be viewing their passport or drivers licence to check the name is the same. It is best practice to photocopy their identity check documents, sign, date and witness them and then keep them on record.



## Interviews

Ensure safeguarding questions are asked during the interview to assess the candidates' response to safeguarding questions, their approach to working with children and young people and any experience they may have working directly with children and young people. Mandatory safeguarding and values-based questions, along with key responses to look out for can be found on the [Y Extranet here](#).

It is important to be upfront and ask the candidate about any criminal convictions, formal disciplinary action taken against them or any findings of improper or unprofessional conduct. If the interview is face to face you can gauge their response to such questions and their level of professionalism around this. It is also important not to apologise before you ask such questions, often we can feel uncomfortable but apologising for them takes away from the importance of the issue. If you are unsure how to best ask this in an interview, reach out to your Member Ys Safeguarding Lead or Y Safeguarding at [safe@ymca.org.au](mailto:safe@ymca.org.au) for support or advice.

Best practice is to conduct a face to face interview where possible. However in certain circumstances this is not always possible, a skype or video conference interview is a good alternative here.

If there is a panel set up for the interview it is good to have a mix of diverse individuals, this can be in age, gender, background and organisational level from within the Y. You should also consider a young person being involved as they bring their perspective to the interview and allows you to see the candidate engage with a young person. If you do appoint a young person to the interview panel there are a few things to consider:

- Ensure they are adequately briefed
- Give them time to speak
- Engage them from the start of the process
- Listen to their concerns or any comments they may have

For more information please refer to section [1.1 Leadership](#) and [1.3 Empowerment](#).

Make sure any gaps or potential 'red flags' you identified earlier from the CV or cover letter are explored and clarified in the interview and be on the lookout for any inconsistencies in the candidates responses.



### QUICK TIP!

Be mindful of your own bias and belief systems. This may cloud your judgement making the interview less objective and therefore not successful.



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## Reference Checks

A minimum of two (2) reference checks should be completed and ideally these should be verbal. The reference check must contain safeguarding questions to assess any past history of working with children, their approach to safeguarding and their suitability for the role. The staff member conducting the checks must be appropriately trained and should use the reference check guide found on the [Y Extranet here](#).



### QUICK TIP!

For staff or volunteers that do not have a work history, consider a reference that can validate their work ethic, character and suitability to a particular role.

References should be from former or current employers, volunteer roles or places of study. It is recommended at least one check is the candidates most recent line manager and a written record should be kept in the references own words for storing. If you are not satisfied with the responses of the checks you may request additional referees from the candidate.



### DON'T FORGET:

When using partner organisations, check their existing recruitment and screening procedures to ensure they align with the Y's standard. Any partner agreements and Memorandum of Understandings (MOU's) should include an agreement on recruitment and screening procedures.



## External Providers

Where the Y uses the services of external contractors or consultants, the WWCC legislation in the respective jurisdiction must be complied with. If it is not possible to obtain the check, the Member Y must support, closely supervise and monitor those delivering such services.

The recruitment, screening and induction requirements must be relevant to the frequency and nature of the engagement with children and young people. All Y People- including contractors- must also be required to read, understand and sign the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and the Safeguarding Commitment relevant to the Member Y.

The Contractor Risk Matrix supports Y People to identify appropriate risk management controls and treatments for the onboarding of each contractor, this can be found in [Appendix 6](#).

## Induction, Training and Support

We want our Y People to be the best they can be. Appropriate induction, training, ongoing support and management helps us achieve this.

### Induction Resources

Here at the Y, all new Y People must watch the Y's Safeguarding Induction video. [This video](#) outlines our Safeguarding Framework and commitment to keeping children and young people safe. Remember to make sure to tick this off in your Safeguarding Training Passport ([Appendix 7](#)) once you have watched the video.

Y Safeguarding have also developed a Safeguarding Induction Tool for managers ([Appendix 10](#)) to assist implementing the induction video and passport. The tool also gives great tips on how to best on-board new Y People and ensure you do not miss anything in the process.

### Policies and Procedures

All new Y People should receive a copy of the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and their Code of Conduct (including Safe Behaviours) prior to commencing at the Y. Once they commence at the Y they should return a signed copy of the Y's Safeguarding Confirmation Form (or similar) acknowledging they have read and understand the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, their Member Y Code of Conduct (and Safe Behaviours) and have watched the Y's Safeguarding Induction video. An example Safeguarding Confirmation Form can be found in [Appendix 13](#) below.



## Commitment Statement

All new staff and volunteers must sign the Safeguarding Children and Young People Commitment Statement which can be found in [Appendix 9](#). This reinforces their responsibility to safeguarding and that they understand their role in keeping children and young people safe. Managers should discuss this commitment statement with the new starter.

## Relevant Training

New staff and volunteers should receive relevant training to ensure they are equipped to manage any safeguarding concerns, are aware of their responsibility to report and what appropriate and inappropriate behaviours are. They should complete the Australian Childhood Foundation Training, formal induction on the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, Safe Behaviours, Stay Safe, Tell Someone Program and reporting safeguarding concerns. Staff and volunteers should also be made aware of how they can report concerns they may have regarding other Y staff member or volunteer behaviour.

Refer to the Y's Safeguarding Training Passport in [Appendix 7](#) for further information.



### QUICK TIP!

When conducting performance reviews a great tip is to ask children and young people who know the Y Person what they think of them - try to get feedback on what they do well as what they could do better.

## Supervision and Performance Management

All new staff and volunteers should have regular supervision during their probation period to ensure they are working appropriately with children and young people and are receiving the required training. Probation periods can vary and are usually between three (3) and six (6) months. Following this, there should be ongoing supervision to ensure their behaviour is safe and elements of safeguarding are embedded in their ongoing performance management. Please refer to [Appendix 14](#) for an example template on how to embed safeguarding into performance appraisals at the Y.



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## U18 Volunteers at the Y

When taking on U18 Volunteers (including school based work experience students) there are a number of considerations to make. Please refer to the U18 Safeguarding Guidance and the volunteer matrix for more information. Please refer to [Appendix 12](#) for more information.



### **DON'T FORGET:**

Records must be kept of all recruitment screening processes and stored securely for seven (7) years or the duration of the employee/volunteers time with the Y.

### **Appendices:**

1. [Statement for Advertisements](#)
2. [Position Description Safeguarding Guide](#)
3. [Sample CV](#)
4. [Recruitment Tip Sheet](#)
5. [Engaging Staff Without A Working With Children Check Procedure](#)
6. [Contractor Risk Matrix](#)
7. [Y's Safeguarding Training Passport](#)
8. [Adverse Police Check Risk Assessment Template](#)
9. [Safeguarding Children and Young People Commitment Statement](#)
10. [Y's Safeguarding Induction Tool](#)
11. [U18 Guidance](#)
12. [Safeguarding Confirmation Form](#)
13. [Vetting Register Template](#)
14. [Performance Appraisal Template](#)



**Appendix 1:**

## **Safeguarding Statement for Advertisements**

The below version must be used for all advertisements:

At the Y, we are committed to empowering all Children and Young People to feel safe and be safe, at the Y, in their families and in their communities. As such, we ensure that all of our candidates are appropriately screened (including police checks) to make sure that the right people are in the right roles.

To learn more about our screening processes, click here to view our Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy:

<https://ymca.org.au/about-us/safeguarding-children-young-people/safeguardingresources/>



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## Safeguarding Content for Position Descriptions

| Group               |                 | Culture  | Operations   | Environment   |
|---------------------|-----------------|--|--|---|
| A                   | All Y People    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Upholding the rights of- and always acting in the best interest of- Children and Young People</li> <li>Fulfilling your responsibilities under safeguarding legislation within your State/s and/or Territory/ies, including declaring anything you become aware of through the course of your engagement with the Y which a reasonable person would consider could impede your suitability to have contact with Children and Young People</li> <li>Supporting your colleagues, supervisors and/or direct reports to understand their responsibilities under safeguarding legislation.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintaining appropriate vetting checks including, but not limited to, Working with Children Checks (or equivalent), National Police Check and International Police Check (as required).</li> <li>Participate in all safeguarding children and young people training for your role.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speaking up about any safeguarding risks and/or concerns to ensure that you are supporting the continuous improvement of our spaces and safeguarding practice.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>In addition:</b> |                 |  |  |   |
| Group               |                 | Culture  | Operations   | Environment   |
| B                   | Direct Y People | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in all required Safeguarding Children and Young People training for your role.</li> <li>Report any suspicions, concerns, allegations or disclosures of alleged child abuse or neglect in line with policies and procedures</li> <li>Actively participate and contribute to continuous improvement of Safeguarding policies,</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the facilitation of safe operations to ensure Y people have the right policies, processes and practices to keep children and young people safe.</li> <li>Actively participate and contribute to continuous improvement of Safeguarding policies, procedures and practices.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete appropriately detailed risk assessments to address any vulnerabilities to children and young people- as required.</li> <li>Empower all children and Young People to have a voice particularly in matters that affect them.</li> <li>Actively educate, promote and advocate the protection and safety to all children and young</li> </ul> |

|   |            |   |  |   |
|---|------------|---|--|---|
|   |            | procedures and practices.   |  | people, families and their communities.   |
| C | Managers   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement the Stay Safe, Tell Someone Program within your team and/or site.</li> <li>• Actively educate, promote and advocate the protection and safety to all children and young people, families and their communities.</li> <li>• Support your team to understand their safeguarding responsibilities and empower them to ask any questions if they are unsure.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate and champion safe operations to ensure Y people have the right policies, processes and practices to keep children and young people safe.</li> <li>• Facilitate the recruitment of the right people for the right roles at the right time to ensure appropriate knowledge and skills are available to enable best practice safeguarding throughout the Y.</li> <li>• Implement the Stay Safe Be Safe and Stay Safe Tell Someone Programs.</li> <li>• Recruit Y people in accordance with Y Safeguarding standards.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Champion safe environments at the Y and in communities which empower children and young people to thrive.</li> <li>• Ensure that any new program initiatives are to include consultation with Children and Young People using the Y Safeguarding guidance and resources.</li> </ul>            |
| D | Executives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Champion appropriately open and transparent communication of safeguarding risks and concerns within the Y to inform continuous improvement.</li> <li>• Support your team to understand their safeguarding responsibilities and empower them to ask any questions if they are unsure.</li> <li>• Have a strategic understanding of Safeguarding across the Y and ensure safeguarding is embedded at strategic level.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate and champion safe operations to ensure Y people have the right policies, processes and practices to keep children and young people safe.</li> <li>• Facilitate the recruitment of the right people for the right roles at the right time to ensure appropriate knowledge and skills are available to enable best practice safeguarding throughout the Y.</li> <li>• Lead and oversee quality assurance and continuous improvement of safeguarding policies, procedures and practices is undertaken regularly.</li> </ul>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Champion safe environments at the Y and in communities which empower children and young people to thrive.</li> <li>• Ensure that any new program initiatives are to include consultation with Children and Young People using the Y Safeguarding guidance and resources.</li> <li>•</li> </ul> |

|                 |   |   |   |  |
|-----------------|---|---|---|--|
|                 |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and implement strategic safeguarding risk management policies and procedures</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support or undertake workplace investigation (where applicable)</li> <li>• Recruit Y people in accordance with Y Safeguarding standards.</li> </ul>  |  |
| CEOs            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultivate and champion a safe culture nationally which empowers children and young people by promoting children and young person focused leadership and governance.</li> <li>• Advocate for- and enable- a strong culture of compliance and understanding in regard to reporting safeguarding concerns within the Y and to the relevant regulatory bodies.</li> <li>• Facilitate a culture where Y People are empowered to speak up about safeguarding concerns.</li> <li>• Support your team to understand their safeguarding responsibilities and empower them to ask any questions if they are unsure.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead and champion safe operations to ensure Y people adhere to the Y's Safeguarding Policies, Procedures and Licencing Standards</li> <li>• Champion the recruitment of the right people for the right roles at the right time to ensure appropriate knowledge and skills are available to enable best practice safeguarding throughout the Y.</li> <li>• Lead and oversee quality assurance and continuous improvement of safeguarding policies, procedures and practices is undertaken regularly.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Champion safe environments at the Y and in communities which empower children and young people to thrive.</li> <li>• Champion appropriately open and transparent communication of safeguarding risks and concerns within the Y to inform continuous improvement.</li> <li>• Ensuring the Y actively promotes the cultural safety for Children and Young People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, LGBTQIA+ communities, those who are unable to live at home and those with disabilities</li> </ul> |  |
| Board Directors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure appropriate risk management and safeguarding policies and procedures enable Y People to fulfil their responsibilities to children and young people.</li> <li>• Ensure a culture of positive compliance and mutual understanding of why safeguarding is</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Champion safe operations to ensure Y people have the right policies, processes and practices to keep children and young people safe.</li> <li>• Ensure your Member Y's people are appropriately resourced to recruit the right people for the right roles at the right time to</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that strategic initiatives are developed in consultation with children and young people – embedding safeguarding by design wherever possible.</li> </ul>  |  |



We believe in the power of  
inspired young people

|  |  |                                |  |  |
|--|--|--------------------------------|--|--|
|  |  | important a priority of the Y. | ensure appropriate knowledge and skills are available to enable best practice safeguarding throughout the Y. |  |
|--|--|--------------------------------|--|--|

### **Appendix 3: Sample CV**

When reviewing CV's and cover letters, it is important to identify any potential 'red flags'. Some examples can be found below:

- Lots of movement between different states or countries – this could indicate being asked to move on from roles or moving between states or countries to avoid criminal records being picked up by checks;
- Lack of progression in roles – this could indicate that a person has had issues in the workplace;
- Being over-qualified for the role – a person may be choosing to take a demotion to be around children;
- Unexplained gaps in employment – this could indicate an unwillingness to list some past employers or a prior prison sentence;
- Prior history of violence – an individual may disclose that they have a past history of violence or a criminal record. Even if this is not child related, it presents a potential risk and may also void your insurance coverage.



# Jane Smith

---

## **Experience**

2016-2019

### **Nanny • Full Time • Private**

I worked as a nanny full time for a family looking after their three children in primary and high school. This role required managing multiple tasks at once and strong engagement with each child. I was solely responsible for their overall health and wellbeing.

2013-2015

### **Nanny • Part-time • Private**

2011-2012

### **Administration • Part Time • High School**

This role involved general filing duties, management of incoming calls and cleaning/sorting of the office supplies at a high school. I worked mainly in the junior office but did move around within my time at the school.

2009-2010

### **Cleaner • Full Time • Primary School**

I worked as cleaner in a primary school for a period of 12 months. Duties included garbage removal, ensuring all classrooms were clean and tidy and managing the environment waste. I was able to work independently and needed little management.

2008-2009

### **Nanny • Part-time • Private**

I was a part time nanny for a family for nine months. I was responsible for picking up and dropping off the kids in my own personal car, making their lunches and snacks and assisting with homework. I find I am very patient and good with kids 1:1 and thrive on seeing them succeed in their personal lives and schooling.

2007-2008

### **Babysitting • Casual • Private**

During my time babysitting I thoroughly enjoyed the deep engagement and interaction I had with kids. I have always wanted to work with kids and help them to experience life, love and friendships in an environment where there are no walls or boundaries.

Education

### **Bachelor of Business – 2010**

### **Richmond High School - 2007**

## **Personal Experience / Hobbies**

I have also coached a number of local junior football team on weekends throughout my high school years and through university. I no longer coach but still volunteer in various capacities.

References

Available upon request.

## **Appendix 4: Recruitment Tip Sheet**

When recruiting, we should be mindful of Recruitment Red Flags, particularly if there are a number of them.

At times during the recruitment phase, we tend to be reactive rather than pro-active. Meaning we need to recruit in a hurry which can often lead to a strong desire to just fill a gap. This mindset can lead to poor recruiting and potentially long-term issues that can have a significant impact to your business and the organisation. Regardless of whether you are reactively or proactively recruiting we need to ensure that we choose the right people and as always the Safeguarding of our young people and the vulnerable should be at the forefront of your decision making.

**A Recruitment Red Flag** is a term that we can use to describe something that doesn't seem quite right during the recruitment, shortlisting and selection process.

It could be something that a candidate says or does that brings into question their motivations for joining the Y. This could include an unexplained gap in their employment history, or an unusual answer to a question during a job interview.

When recruiting, we need to keep an eye out for Recruitment Red Flags and seek to determine a reasonable explanation. A recruitment red flag doesn't necessarily mean someone isn't suitable for a position, it just means that you need to investigate whether there is a reasonable explanation.

Example **Recruitment Red Flags**:

### **Red Flags**

Unexplained gaps in working history

### **Resolution Options**

Ask candidate about their unexplained breaks in work history. Eg:

- “Are you able to expand on this period of your work history?”
- “Are you able to provide a referee from the employer immediately before the extended work break?”

---

### **Red Flags**

Vague description of work performed in previous positions.

### **Resolution Options**

Ask candidate specific questions about duties and responsibilities of their position.



**Red Flags**

Lack of information/evidence about Qualifications/Licences.

**Resolution Options**

Ask candidate to bring in original copy of their Qualifications / Licences

---

**Red Flags**

Unusual or unprofessional statements in a resume about motivations to work with children. Some statements that should raise questions include:

- “I love developing strong personal relationships with children “
- “I want help children to experience life and love where there are no boundaries”
- “Children should be treated the same as adults or other people in the community”
- “I look forward to being able to connect with children in work and outside the workplace”

**Resolution Options**

Question the candidate about their motivations to work with children.

NB: Avoid prompting them with answers considered acceptable by the YMCA.

---

**Red Flags**

Refusal to give most recent employer or direct manager as a reference.

**Resolution Options**

Ask candidate why they do not wish to provide their most recent employer as a reference, and explain that it is YMCA preference to use most recent employers as the referee.

---

**Red Flags**

Vague or unexplained reasons for leaving a previous employer.

**Resolution Options**

Ask the candidate to describe why they left the previous employer; consider asking for a reference from that employer.

---

**Other Red Flags**

Ensure that you have a full understanding of the individual's background, and their motivation for working at the Y.

In circumstances where there is a Recruitment Red Flag(s), consider seeking a second opinion from another member of the selection panel.



## Appendix 5:

### Engaging Staff without a Working with Children Check Procedure

In States or Territories where it is legal to engage a staff member with only an application for a WWCC (or equivalent), this procedure must be followed.

| Step                               | Detail  | Staff | Manager | HR |
|------------------------------------|---|-------|---------|----|
| <b>Compliance</b>                  | Identify legality of engaging staff with only WWCC application in progress  |       |         |    |
|                                    | Verify proof of lodgement of WWCC application with the relevant body  |       |         | ✓  |
|                                    | Sight a current (issued within 6 months)  |       |         |    |
|                                    | National Police Check and an International Police Check (if applicable) with satisfactory outcomes must verify these  |       |         |    |
| <b>Declaration</b>                 | Sign a declaration to confirm that there is no reason that the staff or volunteer is unsuitable to work with children and young people  | ✓     |         |    |
| <b>Contract</b>                    | Work is offered conditionally subject to the satisfactory outcome of the WWCC   |       |         | ✓  |
|                                    | Staff member is made aware that if they fail the check, their employment may be terminated  |       |         |    |
| <b>Risk Assessment/ Management</b> | Manager to be made aware that the staff member is yet to receive the outcome of the WWCC and to trigger monitoring and production of a Risk Assessment                        |       |         | ✓  |
|                                    | Relevant Manager must also be made aware of the pending WWCC  |       |         |    |
|                                    | Safeguarding Risk Assessment and Action Plan to be completed and signed off by delegated manager with review date noted (Mandatory YMCA Template – under development by CCSU) |       |         |    |
|                                    | Staff member must only be permitted to operate in an environment where they are subject to Risk Assessment and Action Plan  |       | ✓       |    |
|                                    | Staff member should not be permitted to engage in high risk activities  |       |         |    |



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| Step           | Detail   | Staff | Manager | HR |
|----------------|--|-------|---------|----|
| <b>Monitor</b> | Follow up with the staff member within four (4) weeks of engagement about WWCC application progress  |       |         | ✓  |
|                | Notify Manager/HR as soon as the WWCC clearance has been returned and provide the number for verification by Y Association or any change of status of WWCC | ✓     |         | ✓  |
| <b>Review</b>  | If the WWCC has not successfully been returned after four (4) weeks, the Action Plan is to be reviewed by a senior manager and Risk Assessment updated     |       | ✓       |    |



# Recruitment and Contractor Risk Matrix and Risk Assessment

## Safeguarding Children and Young People

To support Y Australia and Member Y Associations to implement National Principle 5 for Child Safe Organisations, “People Working with Children and Young People are suitable and supported”, Y People are encouraged to complete the following template to identify key controls to reduce risks to Children and Young People in relation to exposure to third parties (Contractors in this instance) as well as recently onboarded Y People including short term or emergency staff.

If you would like support or require further information in applying the matrix or using this form, please contact Y Safeguarding by emailing [Safe@YMCA.org.au](mailto:Safe@YMCA.org.au)

### Definitions

|  |
|--|
| <b>Contractor</b>  |
| Any independent third party engaged by the Member Y Association to undertake a task for compensation.                                |
| <b>Risk</b>  |
| In this instance, risk includes all risks associated with the exposure of children and young people to contractors as third parties. |
| <b>Controls</b>  |
| Systems and actions already available to reduce the likelihood or consequences of risk to children and young people.                 |
| <b>Treatments</b>  |
| New and systems to reduce the likelihood or consequences of risk to children and young people.                                       |
| <b>Regular contact</b>   |
| For example, the contractor undertakes their work in a room with children and young people.  |
| <b>Infrequent/ incidental contact</b>  |
| For example, the contractor must walk through spaces with children or young people to commence their work.                           |
| <b>No contact</b>  |
| The contractor undertakes work in isolated spaces at isolated times- ie no children or young people are present.                     |
| <b>Constant Supervision</b>  |
| The contractor is accompanied by staff at all times.   |
| <b>Occasional Supervision</b>  |
| Staff check in with the contractor every 20-30 Minutes.  |
| <b>Line-of-Sight Supervision</b>   |
| Staff can see the contractor at all times.   |
| <b>No Supervision</b>  |
| The contractor is unaccompanied by staff at all times.   |

# Recruitment and Contractor Risk Matrix and Risk Assessment

## Safeguarding Children and Young People

### Step 1: Identifying Contractor Risk Ratings

| Access   | Contact   | Supervision                                     | Risk Rating |
|--|---|---|-------------|
| Contractors, emergency staff and/or recently engaged Y People <b>with access</b> to where children and young people are likely to be- who will have              | <b>regular face-to-face or online contact</b> with children and young people and are under                | <b>constant</b> supervision:                    | Moderate    |
|  |   | <b>occasional or line-of-sight</b> supervision: | High        |
|  |   | <b>no</b> supervision:                          | High        |
|  | <b>infrequent, incidental face-to-face or online contact</b> with children and young people and are under | <b>constant</b> supervision:                    | Low         |
|  |   | <b>occasional or line-of-sight</b> supervision: | Moderate    |
|  |   | <b>no</b> supervision:                          | High        |
|  | <b>no contact</b> with children and young people and are under  | <b>constant</b> supervision:                    | Low         |
|  |   | <b>occasional or line-of-sight</b> supervision: | Low         |
|  |   | <b>no</b> supervision:                          | Moderate    |
| Contractors, emergency staff and/or recently engaged Y People with <b>no access</b> to where children and young people are likely to be, regardless supervision. |   |   | Low         |

### Step 2: Identifying Minimum Safeguarding Controls

| Precautions (If these are not possible, consider increasing supervision or reducing access to Children and Young People to reduce the Risk Rating) |  |   |  |   |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| Risk Rating  | Risk Assessment  | Working with Children Check or equivalent   | Police Check   | Induction Documents   |
| High   | Yes. Including the implementation of appropriate controls/ treatments.<br><br><i>It is best practice to undertake a risk assessment (below) for all contractors and emergency staff.</i> | Yes<br><br>(Note, if they are ineligible in your state or territory, consider other controls. For example, increasing supervision to reduce rating) | Yes  | All contractors are required to provide acknowledgement of receipt for the following documents:<br><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conditions of Entry</li> <li>• Code of Conduct</li> <li>• SCYP Commitment Statement</li> <li>• Y Safeguarding Policy</li> </ul> |
| Moderate   |  | Yes   | No. However, if the Y is not permitted by law to request a WWCC, a Police Check is required. |   |
| Low  |  | No  | No   |   |

# Recruitment and Contractor Risk Matrix and Risk Assessment

## Safeguarding Children and Young People

### Step 3: Identifying Safeguarding Treatments

Use the following template to record any further treatments implemented in addition to those selected above.

|       |             |           |                        |
|-------|-------------|-----------|------------------------|
| Date: | Select Date | YMCA:     | Select YMCA            |
|       |             | Location: | [Insert Location Here] |

|                               |  |        |  |
|-------------------------------|--|--------|--|
| Contractor / Y Person's Name: |  |        |  |
| Phone Number:                 |  | Email: |  |

|               |  |           |  |
|---------------|--|-----------|--|
| Completed by: |  | Position: |  |
| Phone Number: |  | Email:    |  |

|  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| Risk Rating identified using the Matrix above: | Select Rating here |
|--|--------------------|

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Proposed Treatments: (Actions that you'll take to reduce the risk level)   |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>(For example, undertaking maintenance works outside of hours- if supervision is not possible)</i></li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul> |

|   |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Residual Risk Rating (Risk Rating after these controls are introduced): | Select Rating here               |
| Is the Residual Risk Rating acceptable?<br>Select Yes/No                | Approved by:<br>[Name and Title] |



The Y Safeguarding Training  
**PASSPORT**



# Our Safeguarding Vision





# Our Safeguarding Framework



---

## Our Safe Behaviours

- **Listen** and **respond** to the views of children, young people and their families. Hear what they have to say, no matter how big or small and always take them seriously
- **Protect** children and young people, put their safety first and do not cause harm in any environment – this includes online
- **Respect** and **support** all children and young people regardless of their backgrounds, everyone should be made to feel welcome and included
- **Speak** using clear language that is appropriate to children and young people
- **Act** within the laws, regulations, policies and procedures and set a positive example for others
- **Be aware** of signs that may indicate abuse or harm to children and young people and notice if they aren't themselves or things don't seem right
- **Respond** appropriately to any suspected or disclosed abuse or harm to children and young people (and reporting concerns to relevant Government agencies as required by law)
- **Empower** children and young people - this includes allowing them to do personal things for themselves
- **Encourage** children and young people to be the best they can be without showing any favouritism
- **Be professional** and **respect the boundaries** of your role at the Y – Y People should not be left alone with a child or young person (this includes transportation) or have any contact outside the Y's programs or facility unless approved by their Member Y's Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

---

## Before you take off

Please ensure you have completed the below requirements:

- Working with Children Check (WWCC) or equivalent
- Police Check
- Reference Check
- International Police Check (if required)

## Performance Appraisals

Please ensure you have completed the below requirements:

- 3 Month Review
- 6 Month Review



# Our Safeguarding Induction Process

1

## Y Induction Video



Watch the Y Safeguarding Induction Video and write down any questions it raises

2

## Discussion with Manager



Your Manager will talk you through all the important things to get you started here at the Y including our Safe Behaviours and the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy. Make sure you read and understand all your safeguarding responsibilities.

3

## Complete Safeguarding Training



You will be required to undertake Safeguarding Training when you begin your journey with us, and then at least once a year from then onwards.



# During your Journey

*Name of Training Completed*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Signature of Manager*      *Date*

\_\_\_\_\_

(      )  
STAMP  
HERE  
(      )

*Name of Training Completed*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Signature of Manager*      *Date*

\_\_\_\_\_

(      )  
STAMP  
HERE  
(      )





# If you ever choose to get off this wonderful Journey

Please ensure you have completed the below requirements:

- Hand in ID Badge
- Exit Interview has been conducted

## Y Safeguarding / Safeguarding Lead Contact Details:



**Title**

First Name Last Name **Ph:** 00 0000 0000

**E:** first.last@YMCA.org.au

Snapshot of role so staff know about how these resources can be utilized



**Title**

First Name Last Name **Ph:** 00 0000 0000

**E:** first.last@YMCA.org.au

Snapshot of role so staff know about how these resources can be utilized

These contacts may be subject to change, visit the below link or scan QR code to view the current Safeguarding contacts:

Insert Link:



**Y Safeguarding**  
Feel Safe, Be Safe



EVERYONE HAS THE RIGHT TO FEEL AND BE SAFE.

IF YOU:





**TELL SOMEONE**

 Talk to someone you trust at the YMCA  
Write it down, Send a text, call or Email

 133 000 777  
 PO BOX 123 YMCA

 Janedoe@ymca.gov.au  
 03 123 456

## Appendix 8: Adverse Police Check Risk Assessment Template

*Private and confidential when complete*

|  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| <b>Name of applicant:</b>  |   |   |  |
| <b>Post/role applied for/current post:</b>   |   |   |  |
| <b>Level of risk assessment required (<i>Green – low level, Amber – medium level, Red – high level</i>)</b>  | <b>Green</b> – no risk assessment needed (explain why?)<br><input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Amber</b> – Safeguarding Lead to carry out risk assessment<br><input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Red</b> – Safeguarding Lead and HR to be present at risk assessment<br><input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Question</b>  | <b>Yes/No</b>   | <b>Please provide details</b>   |  |
| Has the applicant declared any criminal convictions, cautions, reprimands, final warnings in Australia or any other country, or are they under police investigation? |   |   |  |
| Is this a single offence or has there been more than one offence?  |   |   |  |
| Has any other relevant information been provided?  |   |   |  |
| <b>Nature of conviction(s) or police intelligence disclosed</b>  |   |   |  |
| Offence(s):  |   |   |  |
| Date of caution/conviction   |   |   |  |
| Sentence received:   |   |   |  |
| Age at time of offence(s)  |   |   |  |
| Current age:   |   |   |  |
| Length of time since conviction(s)   |   |   |  |



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|  |  |
|--|--|
| Other relevant information / comments: |  |
|--|--|

|                               |  |                                    |  |
|-------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Date of Interview:</b>     |  | <b>Time/location of Interview:</b> |  |
| <b>Interviewer one name:</b>  |  | <b>Role:</b>                       |  |
| <b>Interviewer two name:</b>  |  | <b>Role:</b>                       |  |
| <b>Other person's present</b> |  |                                    |  |

| <b>Question</b>   | <b>Please provide details</b> |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Do you agree that the information on the disclosure is correct? If not, why?          |                               |
| What were the circumstances surrounding the offence(s)?                               |                               |
| How do you feel about the offence?  |                               |
| What efforts have been made to not reoffend?  |                               |
| Additional questions:   |                               |
| Are you subject to any police investigations at present? (If so give further details) |                               |
| Is there anything else you would like us to consider?                                 |                               |
| Why do you want to work for the Y?  |                               |



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| Question  | Yes/No | Please provide details |
|---|--------|------------------------|
| Have the individuals circumstances changed since the offence(s)? If so, how?  |        |                        |
| Are offence(s) relevant to the worker's position?   |        |                        |
| Is the applicant taking part in a specific remedial/action programme?   |        |                        |
| Does the nature of the job present any opportunities for the post holder to re-offend in the place of work? If so, how? |        |                        |
| Does the job role involve regular one-to one/unsupervised contact with vulnerable groups and/or colleagues?             |        |                        |
| Does the post involve direct contact with the public?   |        |                        |
| Does the position involve direct responsibility for finance or items of value?  |        |                        |
| Does the position involve a significant level of trust i.e. physical treatment or caring for people?                    |        |                        |
| Were suitable references obtained and ID checked? (If references gave cause for concern, please state details)          |        |                        |
| What level of supervision does the post holder receive?   |        |                        |

**Summary of risk assessment:**



|  |                                     |   |  |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|--|
|  |                                     |   |  |
| <b>Outcome:</b>                              | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <b>Approve (no conditions)</b>            |  |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <b>Approve (with conditions) – State:</b> |  |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <b>Reject (give reasons)</b>              |  |
| <b>Signed:</b>                               |                                     | <b>Role:</b>                              |  |
| <b>Date:</b>                                 |                                     |   |  |
| <b>Date applicant was informed of result</b> |                                     |   |  |
| <b>Response from applicant</b>               |                                     |   |  |
| <b>Audited by:</b>                           | Date, comments and learning shared: |   |  |



**Appendix 9:**

## **Safeguarding Children and Young People Commitment Statement**

### **We believe in the power of inspired young people**

Our Safeguarding vision is that all Children and Young People are empowered to feel safe and be safe at the Y, in their families and their communities.

In order for young people to be inspired, they must Feel Safe and Be Safe. As part of our Safeguarding Strategy at the Y, we have developed our Safeguarding Framework which aspires to ensure that all Children and Young People are safe and feel safe at the Y, in their families and in their communities.

Our Safeguarding Framework aims to develop:

- A safe **culture** nationally which empowers Children and Young People by promoting Children and Young Person focused leadership and governance;
- Safe **operations** to ensure Y People have the right policies, processes and practices to keep Children and Young People safe; and
- Safe **environments** at the Y and in communities which empower Children and Young People to thrive.

At the Y we commit to embedding our Safeguarding Framework across the Movement and continuing to work towards achieving our mission. In doing this, we commit to providing an environment that ensures the safety and wellbeing of all Children and Young People, families and communities and our Y People.

We commit to implementing and responding to our Stay Safe, Tell Someone Program for Children and Young People and all Y People, that if they see, hear or feel something that makes them worried or concerned, they can tell someone at the Y. We commit to responding to all safeguarding concerns made about children and young people by telling our Member Ys Safeguarding Leads and relevant external agencies as appropriate.

We commit to listening to Children and Young People, empowering them to speak up and amplifying their voices. This includes those from diverse backgrounds including our First Nations Children and Young People, those living with disability, those from culturally and linguistically diverse communities and those who identify as LGBTIQ+.

**Y Person - I have read, understood and commit to the above statement.**

.....  
Name

.....  
Signature

.....  
Date



# Y Safeguarding Induction Tool

Our safeguarding vision is that all children and young people are empowered to feel safe and be safe at the Y, in their families and in their communities.

## Introduction

We understand there is a lot of information for Y People to absorb when they first join the Y. However, we also know how important safeguarding is and want to ensure that all Y People receive the right safeguarding information when they begin their journey with us.

That's why we have developed this Safeguarding Induction Tool to assist Member Y's with their safeguarding induction process.

This tool provides a simple process for Member Y's to follow when inducting new Y People and introducing them to safeguarding at the Y. This tool should be used in conjunction with Y Safeguarding's Volunteer Matrix and adapted accordingly - this tool has been developed for Y People who require the full vetting and induction process.

This tool is designed so that it can be adapted and/or integrated into any existing induction processes.

## Induction Process

- 1. Prior to role commencement:** Y People submit a valid and current National or International Police Check and Working with Children Check
- 2. Role commencement:** Y People watch Y Safeguarding's induction video and discuss any questions they have with their Manager and/or Safeguarding Lead
- 3. Within first week:** Y People complete safeguarding passport requirements (read, sign and acknowledge understanding of their Code of Conduct (Safe Behaviours), Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and their relevant Safeguarding Procedure
- 4. Within first month:** All Y People complete the Feel Safe Be Safe online training and those with direct contact with children and young people complete the next available Safe Behaviours face to face training

## Tips for Managers

If you are a Manager and/or Safeguarding Lead inducting a new Y Person, it is important to check the below requirements are completed.

- Are the Y Person's vetting requirements completed and recorded appropriately
- Has the new Y Person watched the Y Safeguarding induction video
- Has the new Y Person read, acknowledged and understood the Code of Conduct (including Safe Behaviours) and relevant Safeguarding Concerns Procedure
- Has the new Y Person read, acknowledged and understood the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy
- Does the new Y Person understand the Stay Safe Tell Someone Program and can they identify who they can speak to if they have any safeguarding worries or concerns
- Have I allowed the new Y Person to discuss any questions or concerns they may have regarding safeguarding at the Y
- Have I let the new Y Person know how to get in contact with Y Safeguarding if required

## **Appendix 11:**

# **U18 Safeguarding Recruitment Guidance**

We believe in the power of inspired young people. Our collective ambition to empower Young People specifies that we enable Young People in Australia to have a stronger voice and be heard more clearly. In order to do this, we need to bring this belief to our business – this includes how we engage and interact with U18s at the Y.

The volunteer matrix should be applied when recruiting and engaging with U18s at the Y. There is also a modified version of the Feel Safe Be Safe training which can be used with inducting an U18 year old. Please refer to the Education and Training section for more information.

The following points are designed to assist Y People when recruitment and engaging with U18s at the Y.

- At the Y we are committed to exploring new opportunities and learning from one another, engaging U18s (including work experience and placement students) is a vital part of this and could be their first introduction to a fulfilling career at the Y
- Our recruitment, induction and on boarding process is intended to ensure U18s are given enough information to help them during their time with the Y
- When conducting referee checks, consider that U18s may not have formal work experience. In this case you may wish to consider using a reference from a school, community group and/or other organisation the U18 year old may be affiliated with
- Consider alternatives of whom you can accept reference checks from too, for example a coach or supervisor from volunteer arrangements are acceptable however family members are not ideal. If the student is from a school, a reference from the school would be acceptable.
- Ensure U18s are aware and understand their role in relation to the Code of Conduct and Safe Behaviours – they need to be aware of their own behaviours but also that these are in place to protect them
- Make sure students know who they can speak to if they ever feel unsafe or worried, using the Stay Safe, Tell Someone Program
- Once U18s are inducted, we must ensure their time at the Y is meaningful and valuable. To assist with this, you could establish a mentor or buddy for the student to ensure they are included and have a 'go to' person for any concerns or queries
- U18s cannot be responsible for the supervision of children and young people and must be supervised at all times and are not to be counted as part of staff ratios



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- In child care, high school students who are in Year 10 or below cannot be accepted in ELC or OSHC for placements
- Take a strengths based approach, taking the time to get to know the Y Person at the beginning of their time with the Y may assist you in finding what duties, roles and responsibilities are suitable for them. For example they may be involved in a sporting team outside of school and could assist group facilitations or coaching drills
- Agree on activities or observational learning experiences that ensure the Y Person's safety and prevents harm. Provide a safe learning environment, training and the support to undertake work in a safe manner - this includes their Feel Safe Be Safe induction training
- Identify and help address situations that may increase their vulnerability to harm through Y risk management procedures.
- In the case of student placements or work experience, ensure you have any educational institutions requirements or agreement so you know what competencies, roles and responsibilities are expected for the Y Person during their time – there should be clear objectives to assist you in knowing what they need to achieve and the supports required
- If you are unsure whether you have the time or resourcing to take U18 volunteers on, discuss this with your manager.
- Having a plan will mean the Y Person's time at the Y is meaningful and purposeful.
- Engage your staff, set up a roster or meetings during their time at the Y so the time and supervision commitment isn't just on one person. For example in children services they could rotate rooms so they see each aspect of the organisation
- Ensure you check in with them and make sure they are included in lunch breaks, staff meetings etc.
- The above factors are important to mitigate risks associated with U18 volunteers and ensure the time they have with the Y is rewarding and meaningful
- They are a fresh set of eyes – make the most of them! They may pick up on things you have missed or this is great opportunity to engage children and young people in your processes and empower them. They are there to learn but you can equally learn as much from them

*Further information can be found in the Youth Voice Principle and Practice Statement and the Intergenerational Leadership Principle and Practice Statement.*

*Contact us if you have any questions about taking on a work experience student at your service. We are available to provide support: insert Member Y's Safeguarding Lead and/or Human Resource / People and Culture contact details.*



## Appendix 12:

### Safeguarding Children and Young People Confirmation Form 2021

At the Y we are committed to keeping all children and young people safe. Our Safeguarding Vision is that all children and young people are empowered to feel safe and be safe at the Y, in their families and in their communities.

In order to do this the Y have developed our Feel Safe Be Safe Framework which aims to develop:

- A safe **culture** nationally which empowers children and young people by promoting children and young person focused leadership and governance;
- Safe **environments** at the Y and in communities which empower children and young people to thrive; and
- Safe **operations** to ensure Y People have the right policies, processes and practices to keep children and young people safe.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have read, or watched and understand the:

1. Y's Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy;
2. Responding to Safeguarding Concerns Procedure;
3. Code of Conduct and Safe Behaviours; and
4. The Y's Safeguarding Induction Video.

I will ensure I adhere to and advocate for these policies and procedures during my employment with [insert Member Y].

I acknowledge that my Manager has provided ample time to read through the policies and procedures listed above and has clarified any questions I have with them.

I agree to contact my Manager or Y Safeguarding in future if I require any clarification or have concerns relating to any parts of the policies and procedures listed above.

I understand that a copy of this signed statement will be recorded in my personnel file.

|                                  |  |       |  |
|----------------------------------|--|-------|--|
| Employee/Volunteer<br>Signature: |  | Date: |  |
| Manager/Supervisor<br>Signature: |  | Date: |  |
| Manager/Supervisor<br>Name:      |  | Date: |  |





## Safeguarding Performance Appraisal - Template

This template will be used as additional information to Member Y Annual Performance review process, reflective of Y Persons PD, and Y Safeguarding Safe Behaviours and Competency Model and Professional Codes of Ethics.

### SECTION [Insert Number]: Safeguarding Information

|   | NOTES/ Additional Information | Employee Checked | Appraiser Verified |
|---|-------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Have you completed all Safeguarding Children and Young people training in the last 12 months?  | -<br>-                        |                  |                    |
| 2. Is your Working with Children Check Current and valid<br>a. Has your Working with children check status changed?   | -<br>-                        |                  |                    |
| 3. Is your National Police check current<br>a. Has there been a change of status in the last 12months   | -<br>-                        |                  |                    |
| 4. Will you report any suspicions, concerns, allegations or disclosures of alleged child abuse, neglect or harm in line with policies and Y Safeguarding procedures | -                             |                  |                    |

### SECTION [INSERT Number]: Y Values

| Our Safeguarding values connect us with our Y Safeguarding culture, the wider Y community and define the vision that we want all children and young people to feel safe and be safe at the Y, in their families and in their communities. |                 |                  | Value Rating Scale<br>A Role Model<br>B Capable & Effective<br>C Needs Development |
|---|-----------------|------------------|--|
| Value   | Employee Rating | Appraiser Rating | Comments   |
| <b>HEROIC</b><br>I respond and report quickly to all safety concerns and protect children from abuse, neglect, or harm  |                 |                  |  |
| <b>NURTURING</b><br>I provide safe places and spaces to support all children and young people to grow and reach their full potential  |                 |                  |  |

|  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|---|
| <b>CREATIVE</b><br>I respect and find ways to empower all children and young people to have a voice and ensure they are encouraged and listened to |  |  |   |
| <b>Overall Rating</b>  |  |  | In consideration of the Employee's values, what is the agreed overall rating (A, B or C)? |

## SECTION [Insert Number]: Safe Behaviours

| Safeguarding is embedded at every level of our organisation and aspect of our roles<br>They are deeply embedded in our culture, attitudes, behaviours and our decision making. |  |         | <b>Performance Behaviour Rating</b><br>1. Significantly Above Expectations<br>2. Above Expectations<br>3. Meeting Expectations<br>4. Below Expectations<br>5. Significantly Below Expectations |                  |
|--|--|---------|--|------------------|
| Objectives   | Measure(s) & Time Frames   | Comment | Employee Rating  | Appraiser Rating |
| Culture<br>Leadership<br>Governance<br>Empowerment<br>Values and Behaviours<br>Education and Training<br>Continuous Improvement  |  |         |  |                  |
| Operations<br>Practices<br>Procedures<br>Complaints<br>Policies<br>People  |  |         |  |                  |
| Environment<br>Diversity<br>Families and Communities<br>Physical<br>E-Safety   |  |         |  |                  |
| <b>Overall Rating</b>  | In consideration of the Employee's performance, what is the agreed overall rating (1, 2, 3, 4 or 5)? |         |  |                  |

## 2.2 Policies

**Introduction:** It is important that we have strong policies that not only document our commitment to safeguarding children and young people, but also enable and support our Y People to carry out their work across all service delivery lines.

[National Principle 10 - policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.](#)

[Safeguarding Children and Young People Licensing Standards: 2.16, 2.17 and 2.18.](#)

### The Y's Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

At the Y we have a national Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy. The first national policy was developed in 2014, revised in its second version in 2017 and recently at the 2020 Annual General Meeting the third version of the Safeguarding Children and Young People policy was approved. You can view the new Safeguarding Policy on our public webpage [here](#). There is an interactive version you can view online, a PDF version for downloading or printing and a printable version should you prefer to order hard copies. There is also a child friendly and teen/youth version of the national Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy on the website. <https://ymca.org.au/about-us/safeguarding-children-young-people/safeguardingresources/>

To further assist Member Y's understand the changes in the new Safeguarding Policy as well as example communications plans and templates, Y Safeguarding have developed an 'Implementation Guide' and short video resource. You can view the Implementation Guide in Appendix 1 below or online, along with the video resource, on the Feel Safe Be Safe webpage here - <https://oney.ymca.org.au/scyp/Pages/default.aspx>.

### Commitment

Policies relating to safeguarding should reinforce our commitment to [keeping children and young people safe and ensure key messages are embedded across the Y](#). All Member Ys must adopt and implement the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy. In addition to this, each Member Y should have a Code of Conduct (including the Y's Safe Behaviours) that supports the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, as well as local procedures.



#### CASE STUDY

In 2020 Y Safeguarding reviewed the Safeguarding Children and Young People policy. Surveys or focus groups were held with Children and Young People, Families and Communities, Y People, the Y's Safeguarding Leads and Partner Organisations. Y Safeguarding received over 460 responses which was vital in the review of the policy and its implementation.



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WATCH THE  
VIDEO

## Consultation

When developing and reviewing the implementation of policies, stakeholder consultation and engagement is critical. This includes with:

- Children and Young People;
- Families and Communities; and
- Y People.

To ensure a thorough consultation is done, a good cross section of stakeholders is required and this should be done in a range of methods. This can be done through open forums, consultative meetings, suggestions boxes, surveys or calls for email submissions.

Reviews should be regular (at the very minimum annually) and feedback on the practical implementation of policies encouraged. Any consultation of policy development or review should also be documented.

## Communication

It is essential that policies are regularly promoted and easily accessible in a variety of formats, including child-friendly versions, posters, and other languages (as appropriate). Consultation with children and young people also told us that they want to be reminded regularly of the 'rules' and feel that posters and imagery will help with this.

Ways you can regularly communicate policies include through newsletters, at induction, in welcome packs, at forums and staff meetings.



### CASE STUDY

At Y Australia and Y Services Y Safeguarding hosted a morning tea encouraging staff to take 10 minutes to sit and read the new Safeguarding Policy with a piece of cake!

### CASE STUDY

A great example of how to roll out the Safeguarding Policy in Member Ys can be found below from Y Brisbane. This short video outlines the Policy changes and required information for all Y People.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1qHeDG4xfBY>



It is not enough however to simply communicate the policies, this must be accompanied by education and training which you can find more information on under the [culture](#) chapter of this document.



### QUICK TIP!

If employee engagement surveys are done within your Y, this is a good opportunity to assess awareness and understanding of your policies

## Policy Development

When developing policies, the below should be considered;

- Clearly states our zero tolerance of child abuse
- Is user-friendly and age appropriate
- Written in clear and simple language that is meaningful to all Y People and families
- Have child-friendly versions
- Is publicly accessible in a variety of formats – if online, policies should be no more than three clicks from the home webpage and ensure they are downloadable
- Pay attention to diverse needs – see diversity chapter for more information
- Has specific administrative details listed including the effective date, review date, author(s)
- Has a list of related documents or policies that must be read in conjunction with the policy
- Includes the relevant legislation and regulations
- Defines terms used in the policy
- Specifies to whom the policy applies
- Specifies legal reporting obligations
- Describes what action to take if a child is at imminent risk of harm
- Identifies when reports are to be made and the relevant authority to whom they should be directed (including reporting to the Police, Reportable Conduct Schemes, Child Protection authorities)
- Articulates consequences for breaches of the policy (e.g. dismissal, suspension or transfer to other non-child-related duties)



- References to the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and any local Change to Code of Conduct (Safe Behaviours)
- Sets out education and training requirements



### DON'T FORGET:

Policies must be part of Y People's induction and supports on boarding and education and training. All Y People should sign they have read and understood all relevant policies and be encouraged to ask questions or speak up if they are ever unsure. You can use the Safeguarding Confirmation Form in the People Section [Appendix 13](#) as a guide.

For all national policies and procedures, you can visit the [Y Extranet](#) for all the update to date documentation.



### QUICK TIP!

At team meetings pick a point from the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy or the Code of Conduct/ Safe Behaviours and discuss as a group activity. Please refer to Appendix 1 for examples of how to do this.

#### **Appendices:**

1. [Safeguarding Children and Young People Implementation Guide](#)





# Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy Implementation Guide

**NationalSafeguardingUnit**

Feel Safe, Be Safe

e: [safe@ymca.org.au](mailto:safe@ymca.org.au) w: [ymca.org.au/safe](http://ymca.org.au/safe)



## **Appendix 1:**

# **Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy - Implementation Guide**

## **Introduction**

In 2020 the Y's Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy was reviewed and a revised version was approved at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). During the review process and through consultation with the Movement there was resounding feedback that Y People would like further tools and resources to assist with the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy. Therefore, Y Safeguarding have developed this Implementation Guide to assist Y People understand the new Safeguarding Policy and how to implement it within their Member Y Association.

This Implementation Guide aims to address what is new in the Safeguarding Policy, activities Managers and Safeguarding Leads can run with Y People and tips on how to embed the Safeguarding Policy into the Y's Safeguarding practices.

## **What's new in the Safeguarding Policy?**

The new Safeguarding Policy now aligns to the [Y's Safeguarding Framework](#) which incorporates three pillars; **culture**, **operations** and **environment**. Under these pillars are 15 elements which each outline our commitment to keeping Children and Young People safe. As a collective the Safeguarding Policy aims to keep Children and Young People safe at the Y, in their families and in their communities.

The Safeguarding Framework aligns to the 10 National Child Safe Principles, so in adopting and implementing the new Safeguarding Policy commitments, each Member Y is also complying with the 10 Principles.

The new Safeguarding Policy has also removed our Y Safe Behaviours. These have also been reviewed and adapted to now sit within your Member Y's Code of Conduct. The adoption of the Safe Behaviours is however still incorporated in the Safeguarding Policy under 'culture – values and behaviours'.

Finally, the new Safeguarding Policy now incorporates Y Safeguarding as a resource and support function for the Movement, along with the Y's Stay Safe, Tell Someone Program. The Stay Safe, Tell Someone Program is based on the nudge theory that if a Child or Young Person sees something, hears something, or feels something that worries or concerns them, they tell someone. This can be a trusted adult, a Y Person, a Manager, a Safeguarding Lead or Y Safeguarding through the national online incident reporting form. For more information on how to embed the Stay Safe, Tell Someone Program visit the [Feel Safe Be Safe](#) webpage on the Towards One Y website.



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## Communicating the new Safeguarding Policy

A template has been developed to assist Member Y Association's communication of the new Safeguarding Policy. Please see Appendix 1 – Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy Launch – Communications Template for example internal and external communications, these can be tailored to suit your Member Y's various platforms and/or channels.

## Activities for Managers and Safeguarding Leads

Below are some ideas on how to inform all Y People and how to implement the new Safeguarding Policy. But, first things first, before you talk to your Y People ensure you have ticked off the below.

- ✓ Ensure the Safeguarding Policy is easily accessible on your Member Ys webpage (it should not be more than three (3) clicks from the homepage). You can find the link to the Safeguarding Policy on Y Australia's page [here](#). There are two versions of the Safeguarding Policy – a PDF version which is suitable for downloading and emailing, and an interactive version which is more engaging and suitable for webpage viewing. Both can be found [here](#).
- ✓ Ensure your Boards, CEO, Senior Leadership Team and all Y People are informed of the new Safeguarding Policy – this should be managed through your Association's communications processes
- ✓ All Y People will need to sign and acknowledge that they have read and understand the new Safeguarding Policy – this should be managed through your Association's People and Culture processes
- ✓ Pick one pillar at a time (**culture**, **operations** or **environment**) and dedicate sometime to understanding the commitments under each element yourself so you are ready to answer any questions Y People may have
- ✓ It is not expected all of these commitments need to be completed straight away, we recommend starting with what you can and ticking them off as you address each one (some low hanging fruit can be quick wins) – Member Y Associations have until June 2021 to implement the commitments under the new Safeguarding Policy
- ✓ At the next available all staff meeting ensure you have some time dedicated to speak to the Safeguarding Policy so it is front of mind for everyone – if you would like some support on how best to do this please reach out to the NSU, we can help you make it creative and fun ([safe@ymca.org.au](mailto:safe@ymca.org.au))



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The below tips are for when you are ready to start implementing the Safeguarding Policy with frontline staff and Y People – consider this part of your roadshow map!

- The Safeguarding Policy should be included in any newsletters or communication emails sent out over a period of time (not just a once off) so all Y People are informed of the new Policy and know where to find it.
- This is also required for communicating the new Policy to families and communities. Ensure they are updated either by newsletters, emails or through Y centre/sites usual communication processes
- Use team and staff meetings to discuss the new Policy, especially in the early days to ensure Y People can ask any questions about the changes – make sure this isn't a one off, keep it on as your Safeguarding agenda item
- Pick an element under each pillar and brainstorm with your colleagues, team or utilise your Safeguarding Committees/Working Groups to ensure all commitments can be met and those who need to be informed are. For example when you are ready to look at 'environment – eSafety' you may wish to bring in your IT team, marketing and communications team and anyone who facilitates or has a role in your Association's online programs or services
- Utilise the [NSU's National Safeguarding Guidance](#) – this has all the tools and templates on how to fulfil the Policy commitments. For example templates and tip sheets on how to empower Children and Young People and families and communities as well as 20 minute video recordings of each of the Safeguarding Framework elements and what this means at the Y.
- Consider leaving a hard copy of the Safeguarding Policy in staff lunch and break rooms so they can read in their own time.
- Ensure you make yourself available to answer any questions Y People may have – allow for question time at the end of any meetings regarding the Policy, ensure your contact details along with the NSU's are circulated and consider having a questions box left in staff rooms in case Y People do not feel comfortable asking Policy questions in front of a group

### Where can I go for more information?

If your question is regarding how to fulfil a particular commitment under the Safeguarding Policy, we recommend checking the Safeguarding National Guidance first and if you are still unsure following that, please reach out to your Manager, Safeguarding Lead or Y Safeguarding.

If you have any other questions or would like further support on how to best implement the new Safeguarding Policy please do not hesitate to reach out to Y Safeguarding [safe@ymca.org.au](mailto:safe@ymca.org.au)



# Appendix 1: Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy Launch – Communications Template

## 1. Social Media Post / Newsletter – Internal

We'd like to introduce the Y's new Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy. Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility, this Policy applies to all Y People (this includes Board Directors and all those who are employed or volunteer for the Y, including those on work experience); Contractors; and Visitors and Patrons.

To assist you all to understand the new Safeguarding Policy and how to implement it within 'insert Member Y Association', Y Safeguarding have put together an implementation guide.

You can view the new policy and the implementation guide here  
- <https://oney.ymca.org.au/scyp/Pages/default.aspx>

As always, if you have any questions, please contact 'insert Member Y Safeguarding Lead' or contact Y Safeguarding at [safe@ymca.org.au](mailto:safe@ymca.org.au)

## 2. Social Media Post – External

Safeguarding Children and Young people is our highest priority, we want them to 'Feel Safe and Be Safe', and this means we do not tolerate any type of harm or abuse.

After an extensive consultative process, Y Safeguarding have released the third version of the National Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy.

Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility, this Policy applies to all Y People (this includes Board Directors and all those who are employed or volunteer for the Y, including those on work experience); Contractors; and Visitors and Patrons.

You can view the new policy [here](#). If you have any questions, you can email 'insert local Safeguarding Lead and/or contact' or Y Safeguarding at [safe@ymca.org.au](mailto:safe@ymca.org.au).

#safeguardingchildren #theY



### 3. Website or Newsletter Article – External

Y Safeguarding was formed by consensus amongst the Y Associations of Australia in November 2018 as a collective commitment to the safety and wellbeing of Children and Young People in our programs, services and within their families and communities.

Officially commencing in July 2019, the team, made up of subject matter experts Phillip Doorgachurn, Brent McAllister, Laura Giblett, and Teri McIntyre continue to build upon this commitment by facilitating national collaboration and co-design of safeguarding initiatives and resources.

After endorsing the first-ever national Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy in 2014, Y Safeguarding is proud to release the third version of the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy.

This new policy is the result of an extensive consultation process with the Member Y Associations to ensure all Y People were invited and able to have their say in how the policy should be improved and implemented. During this process, Y Safeguarding received over 480 survey responses from Children and Young People, families and communities, Y People, Y Safeguarding Leads and our partner organisations. Y Safeguarding also engaged a diverse group of Y People through in-depth focus groups to ensure adequate feedback was heard and considered in the development of the new policy.

At the Annual General Meeting (AGM) on November 28, 2020, the Movement unanimously approved the new Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy. The Policy is now publicly available on the [Y's safeguarding resources page](#) along with an interactive version which was highlighted as an important addition to have based on feedback received during the consultation process.

Y Safeguarding are also currently developing a child-friendly version of the policy, along with a communications plan for Member Y Associations and an implementation guide on how to roll out the new policy and ensure all Y People are aware and updated of it.

The policy is designed to align with the Y's Safeguarding Strategy, Vision and Framework, and embeds other key pieces of work from Y Safeguarding such as the eCommitment, the National Safeguarding Risk Model and the Stay Safe, Tell Someone program. Y Safeguarding has also developed the first-ever national Safeguarding Guidance which complements the policy and supports Member Y Association's to embed the Safeguarding Framework and Policy initiatives in their respective Y's.

If you have any questions, please email Y Safeguarding at [safe@ymca.org.au](mailto:safe@ymca.org.au)



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#### 4. YNET/SharePoint/Towards One Y Post – Internal

After endorsing the first-ever national Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy in 2014, Y Safeguarding is proud to release the third version of the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy.

This new policy is the result of an extensive consultation process with the Member Y Associations to ensure all Y People were invited and able to have their say in how the policy should be improved and implemented. During this process, Y Safeguarding received over 480 survey responses from Children and Young People, families and communities, Y People, Y Safeguarding Leads and our partner organisations. Y Safeguarding also engaged a diverse group of Y People through in-depth focus groups to ensure adequate feedback was heard and considered in the development of the new policy.

From this consultation, Y Safeguarding heard and incorporated the following feedback:

- The policy is presented in a more accessible and interactive way;
- The language is more inclusive; and
- They have ensured it is easy to understand how Safeguarding directly relates to Y Peoples' individual roles.

Y Safeguarding are also currently developing a child-friendly version of the policy, along with a communications plan for Member Y Associations and an implementation guide on how to roll out the new policy and ensure all Y People are aware and updated of it.

The new Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy is now publicly available [here](#) along with an interactive version [here](#).

The policy is designed to align with the Y's Safeguarding Strategy, Vision and Framework, and embeds other key pieces of work from Y Safeguarding such as the eCommitment, the National Safeguarding Risk Model and the Stay Safe, Tell Someone program. Y Safeguarding has also developed the first-ever national Safeguarding Guidance which complements the policy and supports Member Y Association's to embed the Safeguarding Framework and Policy initiatives in their respective Y's. All of these resources are available on the Y Safeguarding Portal [here](#).

Please read the policy and if you have any questions, do not hesitate to reach out to 'insert Member Y Safeguarding Lead' or Y Safeguarding at [safe@ymca.org.au](mailto:safe@ymca.org.au)



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## 2.3 Procedures

**Introduction:** Procedures underpin our policies and assist Y People to understand how to best carry out their work across all delivery lines to keep children and young people safe.

[National Principle 10 - policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.](#)

[Safeguarding Children and Young People Licensing Standards: 2.19 and 2.20.](#)

### Procedure Development

Procedures should relate back to any relevant policies so Y People understand the scope and overarching framework. However procedures are very much about the ‘how to’ and should have a step by step approach to assist Y People undertake certain roles or duties within their work. Procedures are typically more extensive than policies and have all the relevant information for Y People to understand. Procedures much like policies should be written in simple, easy to understand language and be accessible for all Y People.

Procedures allow for more information that is relevant to the local Member Y or centre as it incorporates what is relevant for a particular service delivery line. Because of this, consultation and the review of procedures is very important to understand how it is practically being implemented with the relevant workforce. Please refer to [policies](#) for different ways of engaging Y People to receive feedback during the review process.

### Communication and Accessibility

Much like policies, procedures should be regularly communicated and in various formats to all people they may involve. If there are changes or new procedures developed, all Y People should be kept up to date and receive relevant education and training to ensure they are familiar with the procedure and have the opportunity to ask questions or receive additional support.

Ensuring Y People understand policies and procedures in one part of this work, however Y People must also adhere to them and be able to recognise when others are not and feel empowered to speak up on this. Role modelling the right behaviour is important to ensure a good work culture and making it ‘part of what we do’ at the Y. Whilst our policies and procedures aim to keep children and young people safe, it is also about keeping Y People safe and ensuring they are protected when carrying out their work.

Please refer to Appendix 1 for an email template on how to communicate your Member Y's Safeguarding Lead information and reference to Y Safeguarding.

### Work, Health and Safety (WHS) Risk and Safeguarding Risk

When identifying, managing and communicating risks to the physical safety and wellbeing of children and young people, it is important to make sure that the right people have the right information to support you.



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WATCH THE  
VIDEO

Physical injuries resulting in accidents or trips (that are not caused by a failure of Y People to make the environment safe) must be reported to your WHS Team as per your Member Y's WHS Policy or alternative. Examples include (but are not limited to):

- When a child falls because they were running where they should not have been
- A child scrapes their knee and requires a band aid

When these injuries have occurred due to the intentional actions of another person or are caused by negligence of Y People to make the environment safe, these are considered as safeguarding concerns and relate to safeguarding risks- it is important to report them to your Association's Safeguarding Lead and Y Safeguarding. Examples include (but are not limited to):

- Inappropriate restrictive practices
- When a Child or Young Person is hit by a Y Person or peer
- When a Child or Young Person slips on a floor that should have been mopped and dried by a Y Person

If you are unsure of what is considered a WHS or Safeguarding concern, incident or risk, contact your Member Y's Safeguarding Lead or Y Safeguarding by emailing [safe@ymca.org.au](mailto:safe@ymca.org.au)

### Procedures at the Y

When developing local procedures at your Y, the below areas are good starting points to ensure you cover off all areas relevant to safeguarding. Each area has a few top tips and suggestions to include in these specific procedures.

### Social Media

- Y People must obtain consent from the parent or carer of any participating child or young person before engaging with them online and before posting or sharing any photos or videos of children and/or young people
- Y People must not engage with children or young people through their personal social media profiles
- All safeguarding concerns that are raised must be communicated to the local Y Safeguarding Lead within 24 hours
- Ensure at least two (2) Y People have access to any Y profiles (including instant messaging)
- Y People must not bully, coerce or use adult language when engaging with children and/ or young people
- Refer to the National eCommitment for best practice when engaging children and young people online



## Imagery/Videos

- Y People must only take videos or photos of participating children and / or young people, if it is required by, and appropriate to, the activity. (For example, to track their progress in gymnastics if the parents have requested)
- Y People must have consent from the parent or carer before posting or sharing images or videos of children and young people
- Y People must use Y approved devices such as centre cameras or room iPads and not store or distribute images or videos of participants on their personal devices
- Y People must ensure that videos and photos of children and young people are stored in an appropriate and secure way
- Y People must ensure that any photos or videos do not contain nudity, or any other inappropriate content

## Physical Contact

- Any physical contact should only be appropriate for the age and relevant program or service the child or young person is engaging in (For example, supporting a child on a balance beam)
- If physical contact is required for a certain task or activity (for example teaching a new technique in sport), Y People must where necessary inform the child or young person where they are going to make physical contact and for what purpose
- Any physical contact must be based on the needs of the child or young person not the needs of the Y Person
- Any physical contact must not be deemed to be sexual by a reasonable observer, be intended to cause harm or distress to the child or young person or be overly physical or unnecessary

## Ratios

- Ensure all legislative ratios are adhered to when working with children and young people, e.g. early childhood care
- Where possible there should always be two (2) staff members minimum with children or young people at any one time



## Overnight Stays

- Overnight stays must only occur with the written consent of children or young people's parents and/or carers
- Consent must include how long the overnight stay is for and the location of the stay
- Member Ys should also provide written approval for the overnight stay
- Children and young people must be provided with the ability to contact their parents and/or carers if they ever feel unsafe, uncomfortable or distressed
- Sleeping arrangements must not compromise the safety of the children and young people such as unsupervised sleeping arrangements or an adult in the same bed or room as a child
- Children and young people should only share rooms with children or young people of the same gender. If there are children or young people who identify as non-binary or transgender participating in programs that require overnight stays, they should be consulted with on their preferred sleeping arrangements and provisions made to ensure they feel comfortable and safe. Please refer to the Gender Diversity Safeguarding Guidance under the Diversity section of this document for more information.
- Adequate chaperones and supervision must be present
  - Under 16: one (1) chaperone to four (4) children
  - Over 16: one (1) chaperone to six (6) children

## Personal Care

- When looking after children and young people's personal care i.e. bathroom or changing nappies, ensure any doors always remain open
- In disability services, ensure there is an agreed personal care plan with the Y and parent and carer
- Y People must not assist children and young people with any elements of their personal care or do personal things that the child or young person could reasonably do themselves

## First Aid and Medications

- A standard care plan must be agreed to by a child or young person's parent or carer
- If medication or first aid is administered by a Y Person to a child or young person, their parent and carer must be notified as soon as reasonable
- All medication and first aid administered by a Y Person to a child or young person should be documented appropriately

## Gifts and Rewards

- Y People should not give gifts to children or young people, except if the value does not exceed \$25 and the child or young person's parent or carer is made aware of the gift
- If a Y Person receives a gift from a child or young person they must ensure the parent and carer are aware the gift was given and also notify their manager



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## Transporting Children and Young People

- The Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy states you should not transport children or young people alone unless you specifically have your Y Association's approval
- Ensure your supervisor/manager knows where you are and when you are departing and arrive safely
- Children and young person's parent/carer consent must be obtained before transporting them (written consent is preferred)
- The child or young person should sit in the backseat on the passenger side



### CASE STUDY

The Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy states that Y People must not transport a single child or young person alone unless specifically approved. In some services this is not practical, so Y Ballarat have developed a Transport Procedure and accompanying checklists for a specific program to assist Y People do this part of their work safely.



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## All Staff Email Template

Safeguarding children and young people is a national priority of the Y and we pride ourselves on our collective and national approach. We also pride ourselves on the individual actions of our frontline Y People who put our commitment to children and young people into practice every day.

But frontline Y People are not expected to do this alone! At the Y, all Y People are supported by their Member Y's Safeguarding Lead as well as the national Y Safeguarding Team.

[Safeguarding Lead's name], as [Member Y]'s [Safeguarding Lead's Title], works in partnership with the national Y Safeguarding Team below to help you understand your responsibilities to empower children and young people to feel safe and be safe at the Y, in their families and in their communities.



Photo of Safeguarding Lead

As our Member Y's Safeguarding Lead, [Safeguarding Lead's first name] represents [Member Y] on the national Safeguarding Consultative Group (SCG) and provides insight into the unique services and programs of our Member Y. This supports a truly national approach by informing the development of Australia-wide benchmarks for safeguarding risk management and continuous improvement.

[Safeguarding Lead's first name] can be contacted by calling [SL's Phone Number] or emailing [SL's email].

The national Y Safeguarding team is also resource for **all** [Member Y] staff and volunteers and is here to help our Y People to collectively grow in their ability to protect children and young people.

The team has developed the National Safeguarding Strategy, Framework, Policy, Licensing Standards and National Safeguarding Guidance as informed by feedback and advice from our frontline Y People as well as the collective expertise of the SCG. These can all be found at [ymca.org.au/safe](https://ymca.org.au/safe)



The team is also here to hear suggestions from all Y People on how we can all help each other to improve our resources, training and support for frontline staff and volunteers nationally.

"If you are ever unsure of where you fit in the national Safeguarding Framework and Strategy- or are unsure what safeguarding means in your role, refer to our National Safeguarding Guidance at [ymca.org.au/safe](https://ymca.org.au/safe) or get in touch with us by emailing [safe@ymca.org.au](mailto:safe@ymca.org.au) – we are looking forward to hearing from you!" *Y Safeguarding Team*

## 2.4 Practices

**Introduction:** Practices refer to the way things are done at the Y and are a reflection of our culture.

[National Principle 10 - policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.](#)

Practices may include formal documentation however are more often the result of organisational culture and the way things are done over time. These can be positive but can also be negative in some cases if poor habits become part of everyday Y practices.

Therefore it is important to ensure we continue to strive for good culture, follow all Y policies and procedures and live by our values – please refer to the [values and behaviours](#) section for more information.

Below are some examples of what poor practice can look like in your Y.

- Y People and children and young people don't feel empowered or supported to speak up on issues
- Y People and children and young people don't have clear expectations of their roles and responsibilities
- Y People and children and young people can be misinformed or not kept up to date
- Y People and children and young people aren't involved or consulted in decision making
- Limited opportunities for learning and development or to participate in key activities
- Poor relationships in the workplace i.e. low trust
- High staff turnover can often be a result
- Children and Young People aren't safe and their overall experience at the Y isn't as good



### CASE STUDY

An example of good practice within the Y is Y Ballarat's staff cards.  
The staff cards show Y Ballarat's ACF Accreditation and our Y values.

On the flip side – here are some examples of how you know when your Y has good practices.

- Clear expectations of Y People and children and young people
- Supportive and safe environment
- Y People are encouraged to participate and provide feedback (and feedback also provided to them)
- Opportunities are made at all levels of the organisation
- Learning and development opportunities
- Strong relationships at all levels of the organisations – trust, respectful, supportive etc.
- Children and young people feel safe and are safe – therefore having a better overall experience at the Y
- Fun!



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WATCH THE  
VIDEO

We know it can be difficult to challenge or speak up against poor practice and behaviours - especially if it is a colleague more superior to you. However it is so important that you do speak up if you see, hear or feel something that goes against the Y values or any policies, procedures or Code of Conduct as this ensures you are doing your bit to keep children and young people safe.

It should be noted that challenging poor practice is different to your reporting obligations. You must report safeguarding issues or concerns whereas challenging poor practice is not mandatory. However it is still very important to raise any concerns you may have about another Y Person's behaviour.

It can be difficult to speak up about poor practice and behaviour, but you must remember it is important for everyone - especially children and young people. Below are some tips on how you can challenge or speak up about poor practice at the Y:

- Practice with your peers/colleagues or families and friends
- Know what you are going to say – be clear but remain respectful and non-threatening
- Assess the situation, sometimes it isn't the right moment but other times the opportunity is there and then
- You may wish to write it down first to help
- Speak with your manager
- You can complete a confidential safeguarding concern form online
- If the behaviour or poor practice involves your manager you can always reach out to their superior, your Member Ys Safeguarding Lead or Y Safeguarding

If you are ever unsure whether it is your responsibility to speak up or challenge poor practice, have a read of the quote below which is a friendly reminder that we all have a responsibility to safeguard children and young people.



### CASE STUDY

Another great example of good practice is Y Brisbane have set up a 'Breach Book' which documents safeguarding policy and procedure 'near misses'. These are then collated and used by the Safeguarding Lead for education and training purposes as well as continuous improvement.

*Everybody, Somebody,  
Anybody and Nobody*

*There was an important job to do be done  
and **Everybody** was sure that **Somebody**  
would do it. **Anybody** could have done it,  
but **Nobody** did..*

***Somebody** got angry about that because it  
was **Everybody's** job. **Everybody** thought  
that **Anybody** could do it, but **Nobody**  
realised that **Everybody** wouldn't do it.*

*It ended up that **Everybody** blamed  
**Somebody** when **Nobody** did what  
**Anybody** could have done.*



## 2.5 Concerns and Complaints

**Introduction:** The Y takes all complaints and safeguarding concerns seriously and commits to seeking understanding and achieving resolution as soon as possible- this includes undertaking investigations and making referrals to child protection authorities where required.

[National Principle 9 - implementation of the National Child Safe Principles is regularly reviewed and improved.](#)

[Safeguarding Children and Young People Licensing Standards: 2.21, 2.22, 2.23 and 2.24.](#)

Following the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse it was found that appropriate complaint handling and response to safeguarding concerns is an essential part of being child safe. As we know, it is important to ensure policies and procedures are child friendly and designed for them - this is confirmed by the Royal Commission report in regards to managing reports and concerns. In order for children and young people to be safe, they must feel safe and being empowered to speak up and tell someone when something worries or concerns them is absolutely part of that.

Children and young people are more likely to speak up and tell someone about concerns or worries if they know their views are listened to, valued and welcomed.

Raising complaints in an organisation is difficult – the process can be complex and confusing. This is particularly true for children and young people. Children and young people may be unaware they have the right to speak up when they feel uncomfortable or unsafe, and can find the complaint process scary and confusing.

This is why the Y has developed the ‘Stay Safe Tell Someone’ program. Following consultation with over 500 children and young people the Y developed this program to empower anyone who may see something, hear something or feel something that worries or concerns them - to tell someone.

Each Member Y has a Reporting Safeguarding Concerns Procedure which will outline the process for managing safeguarding concerns or complaints. Each Member Y also has a dedicated Safeguarding Lead you can talk to or you can always contact the Y Safeguarding at [safe@ymca.org.au](mailto:safe@ymca.org.au).



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WATCH THE  
VIDEO

The following are the nine principles of the National Y Complaints Management Process as informed by guidance provided by the Office of the NSW Ombudsman in collaboration with the National Office for Child Safety.

The Y's concerns and complaints processes supports the rights, safety and wellbeing of all children and young people.

The Y ensures we are aware of our responsibility to report and take action to protect the safety of children and young people.

The Y shares appropriate information with our stakeholders to support transparent and accountable improvement.

The Y protects the privacy, anonymity and confidentiality of children and young people and maintains compliance and up to date knowledge of legislative obligations.

The Y monitors and manages the risks to children and young people associated with the management of received concerns and complaints.

The Y conducts fair, proportionate and thorough investigations to ensure concerns and complaints from children and young people are taken seriously.

The Y ensures our concerns and complaints processes are fair and we take the views of children and young people seriously.

The Y supports children and young people throughout the concerns and complaints processes - ensuring that they are aware of the outcomes and options for further review.

The Y maintains up to date and accurate records regarding concerns and complaints to ensure that past concerns and complaints inform continuous improvement of our services.



### CASE STUDY

The National Office for Child Safety in partnership with the Commissioner for Children and Young People Western Australia have developed some great resources online for reporting and managing safeguarding complaints or concerns.

<https://childsafety.pmc.gov.au/resources/speak-up-make-complaint>



## Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

If the child or young person is in immediate danger, please call 000 immediately.

See Appendix 2 in section [1.5 Education and Training](#) for information on how to manage the disclosure/s that require reporting or refer to Appendix 1 below.

Once the child or young person has provided all of the information that you need to progress the concern, thank them and let them know that you will keep them informed at each step of the process if they would like you to.

Depending on the nature of the concern, you may have legal obligations to report to the police, child-protection agencies or accreditation partners.

Once you have met all of your reporting requirements, you may need to undertake or request an investigation of the concern. It is important to note that New South Wales, Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory also operate under a Reportable Conduct Scheme, please see 'reporting safeguarding concerns within the Y' for more information.

## Complaints Management

It can be a scary experience to provide feedback of any kind- even for adults! Y People in front-line roles with children and young people should make sure that their participants know that they are here to help them and hear them in a non-judgmental way.

When a child or young person comes to you with a complaint, make sure not to lead the conversation- let them explain themselves whilst you offer reassurance that you will take it seriously and confirm that their complaint can help us to improve our services.

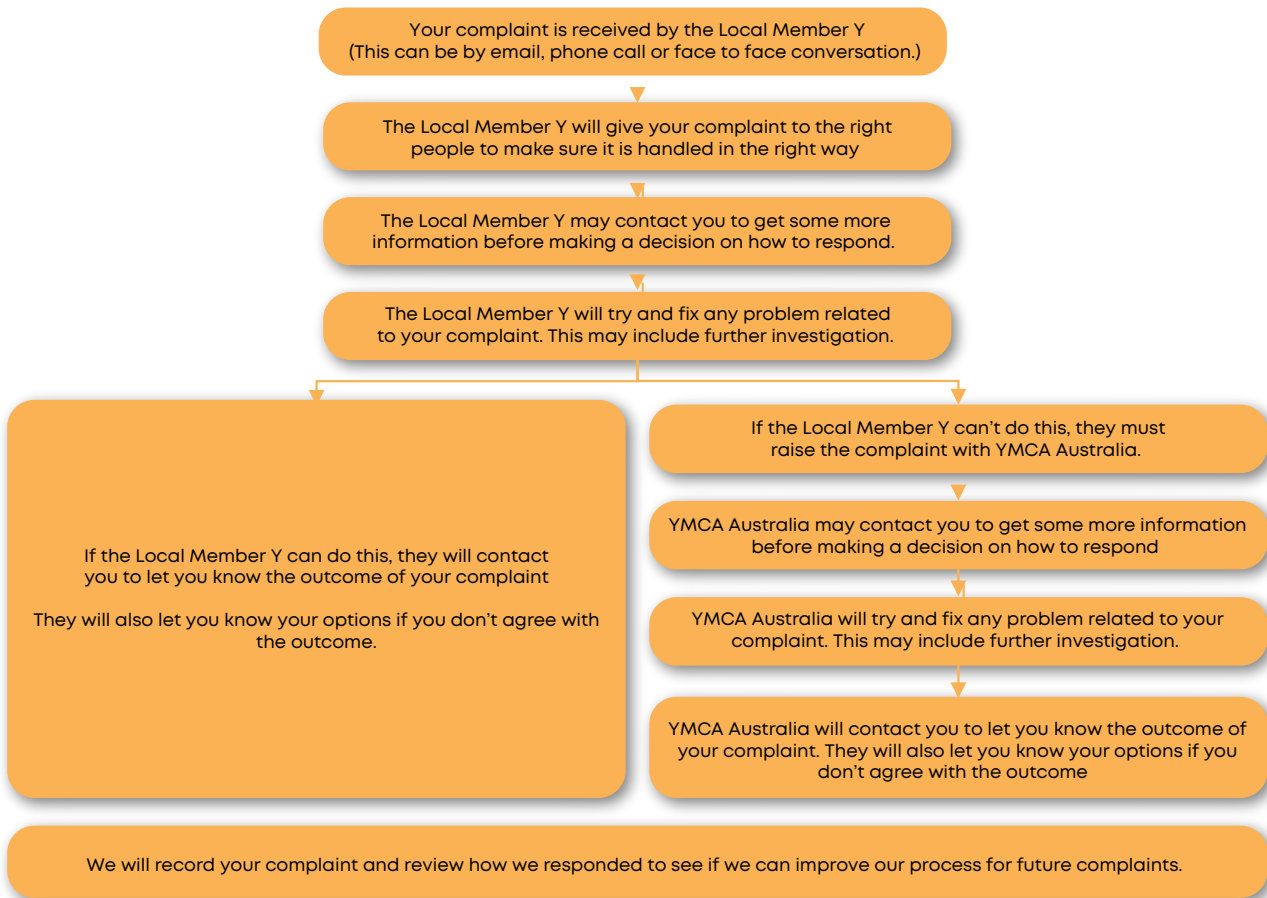
For some of Y People, it is a legal requirement to provide details of any complaint to the relevant early childhood education or care authority. It is important that all of our staff and Managers make time to support each other in understanding and meeting the requirements of their roles.



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## Communicating the process to children and young people

It is important to help the child or young person to understand the process. The following is a process map that describes the complaints management process for children and young people.



## What happens if further investigation is required

If a complaint or concern cannot be resolved through an informal process a decision of whether a matter will be investigated will be made. The decision of whether to investigate should be made through a risk-based approach and would take into consideration, not limited to:

- The seriousness of the allegation
- The wishes of the complainant
- The health, safety and wellbeing of the complainant and others involved
- The outcomes sought and any legal obligations

The decision and reasons should be recorded and communicated to the parties. A parent/carer and young person brochure has been developed to explain 'What happens in an Investigation' - please refer to [Appendix 2](#). A child friendly version will be coming soon.

For further information or support, Y Safeguarding can provide guidance on conducting investigations from the onset of a complaint and is developing a National Investigations Process Guidance document that will be released in 2022. For more information contact [safe@ymca.org.au](mailto:safe@ymca.org.au)



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## Roles and Responsibilities

Y Safeguarding, in partnership with the Member Y Safeguarding Leads, is here to support all Y People in their responsibilities as the first point of contact for any children and young people wishing to submit a complaint or concern.

As per the National Critical Incident Policy developed by Y Australia, Member Y's manage complaints and concerns locally whilst Y Safeguarding and Y Australia provide ongoing support to ensure that Y People respond to the complaint or concern in the best way. This means that the relevant Member Y maintains responsibility for all complaints and concerns.

However, Y Safeguarding continues to support Y People of all levels to understand and undertake their safeguarding concerns and complaints reporting obligations. Please contact Y Safeguarding at [safe@ymca.org.au](mailto:safe@ymca.org.au) any time.

## Reporting Safeguarding Concerns within the Y

All Y People must report safeguarding concerns to their Member Ys Safeguarding Lead and Y Safeguarding within 48 hours. This ensures that the right people have the right information to support you to manage the concern and to improve our processes to reduce the risk of such concerns to happen again.

Report all safeguarding concerns to Y Safeguarding each quarter.

Reporting Requirements under Legislation (Reportable Conduct and Mandatory Reporting.)

**Reportable Conduct Schemes** (currently in NSW, ACT and Victoria) provide a framework for reporting inappropriate conduct of organizational staff towards children and young people.

For more information relevant to your state or territory, please see the links below:

ACT - <https://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/ocyfs/children/reportable-conduct-scheme>

NSW - <https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/reportable-conduct-scheme>

Victoria - <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/reportable-conduct-scheme/>

**Mandatory Reporting** is a national scheme that mandates the reporting of suspected (and actual) child abuse to the relevant child protection agency in your state or territory. This includes abuse that is committed outside of the Y - such as domestic abuse towards children and/ or young people. For information directly relevant to your state or territory, visit <https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/mandatory-reporting-child-abuse-and-neglect>



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## Critical Incidents

The National Critical Incident Policy also details incident thresholds that require national intervention. In these incidents, Y Australia sets up a National Crisis Management Team- including the Y Chief Operating Officer of the relevant Member Y- and collaboratively seeks to find the best solution for the incident. This solution must then be implemented by the relevant Member Y locally.

## Dos and Don'ts When Managing Safeguarding Concerns

See Appendix 2 in section [1.5 Education and Training](#) for information on how to manage the disclosure/s that require reporting.

| Do's   | Don'ts  |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contact your Member Y's Safeguarding Lead and/or Y Safeguarding at any step of the process if you are unsure of what you must do next</li><li>• Remain impartial and do not reach a decision or determination until you have considered all the relevant information</li><li>• Take every concern seriously</li><li>• Take appropriate notes and ensure that all records are appropriately managed</li><li>• Make sure you know your responsibilities under the law</li><li>• Contact the required child protection agencies as soon as you have removed the risk to the Child or Young Person or within 24 hours whichever is earliest</li><li>• Keep the Child or Young Person informed of the process</li><li>• Maintain all records of safeguarding concerns for a minimum of 45 years</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do not confront the alleged perpetrator</li><li>• Ignore what you have been told</li><li>• Do not alter or delete any evidence</li><li>• Discuss the disclosure with people who do not need to know</li><li>• Think you have to do this alone (contact your Member Y's Safeguarding Lead or Y Safeguarding if you are not sure what to do)</li><li>• Delay in reporting the disclosure!</li></ul> |

### **Appendices:**

1. [Immediate Response and Managing Disclosures](#)
2. [Investigations Brochure for parents/carers and young people](#)



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# Immediate Response and Managing Disclosures

## Respect

Take their disclosure seriously. Avoid denial or distrustful responses. They need to feel believed- the disclosure is not the time to investigate.



## Listen

Let them guide the conversation. Try not to interrupt or finish their sentences. If you are unsure, ask them further open questions.



## Don't

Don't make promises or assumptions.

We cannot guarantee what will happen next and promises can lead to disappointment.



## Reassure

Let them know they're allowed to speak up and that they're doing the right thing! We are here to help. Let them know the next steps.

**If in doubt, contact your Safeguarding Lead or Y Safeguarding by emailing [Safe@ymca.org.au](mailto:Safe@ymca.org.au)**

## Write

Make sure to write notes as soon as possible afterwards. Include direct quotes of the exact words that they used if possible.



## Managing Disclosures

**Listen.** Let them lead the conversation. Ask open questions. "What do you mean by that?"  
**Respect.** Let them feel believed. Avoid denial as this could discourage them in future.  
**Avoid** making promises or assumptions.  
**Reassure.** Let them know they're doing the right thing. "You're allowed to speak up."  
**Write.** Make a record of the disclosure as soon as possible, including direct quotes if possible.



Fold or cut along the dashed lines to keep the card-sized version in your lanyard or wallet.

## Who can I talk to during the Investigation?

It's important to be with people you feel safe talking to and those who can update you on what step the investigation is at.

Any person that you have been told knows about the investigation can help you with this.

During an investigation you may feel a little overwhelmed or scared, which is completely normal and OK.

If this happens to you, your parents/carers, the Y Safeguarding lead, can help you find the right support.

It is important that if you feel worried, are scared or upset that you tell someone that you trust - these are your "trusted" people.



Your trusted people are there to talk with you if you feel worried during the investigation and to make sure you are being cared for and are safe.

## What happens when the investigation is finished?

When the investigation is finished, your parent/carer will be told what the final decision of the investigation was.

The investigator will talk about what they think should happen next to make sure everyone is safe and supported.

If you or your parent / carer is not happy with the final decision then they can ask for further information.

Your parents/carer may decide that it would be good for you to talk to a counsellor if you are still worried about things.

This might be your family doctor or someone who is skilled in helping.



Kids Helpline  
[www.kidshelpline.com.au](http://www.kidshelpline.com.au)  
Australian Human Rights Commission  
[www.humanrights.gov.au](http://www.humanrights.gov.au)  
Y Safeguarding  
[www.ymca.org.au](http://www.ymca.org.au)



## Safeguarding

*Feel safe, be safe*

## What happens in an Investigation?

For Children and Young People of the Y

[ymca.org.au](http://ymca.org.au)

[safe@ymca.org.au](mailto:safe@ymca.org.au)

## What is an investigation and why is it happening?

### Your Protection matters

If you tell us that someone has hurt you or makes you feel unsafe OR you see someone hurt another child or young person we will take this very seriously . If this happens we will

- 1. Recognise** - unsafe behaviours and help make sure everyone is safe
- 2. Respond** - look at how serious the incident is
- 3. Report** - tell any authority that needs to know (this might be the police)
- 4. Record** - will get more information from you, anyone else that may have been hurt or felt unsafe and people who saw or heard what happened OR if someone feels like you may be unsafe - **this is the investigation**
- 5. Reflect** - learn from any mistakes and make sure we are doing all we can to keep children and young people safe.



You have a right to protection against any form of abuse or harm. We will listen and look into any concerns you tell us about.

## What happens in the Investigation?

### Consent to Participate

If you are part of an investigation, the investigator will:

- 1. Ask** permission from your parents/carer and you before they speak to you - this is called an interview
- 2. Tell** you and your parent/carer what the investigation is about
- 3. Agree** with you and your parent /carer who they can talk to about the investigation.

When an investigator comes to talk with you they want you to feel safe and supported. They will make sure you will have at least one "safe person" who is an adult there with you during the interview.



You have a right to have a voice, to be heard and for adults to take your concerns seriously.

## Who else knows about this?

### Your Privacy matters

The Y protects your privacy. So, only people who need to know to help find the facts and give you the right support will be involved.

The Investigator will tell everyone they speak to, including you, that it is important that they (and you) don't talk about the investigation with friends. The investigator will talk to you about who else is best to speak to if you wish to. the Y calls these people your "trusted people"

The investigator will also need to talk to the person who may have hurt you or you saw hurt someone else.

They will ask them what they believed happened as well. When they interview this person they will always make sure you are safe.



You have a right to have your personal information protected. Parents have the duty of care to make sure your rights are protected until you are old enough or able to do this yourself.



## Safeguarding

*Feel safe, be safe*

### What happens in an Investigation?

For Children and Young People of the Y

[ymca.org.au](http://ymca.org.au)

[safe@ymca.org.au](mailto:safe@ymca.org.au)

#### What is an investigation and why is it happening?

You have a right to protection against any form of abuse or harm. We will listen and look into any concerns you tell us about.

#### What happens in the Investigation?



You have a right to have a voice, to be heard and for adults to take your concerns seriously.

#### Who else knows about this?

You have a right to have your personal information protected. Parents have the duty of care to make sure your rights are protected until you are old enough or able to do this yourself.



#### Who can I talk to during the Investigation?

Your trusted people are there to talk with you if you feel worried during the investigation and to make sure you are being cared for and are safe.



#### What happens when the investigation is finished?

Websites that might help?

Kids Helpline

[www.kidshelpline.com.au](http://www.kidshelpline.com.au)

Australian Human Rights Commission

[www.humanrights.gov.au](http://www.humanrights.gov.au)

Y Safeguarding

[www.ymca.org.au](http://www.ymca.org.au)





## Environment

This chapter refers to the surroundings at your Y – both physical, online and the people involved. In order for children and young people to feel and be safe, the environment must support their safety and empower them to speak up when something doesn't seem right.

The elements under this chapter will give practical ways to ensure the surroundings at your Y are supporting children and young people being and feeling safe by minimising the risks of any harm coming to them.

## 3.1 eSafety

**Introduction:** At the Y, we continue to explore new ways to engage with children and young people- this includes online platforms. Whilst these platforms have a unique ability to reach our participants, we must make sure that we encourage safe use and minimise risks to our children and young people. The following is informed by guidance provided by the Commonwealth eSafety Commissioner and enables Y People to find the best ways to use online platforms.

[National Principle 8 - physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.](#)

[Safeguarding Children and Young People Licensing Standards: 3.1.](#)

### Tips for all Y People

The ever evolving online environment presents new and unknown risks for children and young people- some of which even their parents and caregivers cannot constantly monitor.

Whilst we cannot always keep them safe online, all Y People have a responsibility to do all that they can to ensure that they are safe and feel safe when they engage with us in this environment.

We also have a responsibility to make sure that children and young people are as aware of new threats as we are and, as such, it is important for the Y to take time to understand new technology, apps and websites that pose a risk to children and young people. The Australian Childhood Foundation have developed a practice guide for personnel to use, please refer to [Appendix 11](#) for the full Social Media Practice Guide.

See the eCommitment at [Appendix 2](#) below to understand the Dos and Don'ts of online engagement with children and young people.

Each Member Y is encouraged to send the eCommitment to all Y People before they engage with children and young people online, and to ensure that they read, understand and acknowledge that they will make sure that they follow these guidelines during all online activity.

We always recommend checking back on the eSafety Commissioner's website for the latest up to date information. The eSafety Commissioner recently published some new data and evidence on keeping children and young people from diverse communities safe online and the increased risks some diverse groups have. You can read more on this by clicking the link below.

<https://www.esafety.gov.au/about-us/what-we-do/protecting-voices-risk-online>



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In 2021 Y Safeguarding launched the 'Stay Safe Online Tell Someone' program which aims to empower children and young people to tell someone if they see, hear or feel something that makes them feel worried or concerned online.

The program consists of three (3) resources:

- \* Children (8-12 year old)
- \* Young People (13-18 year old)
- \* Adults and the community

The resources are freely accessible at the below website.

<https://ymca.org.au/stay-safe-online/>

## Official Y Pages and Profiles

Social Media and other online platforms are a very useful way for the Y to engage with children and young people, but it is important that they are used appropriately.

It is also important for Y people who use official Y channels online, including social media pages and profiles, to understand the best way to manage any complaints or safeguarding concerns raised by children or young people. The following are a few tips:

- Reassure the child or young person that they have been heard and that we will take their complaint or concern seriously.
- Let them know that the Y prefers to use a different way to follow up their concerns or complaints including the phone or by email. Ask them for their contact details or the contact details for an adult that they trust.
- Forward the details of the concern or complaint, with the provided contact details, to your Member Y's Safeguarding Lead. They will advise you on the best manage the concern or complaint going forward.

Reassure the Child or Young Person that they have been heard and that we will take their complaint or concern seriously.

Let them know that the Y prefers to use a different way to follow up their concerns or complaints including the phone or by email. Ask them for their contact details or the contact details for an adult that they trust.

Forward the details of the concern or complaint, with the provided contact details, to your Association's Safeguarding Lead. They will advise you on the best manage the concern or complaint going forward.

Visit [this website](#) for up to date contacts for the Safeguarding Leads of all Member.



## Online Engagement Sessions

The Y continues to explore new avenues to engage with children and young people and this includes online sessions and seminars at times where face to face engagement may not be possible.

The following are tips and resources to support Y People to make sure that children and young people can feel safe and be safe when joining these sessions.

### Prior to the Sessions

The following should be considered during the design and development stages for these online engagement sessions.

### Registration and Seeking Consent

Whilst the majority of children and young people who will engage using our online sessions have already enrolled or registered for face to face services, it is important to ensure that the correct information (including parental or caregivers' consent) has been provided before the child or young person can engage with the Y in this new way.

Information required from Parents or Caregivers to undertake best practice safeguarding includes:

- Child's name
- Child's Date of Birth
- Parent's/ Caregiver's Name
- Parent's/ Caregiver's Phone Number
- Parent's/ Caregiver's Email Address
- Consent for the participation of the Child or Young Person

For ongoing programs with more than one session, Y People are encouraged to reach out to the Parents or Caregivers of the child or young person to ensure that they understand the nature of the program and can ask any questions they may have.

The Parent or Caregiver should also be provided a copy of the eCommitment, Guide for Parent's and Caregivers and Guide for Children and Young People.

Once they have received all of these and provided consent for their child's involvement, the child or young person can then be invited to participate.



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## Risk Assessments

Y People must consider anything that could go wrong during any planned sessions. The best way to do this is to complete a risk assessment that is tailored to each program. Find the Y Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template at [Appendix 1](#) below.

Consider holding a brainstorming session with relevant Y People, including the Y Person who has developed the content, the host and your Member Y's Safeguarding Lead.

The risks assessment template will help you to consider the following:

- What could go wrong?
- What could lead to this?
- What will happen if this goes wrong?
- What controls are in place to stop this from happening or to reduce the impact if it does?
- Are these enough?
- What else could be done to stop this from happening or to reduce the impact if it does?
- Who will manage this risk?

It is important for all Y People to understand their responsibilities to manage risks to children and young people. You can find out more on how to manage risks for children and young people online by heading to the eSafety Commissioner's website and using some of their online resources here. <https://www.esafety.gov.au/key-issues/covid-19/online-collaboration-tools>

The following steps are recommended when considering risks for each program:

1. The development of the general program. This includes risks that will be the same for every session for this particular program. (For example, the risk that unknown people may join the session.)
2. Before each individual session. This step reminds Y People to consider any unique risks to each session that may not have been considered during the first assessment. (For example, the risk that there may not be an appropriate background depending on the home from which it is hosted.)
3. Ongoing review if the environment or involved Y People have changed. (For example, if the Y Person who completed the initial assessment is no longer available to monitor any changes, or if a pandemic occurs.)

Member Y Safeguarding Leads and Y Safeguarding are available to support you during this process.



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## eCommitment

The eCommitment is a commitment from all Y People to the children and young people that we engage with online.

Each Member Y is encouraged to send the eCommitment to all Y People before they engage with children and young people online, and to ensure that they read, understand and acknowledge that they will make sure that they follow these guidelines during all online activity. The eCommitment must be sent to the Parents and Caregivers of all participants in online programs.

See the eCommitment at [Appendix 2](#) below.

## Guide for Parents and Caregivers Guide

This guide supports Parents and Caregivers to ensure that their children and young people can feel safe and be safe online- both during Y Programs and during any other activities.

This has been informed by resources provided by the eSafety Commissioner including the [eSafety Guide](#) which provides details of key online platforms popular with children and young people.

Y People are encouraged to provide a copy of this Guide to Parents and Caregivers during the registration or enrolment process.

See the Guide for Parents and Caregivers Guide at [Appendix 3](#) below.

## Guide for Children and Young People

This guide supports children and young people to feel safe and be safe when they are online, both during Y Programs and during any other activities.

This has also been informed by resources developed by the eSafety Commissioner. Y People are encouraged to provide a copy of this Guide to Parents and Caregivers during the registration or enrolment process.

See the Guide for Children and Young People at [Appendix 4](#) below.

## Hosts' Safeguarding Checklist

The Hosts' Checklist includes key tips for Y People who will be running each session. It includes tips for getting ready for the session including processes to consider before the session begins - including the Responding to Inappropriate Language and Responding to Nudity or Inappropriate Imagery Processes below.

See the Hosts' Checklist at [Appendix 5](#) below.



## During each Session

The following should be considered during the delivery stages for these online engagement sessions.

### Welcome Tips

It is important to consider safeguarding when welcoming participants to any session to set the tone and to remind the participants that we take complaints and concerns seriously. Consider mentioning:

- Welcome the participants and let them know what the session is about.
- The Y's commitment to safeguarding and the details of the Member Y's Safeguarding Lead.
- Mutual responsibilities to make the best of the session- mention the eCommitment, Guide for Parents and Caregivers and Guide for Children and Young People.
- Let them know what will happen if someone shows nudity, uses inappropriate language or shares inappropriate imagery.
- Ask them if they have any questions to start with and allow them enough time to ask them as required.

See the Welcome Script Template at [Appendix 6a](#) to see how these topics can be included in a Welcome Script.

### Responding to an Unexpected or Unregistered Participant

As the Y explores platforms that support us to increase our reach when engaging with children and young people, this also increases the risk of unknown participants joining our sessions. To protect our participants, it is important for the Host to acknowledge unknown participants and to determine, as soon as possible, whether they must remove them or not.

During public sessions where anyone can visit, Y People must monitor the behavior of all participants within the session (including within any available chat functions.)

During private sessions for pre-registered participants, it is important to remove any uninvited participants as soon as possible (whilst reminding them of the registration process for future sessions if appropriate.)

See the Responding to an Unexpected or Unregistered Participant Process at [Appendix 7](#).



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## Responding to inappropriate language

Y People who are hosting an online session are responsible for protecting participants from inappropriate behaviours- including the behaviour of other participants.

If a Y Person uses inappropriate language, such as swearing, then the session must be stopped. If a participant uses inappropriate language the host must follow the Responding to Inappropriate Language Process at [Appendix 8](#) below. This includes the consideration of the following:

- Whether the language used is strong enough to require the host to remove the participant immediately, or whether an initial warning is enough.
- If the language is strong enough, or the participant continues to use inappropriate language after the warning, the Host must remove them from the meeting.
- If several participants are using inappropriate language, the Host must stop the meeting.

## Responding to nudity or inappropriate imagery

Y People must stop any meeting where a participant shows nudity or shares inappropriate imagery. The Host should then communicate with all participants (who have provided email addresses) why the session was cancelled and when the session may be rescheduled.

Please see the Responding to Nudity or Inappropriate Imagery Process at [Appendix 8](#) below.

## Closing the Session

It is important to bookend each session by reminding the participants of the Ys approach to safeguarding at the start and at the end of each session. Let them know:

- About the feedback process for each session.
- The Y takes complaints and safeguarding concerns very seriously.
- The contact details for their Member Y's Safeguarding Lead.

See the Closure Script Template at [Appendix 6b](#) to see how these topics can be included in a Welcome Script.

## After each Session

The following should be considered after each of these online engagement sessions.



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## Feedback for each session

To ensure that the Y's programs and services are continuously improved and to empower participants by including them in the review process, Y People are encouraged to provide an opportunity for participants to provide feedback.

Key questions to ask include:

- What did you like best about the session?
- What did you like least about the session?
- What do you think we could do better?
- Do you have any other comments to share about the session?
- Do you have any other comments to share about the Host?

These open questions, that invite participants to provide comment based feedback, provide unique insights into the individual opinions of each participant but to ensure a more collective analysis of the feedback of multiple participants over time, please consider the closed questions mentioned in the next section.

It is also important to remind participants of the right person to talk to if they have any complaints or safeguarding concerns that may relate to the behaviour of Y People.

See the Feedback Form Template at [Appendix 11](#) to see how these questions can be included.

## Continuous Improvement of online programs

Feedback Forms are a great way to seek feedback from participants, but each returned form is only one piece of the puzzle when continuing to build upon Y programs and services.

Using closed questions (such as "Would you recommend this session to your friends?" where participants can only answer yes or no) allows Y People to aggregate the responses and see the bigger picture. (For example if 80% of participants say no, then you know that the session needs improvement.)

Other questions that support data-based improvement include:

| Please select the 2 best aspects of the session:  | Please select the 2 worst aspects of the session:   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Topic and content</li><li>o Resources</li><li>o The Host</li><li>o Polls</li><li>o Audience Participation</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Topic and content</li><li>o Resources</li><li>o The Host</li><li>o Polls</li><li>o Audience Participation</li></ul> |



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(These allow Y People to identify the successful elements of the session and the elements that need improvement.)

- What would you rate the session? (1 to 10)
- What would you rate the Host's knowledge? (1 to 10)
- What would you rate the resources? (1 to 10)

Online survey platforms like Survey Monkey are useful tools when seeking participant feedback, but it is important to note the privacy risks with such sites. These sites often do not have adequate information security so to make the most of these platforms- avoid using personal information or information that may be sensitive for your Member Y.

### **Appendices:**

1. [NSU Risk Assessment Template](#)
2. [ECommitment](#)
3. [Guide for Parents and Caregivers](#)
4. [Guide for Children and Young People](#)
5. [Hosts' Safeguarding Checklist](#)
6. **Session Script Templates**
  - a. [Welcome Script Template](#)
  - b. [Closure Script Template](#)
7. [Responding to Unexpected/ Unregistered Participants Process](#)
8. [Responding to Inappropriate Language Process and Responding to Nudity or Inappropriate Imagery Process](#)
9. **Email Templates**
  - a. [Email for participants who have been removed](#)
  - b. [Email for all participants when a session has been interrupted or stopped](#)
10. [Feedback Form Template](#)
11. [Social Media Practice Guide](#)



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|       |             |           |             |
|-------|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| Date: | Select Date | YMCA:     | Select YMCA |
|       |             | Location: |             |

**Please select your YMCA**

Consider: Have new staff, volunteers or contractors started working at the site before they have their Working with Vulnerable People / Children Checks? Have new programs, services or equipment been brought into the Centre? Has the environment of the Centre changed (for example: change in management, natural disasters, pandemics etc.)?

Why do you need to do an assessment?

|               |                   |           |                           |        |  |        |  |
|---------------|-------------------|-----------|---------------------------|--------|--|--------|--|
| Completed by: | [Enter Your Name] | Position: | [What is your job title?] | Phone: |  | Email: |  |
|---------------|-------------------|-----------|---------------------------|--------|--|--------|--|

| Causes   | Risk   | Consequences  | Inherent Risk Rating  | Controls  | Residual Risk Rating   | Treatments  | Risk Owner   |
|--|--|---|---|---|--|---|--|
| What could cause the risk to happen?<br>(There may be a lot of causes, or only one. You may also find that the same cause/s can result in several separate risks.) | What could go wrong?<br>(A safeguarding risk is an event that could negatively affect the Y's ability to protect the safety and welfare of children and young people.) | What will happen if it does?<br>(What are the results if the risk happens? These can include reputational damage, increase in safeguarding incidents, reduced participant numbers etc.) | This is the risk rating with nothing in place to reduce the likelihood or severity.<br>(Dropbox)      | Tools and tactics currently in place to minimize the likelihood of the risk happening- or the severity of the consequences if the risk does happen.     | This is the risk rating once you have considered the existing controls in place.<br>(Dropbox)  | Further actions required.<br>(Only necessary if the current controls are not enough to appropriately reduce the likelihood and severity of the risk. Where the severity of the risk cannot be changed, Y People must focus their efforts on reducing the likelihood.) | This is the name/ position of the Y Person who must manage and review the controls and treatments. |
| • Lack of appropriate training for Y People  | A child or young person may be restrained (without justification)  | • Increased harm to children and young people   | High<br>(Without the controls or treatments such as training for Y People, this risk is very likely.) | • Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy<br>• Ongoing training for Y People<br>• Resources to help Y People to understand their responsibilities | High<br>(Whilst the likelihood is reduced because of the controls, the consequences are still severe so the risk rating remains the same.) | • Safeguarding incidents discussed at all team meetings- to ensure that all Y People know about them<br>• Restrictive practices training tailored to relevant Y teams   | John Smith,<br>Centre Manager  |
| • Lack of awareness of what restrictive practices means  |  | • Non-compliance with legal requirements  | Rating  |   | Rating   |   |  |
| • Stress resulting from understaffing  |  | • Reputational damage and reduction in enrolments   | Rating  |   | Rating   |   |  |
|  |  |   | Rating  |   | Rating   |   |  |

|   |               |   |
|---|---------------|---|
| Are the Residual Risk Ratings acceptable? | Select Yes/No | Approved by: (Confirm with your Manager who should approve this.) |
|---|---------------|---|

If you would like any further support to identify or manage your safeguarding risks, please contact Y Safeguarding by emailing [safe@ymca.org.au](mailto:safe@ymca.org.au)



# eCommitment



## We will:

- Try our best to make sure you can safely access and engage with the Y online and get the most out of our services
- Make sure to get permission from your parent or caregiver before we engage with you online
- Always make sure that a parent or caregiver and / or other Y People are copied into everything that we send you
- Only communicate with you about Y related activities, from a Y approved device (unless we are providing youth or counseling services.)
- Get permission from your parent or caregiver before we post or share any photos or videos of you
- Make sure that the right people are told about any concerns you may let us know about and the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and your Member Y Safeguarding Procedure is followed at all times
- Do our best to make sure that any information you give to us is protected under privacy laws
- Ensure you are told if we record any of our engagements with you online

***If you direct or private message us about your concerns, the Y Person who sees your message will request your contact details and share your concerns so the right Y Person can help you.***

## We will not:

- Message you privately or one on one unless we are providing youth or counseling services.
- Message you using a personal account -we will only use approved Y profiles. If you are unsure or don't recognise the profile, please speak with an adult you trust.
- Post or share pictures or videos of children and young people - who participate in our programs -on a personal profile (we will only use approved Y profiles)
- Post or share any inappropriate pictures of children or young people on any profiles
- Swear, use adult language or talk about anything that is inappropriate when communicating with children and young people
- Bully you or force you to do anything or share anything
- Encourage you to keep what we talk about a secret, or what you talk about with anyone else
- Ask you to meet us anywhere for any reason other than what is appropriate in the program or service you are involved in
- Share your information with other people without getting permission from you and your parent or caregiver
- unless we have to by law- for example when you tell us that someone is trying to harm you
- Encourage you to visit sites that we think may have viruses or where your information is not protected



**If you have seen something or felt something that concerns you, speak to a Y Person that you trust face to face, over the phone or by email.**



**Use the QR code to find the right contact for your Member Y.**



# Engaging with the Y Online

## A guide for Parents and Caregivers

We believe in the power of inspired young people. For young people to be inspired they must feel safe and be safe.

The Online world can be a scary place, and whilst we make sure that Y People are equipped to keep your Children and Young People safe during our programs, there are a few things Parents and Caregivers should consider whilst they are online.

### Get to know Y People

Taking some time to meet and greet with Y People during our sessions allows for open conversations about how your Child or Young Person is interacting with others.

It takes a village and these conversations help you to identify when your Child or Young Person may be having negative experiences online.

### Speak with them after each session

Have open conversations about who they're talking to online – inside and outside of Y Programs

### Consider joining your Children and Young People when they're online

It's important to share your children's and Young People's interests.

When online, this also gives you a chance to experience our sessions so that you can speak with your Child or Young Person about what they have learnt, what they have enjoyed and if there is anything that they did not enjoy.

### Consider Parental Controls

Parental Controls help you to monitor and limit what your child or young person sees online. But speak with them and let them know why you have applied them. It's important that they understand that you haven't applied them because you are trying to stop their fun.

### Read the Y's eCommitment

The Y has written up a commitment to let you know what to expect from us.

It includes Do's and Don'ts when we welcome your Children and Young People into our online programs. Find the eCommitment by clicking here or visiting

<https://ymca.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Y-Safeguarding-eCommitment.pdf>

If you have a concern about the behaviour of a Y Person, please visit our reporting page by using the QR code in the yellow box below.

### Consider limiting how long they can spend alone online

When your children and Young People use their devices in shared family rooms, you can monitor and manage who they engage with online.

You can also help to make sense of it all with them.

### Set Time Limits

Help them to maintain a balance between online activities and offline time.

### Keep an eye on new apps and platforms

To keep your Children and Young People safe online, it is important to keep on top of new apps and platforms.

Visit the eSafety Commissioner's eSafety Guide to find out more:

<https://www.esafety.gov.au/key-issues/esafety-guide>

### If you see, hear or feel something that worries you, tell someone

If something happens online that concerns you or your child, please let us know.

Click here or use the QR code in the yellow box to visit our Safeguarding Reporting Page where you'll find the contact details of our local Safeguarding Leads or a form to let Y Safeguarding know about your experiences.



# Engaging with the Y Online

## A guide for Children and Young People

### Read our eCommitment

The Y has written up a commitment to let you know what to expect from us.

It includes Do's and Don'ts when we welcome you into our online programs. Find the eCommitment by clicking here or visiting <https://ymca.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Y-Safeguarding-eCommitment.pdf>

If you feel like a Y Person has done something wrong, please speak with a friend or an adult you can trust, then visit our reporting page by using the QR code in the yellow box below.

### Think about who you're talking to

Sometimes people online are not who they say they are

### Look after your fellow participants

Help your fellow children and young people to get the most out of their sessions online.

Don't bully, swear or share anything that you wouldn't like to see.

### Look after Y People

Y People are dedicated to making sure that you have a safe and fun experience online but if you are not happy with how they have acted, please use the QR code below to let us know after the session.

### Speak with your Parents or Caregivers

Have open conversations and let them know what you're doing online.

They want to help you stay safe online and they can help you make sense of any concerns you may have.

### If you see, hear or feel something online which makes you feel unsafe – tell someone

If something happens online that concerns you, speak with a friend or an adult you can trust, then please let us know.

Click here or use the QR code in the yellow box to Safeguarding Reporting Page where you'll find the contact details of our local Safeguarding Leads as well as a form to let Y Safeguarding know about your experiences.

### Be careful of your camera and background

Sometimes people can find out information about you by looking at your background- for example finding out what school you go to by looking at your uniform.

Consider covering your camera when you're not using it.



## **Appendix 5: Hosts' Safeguarding Checklist**

- Are you familiar with the software platform?
  - Do you know how to start and stop the session?
  - Do you know how to use waiting rooms (where the host can choose whether to allow a participant into the session or not)?
  - Do you know how to set up a password for the session? (to be provided to invitees)
  - Do you know how to remove participants if required?
- Have you scheduled a second Y Person to attend the session (remotely or physically next to you)? (This person must be appropriate present within the session to note if any inappropriate behavior occurs)
- Have you completed the Risk Assessment Template considering any risks that might be unique to each session?
- Have you obtained consent from the parents or caregivers of the each participant, as appropriate?
- Are you familiar with the in-session processes?
  - Are you familiar with the important safeguarding points within the Welcome and Closure Scripts?
  - Do you know what to do if an unexpected or unregistered participant joins the session?
  - Do you know what to do if a participant uses inappropriate language?
  - Do you know what to do if someone shows nudity or shares inappropriate imagery?
- Are you familiar with the required information to mention during the session?
- Do you know the name and contact details for your Association's Safeguarding Lead?
- Do you know the contact details for Y Safeguarding? (safe@ymca.org.au)
- Have you tested the reliability of your internet service? Do you need to consider another location?



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## **Appendix 6: Session Script Templates**

### **Appendix 6a: Welcome Script Template**

Welcome to [Session Name- I.E. Gym Basics] with [Your Y- I.E. Y Geelong]!

We're excited to see you again!

Here at the Y, we are committed to making sure that Children and Young People can feel safe and be safe and to do that, we have a few things to mention before we begin.

To do this, we have developed three documents that help us to understand our shared responsibilities and we hope you have had a chance to read through these:

- The Y People eCommitment;
- Guide for Children and Young People; and
- Guide for Parents and Caregivers.

If you haven't received these, please let us know in the chat or by emailing [appropriate email address].

Following these guides, if any participants use inappropriate language, show nudity or share inappropriate imagery, we may remove the participant or stop the whole session and reschedule. It is important that you provide your email address, or the email address of an adult you can trust, so we can keep you informed if this happens.

**[If a participant used inappropriate language, showed nudity or shared inappropriate imagery in the last session:**

**Unfortunately, this happened in our previous session and we have spoken with that participant to let them know why this can't happen again. This is a new day and we are looking forward to this fresh session! ]**

We also take all complaints and safeguarding concerns very seriously and you can let us know about these by emailing our Safeguarding Lead using [Association's Safeguarding Email Address] – these details are also available on the feedback form that we will send out at the end of the session. It is important to note that if you do submit a complaint or concern, the information may be shared with Y Safeguarding and will be shared with government agencies as required by the law.

Does anyone have any questions about all of this? (Ensure appropriate time for questions- provide the Safeguarding Leads email again if there are too many questions.)

(Continue the session as planned.)



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## **Appendix 6b: Closure Script Template**

[If the session must be stopped because a participant uses inappropriate language, shows nudity or shares inappropriate imagery:

I apologise to you all, but we must close this session. Thank you for your time, we will let you know if this session will be rescheduled.]

If the session has been completed as planned (without inappropriate behaviour):

Thank you all for participating in our session- we hope you had as much fun as we did!

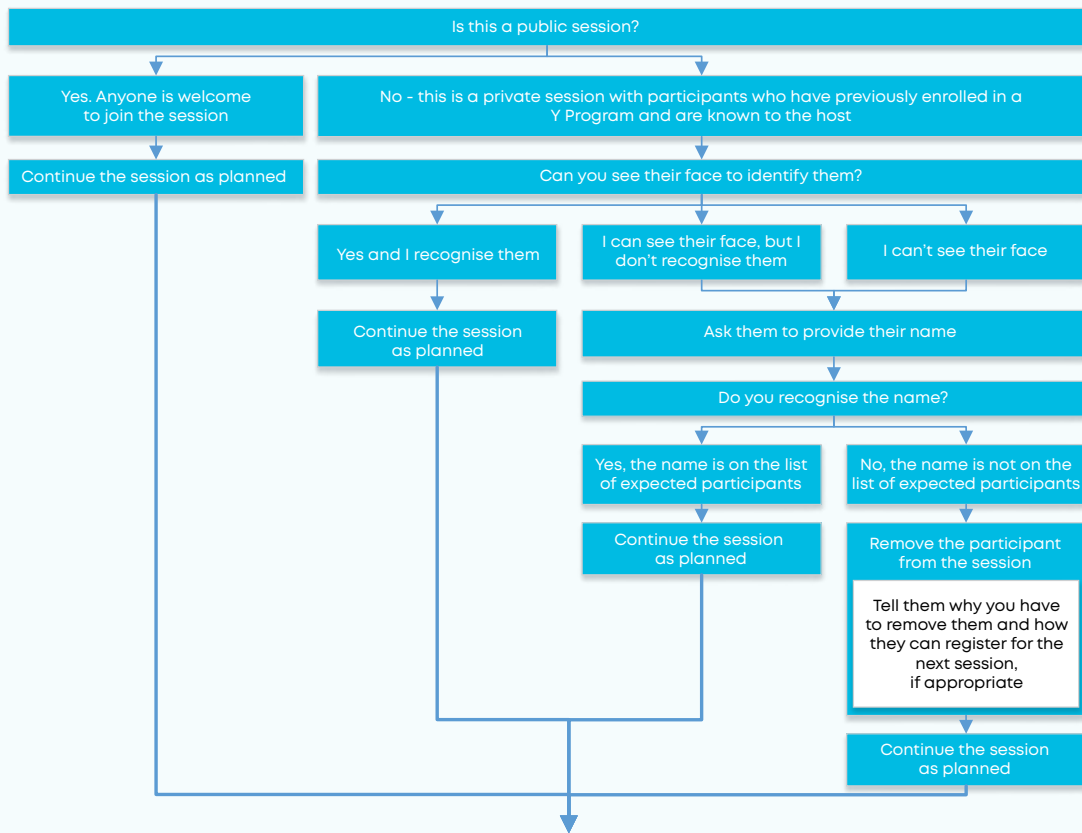
Just a quick reminder that we will be inviting you to provide feedback shortly. And if you have any complaints or safeguarding concerns, please email our Safeguarding Lead using [Association's Safeguarding Email Address].



**Appendix 7:**

**Responding to Unexpected/ Unregistered Participants Process**

Responding to Unexpected / Unregistered Participants



See the Responding to Inappropriate Behaviour Process on the next page



## Appendix 8:

### Responding to Inappropriate Language Process and Responding to Nudity or Inappropriate Imagery Process

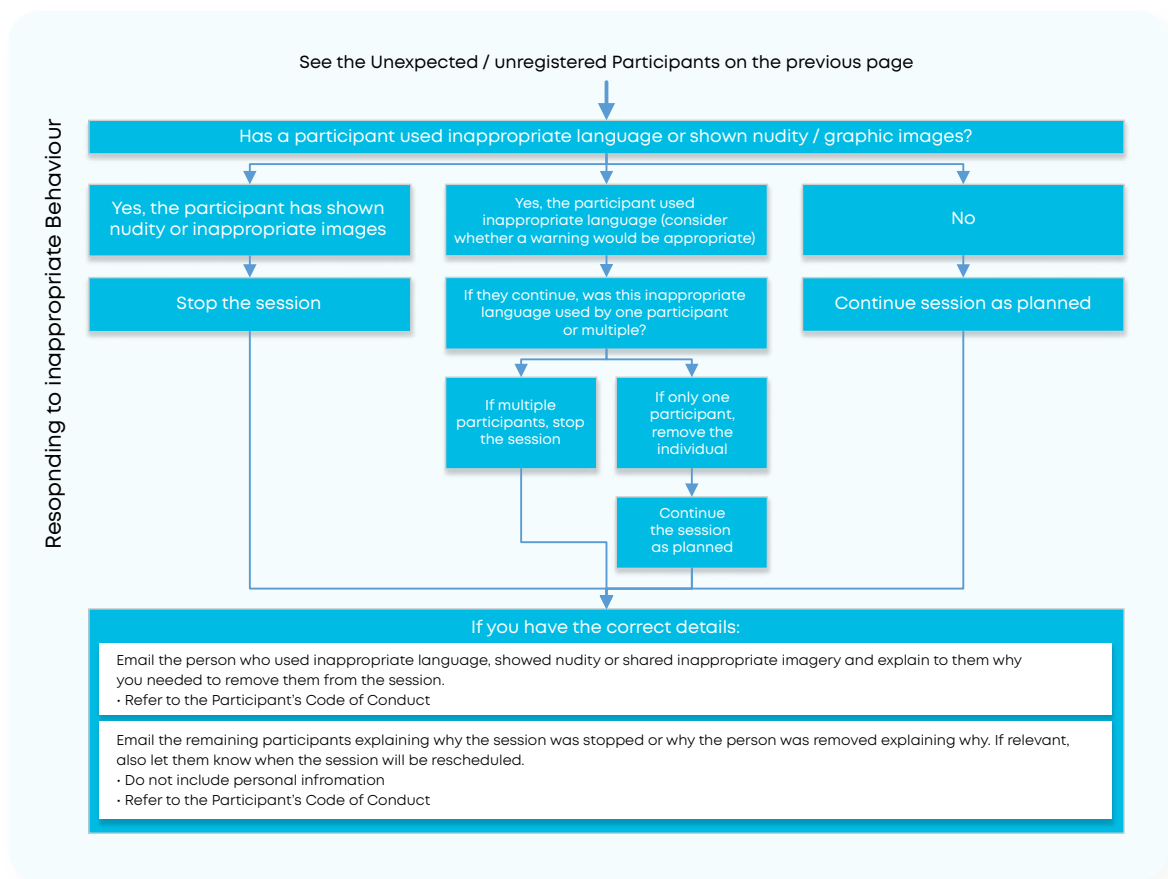


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## **Appendix 9: Email Templates - Appendix 9a:**

### **Email for participants who have been removed**

Good [Morning/ Afternoon/ Evening], [enter the participant's name]

I am contacting you about the [Name of Session] on XX/XX/XXXX and our decision to cancel your access to the session.

The Y is committed to providing an environment where Children and Young People can feel safe and be safe online and, unfortunately, your language/ your nudity/ the imagery you shared has made some of our participants uncomfortable. As such, we had to cancel your access to the session.

For information on our shared responsibilities, please read through the attached documents:

1. The Y eCommitment – a commitment to Children and Young People about the online behaviour of Y People.
2. Guide for Children and Young People – a guide to support Children and Young People to make the internet a safe place for themselves and for others.
3. Guide for Parents and Caregivers – a guide for Parents and Caregivers.

We would like to see you again, but we would appreciate the chance to speak with you before you attend the next session.

If you would like to discuss this decision, or would like further information about our shared responsibilities, please call [appropriate number I.E the Host or Safeguarding Lead] or email [appropriate email I.E. the Host or Safeguarding Lead].

Signature



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## **Appendix 9: Email Templates - Appendix 9b:**

### **Email for all participants when a session has been interrupted or stopped**

Good [Morning/ Afternoon/ Evening], [enter the participant's name]

I am contacting you about the [Name of Session] on XX/XX/XXXX and our decision to remove the participant/ stop the session.

The Y is committed to providing an environment where Children and Young People can feel safe and be safe online and, unfortunately, the inappropriate behaviour of one of the participants has resulted in the need to cancel their access to the session/ stop the session.

We have rescheduled the session for XX.XX on the XX/XX/XXXX, and we're hoping to see you there. For information on our shared responsibilities, please read through the attached documents:

1. The Y eCommitment – a commitment to Children and Young People about the online behaviour of Y People.
2. Guide for Children and Young People – a guide to support Children and Young People to make the internet a safe place for themselves and for others.
3. Guide for Parents and Caregivers – a guide for Parents and Caregivers.

If you would like to discuss this decision, or would like further information about our shared responsibilities, please call [appropriate number I.E the Host or Safeguarding Lead] or email [appropriate email I.E. the Host or Safeguarding Lead].

Signature



**Appendix 10:**

**Feedback Form Template**

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| <b>Date of Session</b> |  |
| <b>Name of Session</b> |  |
| <b>YMCA</b>            |  |
| <b>Name of Host</b>    |  |

**How would you rate the Session?**

|  |   |  |   |   |
|--|---|--|---|---|
| The Worst<br> |  | The Worst<br> |  | The Best<br> |
|--|---|--|---|---|


**How would you rate the Content?**

|  |   |  |   |   |
|--|---|--|---|---|
| The Worst<br> |  | The Worst<br> |  | The Best<br> |
|--|---|--|---|---|

**How would you rate the Resources?**

|  |   |  |   |   |
|--|---|--|---|---|
| The Worst<br> |  | The Worst<br> |  | The Best<br> |
|--|---|--|---|---|

**How would you rate the Host's Knowledge?**

|  |   |  |   |   |
|--|---|--|---|---|
| The Worst<br> |  | The Worst<br> |  | The Best<br> |
|--|---|--|---|---|

**Please select the 2 best elements of the Session.**

|                 |           |          |       |                        |
|-----------------|-----------|----------|-------|------------------------|
| Topic & content | Resources | The Host | Polls | Audience Participation |
|-----------------|-----------|----------|-------|------------------------|

**Please select the 2 worst elements of the Session.**

|                 |           |          |       |                        |
|-----------------|-----------|----------|-------|------------------------|
| Topic & content | Resources | The Host | Polls | Audience Participation |
|-----------------|-----------|----------|-------|------------------------|

**Would you recommend the session to your friends?**

|          |
|----------|
| Yes / No |
|----------|

**Is there any other comments you would like to add about the session and resources?**

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

**Is there any other comments you would like to add about the Host and the delivery?**

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

If you have a complaint or a safeguarding concern, please contact our Association's Safeguarding Lead on XXXX XXX XXX or Email@ymca.org.au

You can also contact Y Safeguarding by emailing safe@ymca.org.au



Australian  
Childhood  
Foundation

# Social Media

## Practice Guide for Personnel

*Version 1, November 2020*

## Purpose of this guide

Social media can be a powerful and valuable tool for communication, engagement and promotion, offering convenience and communication opportunities in many instances. But social media can also raise questions around the safety and ethical implications of its use in communities serving young people.

Drawing on the practical experience of the Safeguarding Children Services team at the Australian Childhood Foundation and contemporary academic research, this guide aims to support personnel and young people by exploring social media use from policy through to practice. It helps to:

- Understand the scope of social media and the most common forms used in organisational settings
- Examine the safety and ethical considerations behind social media use, particularly from a safeguarding perspective
- Reflect on social media use within an organisational setting to explore gaps and opportunities that make social media use as safe as possible, particularly for children and young people
- Apply checklists and other tools to guide best practice.

## Background: social media use for young people

Social media are technologies which enable communication between individuals or groups, often in new ways (for example, through music sharing or gaming) and always digitally. There are many categories of social media and these are often overlapping. Social networking technologies are the most common category – examples include Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp – and these often hold multiple purposes such as communication, collaboration and content sharing<sup>1</sup>.

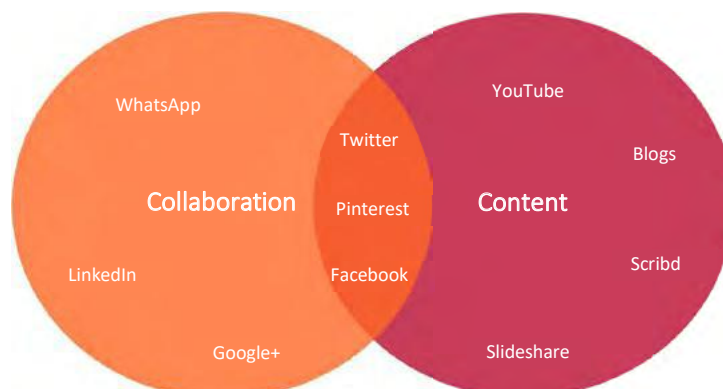
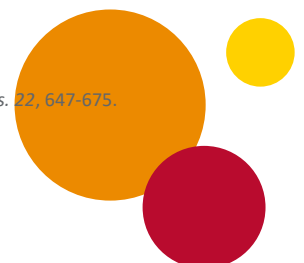


Figure 1: Examples of social media and their communication uses

<sup>1</sup> Fox, A. & Bird, T. (2017). The challenge to professionals of using social media. *Education and Information Technologies*. 22, 647-675.



Since social media present new ways of communicating that we are still learning to navigate, it is not surprising that our understanding and uses are constantly changing. One of the greatest challenges of social media is the way that they blur professional and personal identities. Determining best practice in an organisational setting – and navigating the layers of identity that different stakeholders hold – can be difficult. But it is essential, in order to prioritise the safety and welfare of young people and to provide personnel and caregivers with clear guidelines for use.

Social media can be a powerful and positive force in the classroom – there is evidence of tools like Facebook being used to facilitate learning and enrich collaboration<sup>2</sup>. Outside of organisational settings, personnel and young people use social media in many ways, with teenagers accessing five separate social media services on average<sup>3</sup>. But there is also research demonstrating the challenges for personnel and young people in navigating the implications of social media use in personal and organisational settings<sup>4</sup>. Many organisations have responded to this through Social Media Policies and Safeguarding Policies. But translating policy into practice in a way that is accessible and relevant for personnel and young people alike requires ongoing reflection.

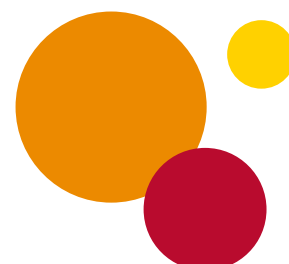
### Practice reflections

- How does your organisation use social media?
- What purpose does it serve? How has it helped or hindered communication within the organisation's community?
- Have there been unintended consequences in the use of social media in your organisation?

<sup>2</sup> Ratneswary, V. (2014). Transformative Higher Education Teaching and Learning. *Procedia*. 123, 369-379.

<sup>3</sup> Office of the eSafety Commissioner. (2018). Young and eSafe. Retrieved from: <https://www.esafety.gov.au/>

<sup>4</sup> Wang, Y. (2013). Social media in schools. *Journal of Cases in Educational Leadership*. 16(1), 56-64.



## Ethical and practical considerations

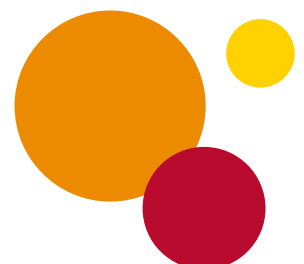
Historically, new communication channels have often prompted ethical debates about the new methods of engagement and ideas that emerge through the technologies. For example, the expansion of literature in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries was seen by many elites as sensationalising and anti-authoritarian; while in the 1940s, comic books were considered weird, violent and addictive tools of communication which could lead to juvenile delinquency<sup>5</sup>. These new communication channels have grown to become an everyday part of society, causing both desired and less desired impacts, depending on an individual perspective.

So how can we practically assess the risks and challenges presented by new forms of communication, such as social media – particularly when new tools and versions are frequently becoming available? While there may be many examples of social media platforms, and social networking tools specifically, a framework can be applied to consider the risks they present on a case-by-case or generalised basis.



Figure 2: Risks posed by social media (adapted from [Childnet International](#))

<sup>5</sup> Mueller, M. (2019). Challenging the social media moral panic. *Policy Analysis*. 876.



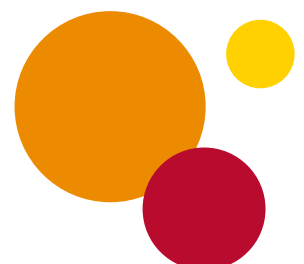
As well as identifying the different types of risks that could affect organisations and young people through social media use, it is also important to consider the skills that all stakeholders need to participate in safe and positive social media use. Australia's eSafety Commissioner, a government agency solely committed to keeping citizens safer online, identifies the core skills of respect, resilience, responsibility and reasoning<sup>6</sup>. Learning, modelling and practicing these skills in online settings helps to ensure that risks are mitigated, and social media are used intentionally and carefully.

- **Respect** – not only should social media users treat others with respect, they need to respect themselves and understand that their digital footprint should always be a positive and realistic reflection of themselves.
- **Responsibility** – responsible online behaviour means understanding and applying their rights and obligations, such as their right to privacy and the obligation to stay within the law.
- **Digital resilience** – the online world can be challenging, and we all need resilience to navigate and bounce back from stressful situations.
- **Critical reasoning** – as machine learning technologies continue to advance, it will become more difficult for children, young people, and adults to discern what is real and what is not, and understand how to apply offline values and ethics to the online world.

### Practice reflections

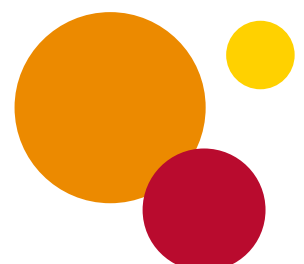
- Does your organisation recognise that use of social media use involves safeguarding risks? What current policies do you have and are they sufficient to guide your evolving social media use?
- What is acceptable language, behaviour and conduct on your online platforms by all personnel, volunteers and those who you engage with?
- How does your organisation manage consent and share information, images and videos of your community, especially children and young people?
- Do all personnel know how to respond when communicating with children through any form of online communication (i.e. social media, video calls, livestreaming or calls) if they suspect or are told that a child could be harmed in some way?
- How do you keep both young people and personnel safe and monitored in their online communications?
- What consequences could individuals or groups face for contributing to your communication materials? Are the potential risks greater for certain groups or individuals that you work with? Do existing procedures help mitigate these risks?

<sup>6</sup> Office of the eSafety Commissioner. (2020). eSafety Young People. Retrieved from: <https://www.esafety.gov.au/>



## Translating ideas and values into practice

After considering the risks of using social media, and the skills needed to mitigate these risks, it is useful to explore what tools will be used and how they'll be managed. It is important to consider these within the organisation's context, and with input from personnel and young people.



### Case study: WhatsApp

WhatsApp is a private messaging application owned by Facebook. It is an increasingly popular social networking tool, and as more people use WhatsApp in their private lives, some organisations may consider the tool in professional contexts thanks to its pervasiveness and convenience.

Applying the framework above, how might a school assess the use of a new tool such as WhatsApp?

#### 1. Assessment

What is the purpose of the communication?

Teachers are struggling to reach students with all the updates and information they need to share about homework, events and reminders. They want a convenient and accessible tool that students and parents will actually check.

What are the values guiding the choice?

The school's Social Media Policy prohibits use of personal devices for teachers. It addresses the importance of gaining consent for sharing any information or images about individuals and acknowledges the risks of cyberbullying.

#### 2. Analysis

Which types of social media are best for meeting the purpose?

Facebook seems like an obvious option, but many parents and students fail to check the school's page. Students have access to Teams through their school accounts, but teachers are concerned messages there aren't being checked. WhatsApp seems like a convenient and simple tool since so many stakeholders already use it personally.

What are the risks?

The school does some research to explore the options and identifies the following risks and considerations:

From a **Contact** perspective, WhatsApp presents the risk that contact will be between students and teachers only – consent must be sought by students and parents, and at least two staff members must be present in the Group as Administrators. Since the teacher will need to access all students' personal mobile numbers to set up the Group, the school should consider providing a device for teachers so that contact and content can be monitored more easily, and the teacher is not exposing themselves to the risk of students contacting them directly or privately on a personal phone number.

From a **Content** perspective, the staff and students must agree what content is considered relevant and appropriate. There must also be clear rules of engagement that explain what will happen if or when inappropriate content is shared, and the hours that staff are expected to moderate the discussion.

From a **Conduct** perspective, WhatsApp is limited to users over the age of 16, so the school must exclude or remove any users younger than this. For these students, and those whose parents do not grant permission for their child/ren to use WhatsApp, an appropriate alternative communication channel must be identified.

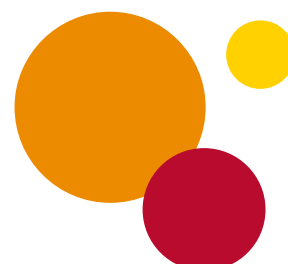
*Through this process, the proposed social media tool – WhatsApp – presents safeguarding risks that are unable to be mitigated, so the school is re-considering alternative channels of communication.*

### 3. Action

The school must develop a Social Media Policy to guide use of social media; or ensure that any current policy addresses the values and risks identified by any new tool.

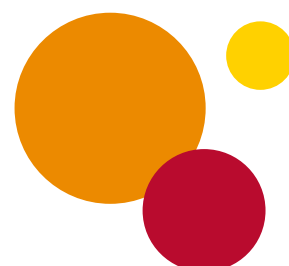
The school must conduct a risk assessment for each new social media tool that includes a risk mitigation plan, and consider how induction, training and reporting processes will need to be updated as part of this. This could include training on the '4 R's' – the digital skills identified by the eSafety Commissioner for online safety for young people.

The school should ensure that any new policy or policy changes are communicated throughout the school community so that staff, students and parents or caregivers understand the purpose, risks and responsibilities of users.



### Practice reflections

- Are your organisation's policies and procedures well-understood and implemented by personnel involved at different stages of the communications process? Are existing procedures being followed consistently?
- What risks do current processes for storing and filing images and information pose to your organisation or contributors, including children?
- What role do partners or other third parties have in your communications process? Do they have the knowledge, capacity and experience to implement any relevant policies or procedures?
- What are the potential reputational risks created by your communications materials?
- Has your organisation had complaints or issues with its communications materials in the past that you can learn from?



## Checklist for safe and positive social media use



Explore the platforms and services your organisation wants to use and how they will enhance the work of your organisation, as well as the reporting mechanisms that must sit alongside these.



Establish guidelines including how your organisation will use social media and communicate appropriately and safely to your audiences. Communicate these guidelines clearly and widely. Consider developing rules of engagement with children and young people.



Set clear policies for personal use of accounts and devices and particularly for interacting with children and young people. Establish a clear process for obtaining consent from children and young people, as well as their parents, when sharing content on social media.



Share content involving children and young people safely and appropriately. Be mindful of age restrictions on platforms if you are trying to engage younger audiences. Most social media services are only for those 13+, with WhatsApp being 16+.

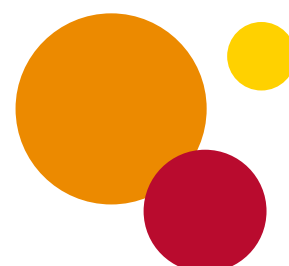


Review and check the security and settings of the platforms you use. Do a regular check of passwords and plan how you will store and share safely.

### Case study: Code of Conduct example

With the consent of the child or young person's parent/guardian, Personnel may communicate digitally with children and young people using Organisation equipment or, where necessary or appropriate, personal devices (e.g. cameras or mobile phones), for the purpose of Organisation activities. In doing so, Personnel must comply with the Organisation's Privacy Policy, ICT Use Policy and Child Protection Policy and Child Risk Management Strategy and must ensure that:

- Parental and child consent has been gained and all stakeholders have been informed of the purposes and risks of any platforms being used by the Organisation;
- At least two Personnel are present and involved in any digital communication, and any - private or direct communications initiated by a child or young person must be reported immediately;



- The content of communication is relevant to the Organisation’s activity and does not contain any inappropriate or offensive comments or images. In particular, do not communicate anything that a reasonable observer could view as being of a sexual nature;
- A plan for moderating and removing any inappropriate or offensive content has been developed and documented;
- All users are educated that what they share is on a public platform and can be seen and screenshotted by people unknown to them. All users are educated in identifying and reporting harmful or inappropriate content.
- No unnecessary identifying details about or images of individuals are shared – this includes adjusting settings to turn off location sharing and online status updates;
- Only engage through organisational or approved accounts, not personal or unapproved ones;
- Any usage is within the restrictions and rules imposed by the application itself (such as age limitations).

## Contact us

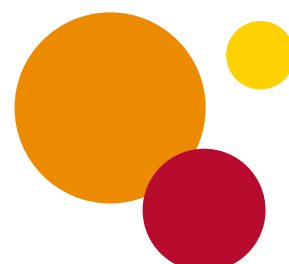
Contact the Safeguarding Children Services team at the Australian Childhood Foundation to discuss your needs so we can share tailored recommendations to help you to realise your organisation’s objectives.



**1300 381 581**



**[safeguarding@childhood.org.au](mailto:safeguarding@childhood.org.au)**



## 3.2 Physical

**Introduction:** At the Y, we encourage active participation and exercise for our participants. Whilst this is a great way to keep our participants healthy and engaged, we must consider the risks associated with physical activity including injury, supervision and public access.

[National Principle 8 - physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.](#)

[Safeguarding Children and Young People Licensing Standards: 3.2.](#)

### Communications and Displays

It is important that we make use of the display space at all of our centres. Consider the most accessible places to display safeguarding posters and information so that parents, families, children and young people and the community can see them and engage with Y People if they have any questions.

Member Y Safeguarding Leads and Y Safeguarding, as well as key external organisations and government agencies, frequently develop resources to support safeguarding children and young people in a variety of physical environments. Y People are encouraged to explore these resources and determine which would be the information that directly addresses the concerns of their specific community. These may include:

- Reporting Processes
- Safeguarding Accreditation Certificates
- Current safeguarding programs
- Events and Opportunities for them to meet Y People
- Programs and Projects
- Information relating to current circumstances (such as the bushfires or COVID-19)



#### QUICK TIP!

Consider the 'less is more' approach. Determine the most useful information for the unique needs of your specific community- when the amount of posters starts to resemble wall paper, people will not know where to start!

Pick-up points and entryways are the best places to provide important information for the community. But remember- if the audience is younger, consider the height of the display.



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## Risk Management

As discussed in section [1.2 Governance](#), physical risks are usually operational risks- risks that only affect specific business areas. For example, a risk that relates to one faulty swing is not directly relevant to all business areas or to the larger enterprise (although the umbrella risk of participants' safety is.)

Each Y site and centre should have a risk register for physical risks that may include such elements as access to the building, equipment, security, contractor onboarding.

The following is an example of the basic information that must be considered when assessing the physical environment of your centre. From left to right, the register supports Y People to tell the story of the risk- what could lead it to happen, the consequences if it does and the actions required to stop it from happening.

| Causes<br>Actions or events that may lead to the risk. | Risk  | Consequences<br>What will happen if we cannot effectively manage the risk?           | Inherent Risk Rating | Controls<br>What are you currently doing to manage the risk?                            | Residual Risk Rating | Treatments<br>If the risk rating is still not acceptable, what further actions are required to manage the risk? |
|--|---|--|----------------------|---|----------------------|---|
| - Hailstorm last week                                  | <b>The security door is broken and can be easily accessed without a code.</b> | - Children may be able to abscond<br>- Members of the public may access the building | High                 | - Repairs are booked for Tuesday<br>- A Y People to stay by the main door at all times. | Med                  | - Lunch times to be rescheduled for reception staff to ensure some is present at all times.                     |
| - Hailstorm last week                                  | <b>Bathroom tap way too hot in boys' bathroom.</b>                            | - Children may burn their hand.<br>- Parents unhappy.                                | High                 | - Spoke with children and told them to use the other sink.                              | Med                  | - Children did not remember the warning. Bathroom now closed  |
| - Lifeguards are not suitably trained                  | <b>Children drown</b>   | - Children may die   | High                 | - First Aid and CPR Training.<br>- Adequate supervision                                 | Med                  | - Performance review to make sure that Y People know their supervision responsibilities                         |



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In each of the examples above, the controls are actions that have already been taken to manage the risk. After the second assessment, it was determined that the existing controls were not reducing the risk rating enough so more treatments (further actions required) were implemented.

Y Safeguarding, as well as your local Safeguarding Lead, is available to support you as you identify and assess your physical risks.

For risks associated with the onboarding of Contractors, please see Section [2.1 People](#).

### Restrictive Practices

A restrictive practice is any practice or intervention that has the effect of restricting the rights or freedom of movement of the person. These practices can often be considered when developing behavioural support plans for children and young people to reduce the likelihood of them being able to harm themselves, others or property but it is important to note that this should only be the last resort.

Certain States and Territories require that any restrictive practices, subject to the relevant thresholds, are reportable to child protection agencies. For further information, please contact your Member Y's Safeguarding Lead or Y Safeguarding by emailing [safe@ymca.org.au](mailto:safe@ymca.org.au).



## 3.3 Families

**Introduction:** Children and young people have the right to feel safe and be safe wherever they are – at home, school, clubs, places of faith, sport - everywhere. To ensure this happens at the Y we engage with families and regularly communicate with them so they can feel confident and understand what we are doing to keep their children and young people safe in our programs and services.

[National Principle 3 - families and communities are informed, and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.](#)

[Safeguarding Children and Young People Licensing Standards: 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6 and 3.7.](#)

### Engaging with Families

At the Y we want to ensure families participate in decisions affecting their children and young people. This requires us to engage and openly communicate with them on a regular basis. At the Y we encourage this engagement and open communication by formal and informal communication methods with families and carers.



#### EXAMPLES

- Tip sheets and information specific for families
- Hold training sessions for families on how to keep children and young people safe
- Surveys
- Focus Groups
- Suggestion boxes (at reception)
- Newsletters

Information such as the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy as well as your relevant Y's Code of Conduct (including Safe Behaviours) should be publicly available, accessible and communicated to all families once they join or engage with the Y, but also regularly reminded throughout their time with the Y. It is also important that families know how to raise a concern or whom they can speak to if they wish to report an incident – refer to the [complaints](#) element of this guidance document for more information.

Seeking feedback and consultation from families is also a vital part of policy and procedure development as well as how your Y operates. Refer to the [policy](#), [procedure](#) and [practice](#) elements of this guidance document for more information.



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For particular groups or programs/services, personal safety education may be required. It is important that families are involved in this process and open, transparent communication occurs in relation to the care going to be given to a child or young person.

Just as it is important to have information in child-friendly versions, it is also important to provide information specific and relevant to families. Parent or carer information sheets are a great example of this, an example can be found in [Appendix 1](#) in relation to the recent COVID-19 pandemic.



### CASE STUDY

Y Canberra use an online platform called Storypark to communicate with parents and carers about their child's development and any important updates or events within their centres.

## Keeping Children and Young People Safe

There are three main things you can do to help keep children and young people safe wherever they are:

1. Help children and young people to understand and speak up
2. Choose organisations carefully and stay involved
3. Act appropriately on concerns if a child or young person tells you they are being harmed or feel unsafe

If parents or carers are unsure of what to look for in organisations or want to know more about how organisations keep children and young people safe, the ten [National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#) outline what is important.





### QUICK TIP!

Raise good kids is a fantastic resource to support parents and caregivers. You can follow @raisegoodkids on Instagram or listen to their daily podcast for mindful tips.

#### Appendix:

1. [Coronavirus resource for parents and carers](#)





# Talking to Children and Young People about Coronavirus (COVID-19)



## Try not to Panic

Children and Young People look to adults for reassurance in times like these. If you panic, it's likely they will too!

## Listen

Make time for them to talk. Be present and try not to be distracted if you can help it

## Be Careful how you Talk about the Virus

It's best to be honest to Children and Young People by speaking in an age appropriate way. Try to talk positively about other people. Give children a sense that everyone is in it together.



## Acknowledge Feelings

Use phrases like "I know this can be a bit scary" and "it's OK to feel like that"

## Limit Access to News and Social Media about the Virus

Children see and hear so much, it can be overwhelming for them. Set up time that you can do other things with them that mean they don't watch so much TV or spend time on the Internet.

## Empower Them

Ask them what they could do to help keep themselves and keep others safe. Children and Young People will often come up with great ideas that often adults might not think about

**Little Things Help!**



Some children and young people may be scared that their friends and loved ones might get sick. Children worry about the people they love and care about the most. Reassure them. Acknowledge their feelings of concern for people getting sick. But reassure them that there a lot of good smart people working hard to keep everyone healthy.

## 3.4 Communities

**Introduction:** Children and young people have the right to feel safe and be safe wherever they are – at home, school, clubs, places of faith, sport - everywhere. To ensure this happens at the Y we engage with our local communities so we can all play our part in keeping children and young people safe.

[National Principle 3 - families and communities are informed, and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.](#)

[Safeguarding Children and Young People Licensing Standards: 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6 and 3.7.](#)

At the Y we work closely with our local communities to ensure they have a say in the development and review of our policies, procedures and practices. Much like engaging with families and children and young people there are various ways we can do this.



### EXAMPLES

Holding training sessions for local community members to educate them on how to keep children and young people safe or facilitating community of practice sessions to discuss how best to implement safeguarding practices.

Relevant information such as the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy should be publicly available and accessible for your local community's needs. It is one thing to seek feedback and engage with the community but listening and responding is just as important. An example of this may be adapting relevant information into different languages if there is a high population of a particular demographic in your local community.



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## 3.5 Diversity

**Introduction:** We respect and support the diverse needs of all children and young people including those who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, are from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD), have a disability or identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Queer, Intersex or Asexual (LGBTQIA+). Children and young people's ideas and responses to diversity are influenced by what they see and hear around them. This is why we ensure diversity and inclusion is reflected in everything we do at the Y.

[National Principle 4 - equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.](#)

[Safeguarding Children and Young People Licensing Standards: 3.8, 3.9 and 3.10.](#)

### Disability

Children with disability make up 8% of Australia's population.



Children with disability have a nearly four (4) times higher risk of experiencing violence than their non-disabled peers. Children with disability are:

- three times more likely to experience physical violence;
- three times more likely to experience sexual violence; and,
- four times more likely to experience emotional abuse and neglect.

The reason for this can be:

- how care is provided;
- the effect of impairment;
- limited available programs to support children, their families and organisations.

For example many children and young people with disability receive frequent intimate and personal care from one or more adults that they are not related to or do not know. There may be little oversight of these adults by others and with an increasing casualisation of such workforces there is concern that this situation where adults are unknown to children and young people, and to each other, will increase.



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Considering the above, the importance of strong policies and procedures to safeguarding children and young people with a disability is vital, along with strong family engagement to ensure there is transparency between your Y and the parents/carers e.g. an agreed personal care plan. It is also important to note that it is not the child or young person's disability that causes them to experience the increased risk of abuse, harm or neglect, it is societal attitudes and the structures and environments around them that can inhibit their opportunities.

Other strategies include providing personal safety information for children and young people, parents/carers and to Y People. Examples include:

- a) Children and young people with disability should be empowered to feel safe through education, for example, children and young people with disability should receive education about what is and what is not safe touching
- b) Adult carers need to be taught and supported to recognise signs and changes in behaviour that are associated with abuse
- c) Communicate directly with children and young people who have a disability about how they feel safe and what to do if they do not feel safe
- d) Communicate to children and young people using communication cards which have body parts including penis, vagina and anus
- e) Actively engage and encourage children and young people with a disability to be involved in decisions affecting them, studies show that feelings of safety increase when children and young people with disability have a level of control over their environment

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People

Where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children live – age group (as taken from the Children's Rights Report 2019 – In Their Own Right: Children's Rights in Australia)

| Remote Areas       | Regional Areas     | Major Cities       |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 0-4 years 15,772   | 0-4 years 42,708   | 0-4 years 35,350   |
| 5-9 years 16,010   | 5-9 years 43,662   | 5-9 years 34,186   |
| 10-14 years 14,730 | 10-14 years 40,058 | 10-14 years 31,857 |
| 15-17 years 8,227  | 15-17 years 22,999 | 15-17 years 19,096 |

Today, the term 'Indigenous Australian' is used to include both Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people. However many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people do not like to be referred to as 'Indigenous' as the term is considered too generic. When used in Australia, the words Indigenous, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander are capitalised, as would be the name of any other group of people. It is best not to resort to the acronyms of ATSI or TSI.



It is the right of every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child and young person to be immersed in their culture, experience strong connections and relationships and maintain their kinship ties.

In 2019-20, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare reported that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were eight (8) times as likely as non-Indigenous children to have received child protection services, this is 1 in 6 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Family violence disproportionately affects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. Family violence within Australian Indigenous communities is both a cause and effect of social disadvantage and intergenerational trauma. The reasons for this are complex but can be connected to past policies, the legacy of colonisation and intergenerational trauma, and a lack of understanding of cultural differences. Whilst there are known limitations with child protection data in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children statistics, there are several issues that contribute to the under-reporting and over-reporting of child abuse and neglect in these communities for example fear of racism when reporting, mistrust in systems, cultural pressures, lack of understanding, barriers for children and young people to disclose and community silence/denial.

This reinforces the importance of why cultural safety, cultural awareness training and culturally appropriate care and support is such an integral part in safeguarding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. Maintaining a connection to family, community and culture is essential for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. Strategies should be based on partnerships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities and link with existing Indigenous agencies. SNAICC released a very informative video which talks about the importance of cultural safety and keeping Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people safe and how this aligns with the Child Safe Principles - you can watch the video [here](#).

A Welcome to Country is delivered by a Traditional Custodian of the land you are on to welcome you to their land. Whereas an Acknowledgment to Country can be done by any person who shows awareness of and respect for the Traditional Custodians of the land they are on unlike a Welcome to Country it can be delivered by anyone.



### QUICK TIP

Having a Welcome to Country or Acknowledgement of Country are very important ways of recognising the continuing connection Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have to their land. Ways of recognising this can be done at events, having a written acknowledgment at reception areas of your Y or before meetings. You can also research and explain what the land name means that you are meeting on and add this to your Acknowledgement.



More information can be found here:

- <https://australianstogether.org.au/resources/welcome-to-and-acknowledgement-of-country>
- [https://www.indigenous.gov.au/contact-us/welcome\\_acknowledgement-country](https://www.indigenous.gov.au/contact-us/welcome_acknowledgement-country)

Having a range of collateral in culturally appropriate languages and using appropriately trained staff when engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people will assist in ensuring cultural safety.



## CASE STUDY

Y Victoria's Reconciliation Action Plan was endorsed by Reconciliation Australia in January 2016. It outlines how as an organisation Y Victoria will begin their reconciliation journey.

<http://victoria.ymca.org.au/about/reconciliation-action-plan.html>

An example of an Acknowledgement of Country is below.

We would like to acknowledge and pay our respects to Elders past and present. We recognise sovereignty was never ceded and that this land always was and always will be First Nations land. We recognise their ongoing connection to land, waters and community, and we commit to ongoing learning, deep and active listening, and taking action in solidarity.



## CASE STUDY

Y Safeguarding commissioned a young First Nations artist to design a culturally appropriate print for our Stay Safe, Tell Someone Program. You can read about Allira's design [here](#).



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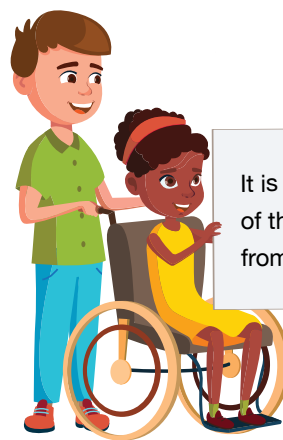
## LGBTQIA+ Children and Young People

LGBTQIA+ children and young people have the right to feel safe, and be safe wherever they are, this includes being recognised for their gender identity, sexual orientation or intersex status.

There are a range of factors and issues that may prevent LGBTQIA+ children and young people from being treated equally or having the same opportunities as other members of the community. These can include discrimination that stems from social and cultural beliefs and assumptions about gender and sexuality. Examples of how this can play out in practice is providing survey forms that only have gender options as male and female and exclusively male and female bathroom facilities or change rooms.

Within your Member Y giving children and young people the opportunity to use their pronouns (how a person is referred to) creates a more inclusive space for someone who is trans, non-binary or questioning. If in doubt it is always good to ask them how they would like to be addressed and whilst it may take some time and practice this can really promote a safer community for all.

Rates of discrimination, bullying, public harassment and use of homophobic language and slurs are contributing factors to the increased rate of suicide attempts and mental health issues in LGBTQIA+ children and young people. Studies have found the period of highest risk of suicide for LGBTI (queer and asexual were outside of scope) children and young people is where they have acknowledged their sexuality or gender identity, but have not told anyone else.



It is estimated that approx. 11% of the Australian population are from the LGBTI community.

It should be noted that having a diverse sexual orientation, diverse gender identity or being intersex themselves are not risk factors alone for poor mental health, it is the social exclusion and discrimination that these children and young people experience secondary to this that leads to poor mental health.



### QUICK TIP!

Don't dwell on it if you make a mistake when addressing someone. Correct yourself, move on and work toward doing so less in the future.



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To improve the wellbeing of LGBTQIA+ children and young people we need to increase understanding, awareness and acceptance of LGBTQIA+ people within the community. At the Y this can include educating yourself on some of the factors to consider when working with this community. Some factors to consider when working with LGBTQIA+ children and young people include:

- For trans and gender diverse children and young people, puberty can be a time of distress for them in regards to physical changes in their bodies
- Navigating gendered environments such as camps and sporting activities can also cause distress
- They may experience additional barriers accessing suitable crisis accommodation or homelessness services for a number of reasons, for example eligibility requirements such as being a gender-specific service
- Look at the whole person, not just their gender or sexuality
- No LGBTQIA+ person is the same, they each have their own individual experiences
- Look up how you can be a support or ally – educate yourself
- Ensure the LGBTQIA+ community is visible in your organisations posters and imagery e.g. Having the Y Pride merchandise available
- Be respectful
- If you are unsure of what any terms or acronyms mean for LGBTQIA+ Children and Young People, you can familiarise yourself with them by looking up organisations such as Pride in Diversity. They have free, publically available resources you can use, one of which is a language and terminology guide. You can view this guide by clicking [here](#).



### CASE STUDY

Y Safeguarding have released the Y's first ever Gender Diversity Safeguarding Guidance document. This document addresses some commonly asked questions regarding the inclusion of gender diverse children and young people at the Y, especially in relation to overnight stays and sleeping arrangements. You can view this document in Appendix 2.





## QUICK TIP

A great way of being more inclusive can be acknowledging your own pronouns when introducing yourself to someone, in meetings or on your email signature. This can help put someone who is non-binary or gender fluid at ease and feel more comfortable to share their own pronouns back.

## Language and Accessibility

In the 2016 Census, it was reported that approximately 9% of children were born overseas and 93 languages were recorded as being spoken at home. A table of the top ten languages spoken at home in 2016 is set out below.

With the above in mind, it is important to consider how we are best communicating and engaging with children and young people from diverse communities communities. Providing interpreter services and copies of documents in various languages and formats is a good start to ensuring children and young people from diverse backgrounds are informed and engaged.

|               |                  |
|---------------|------------------|
| 1. Mandarin   | 6. Greek         |
| 2. Arabic     | 7. Hindi         |
| 3. Cantonese  | 8. Spanish       |
| 4. Vietnamese | 9. Punjabi       |
| 5. Italian    | 10. English only |

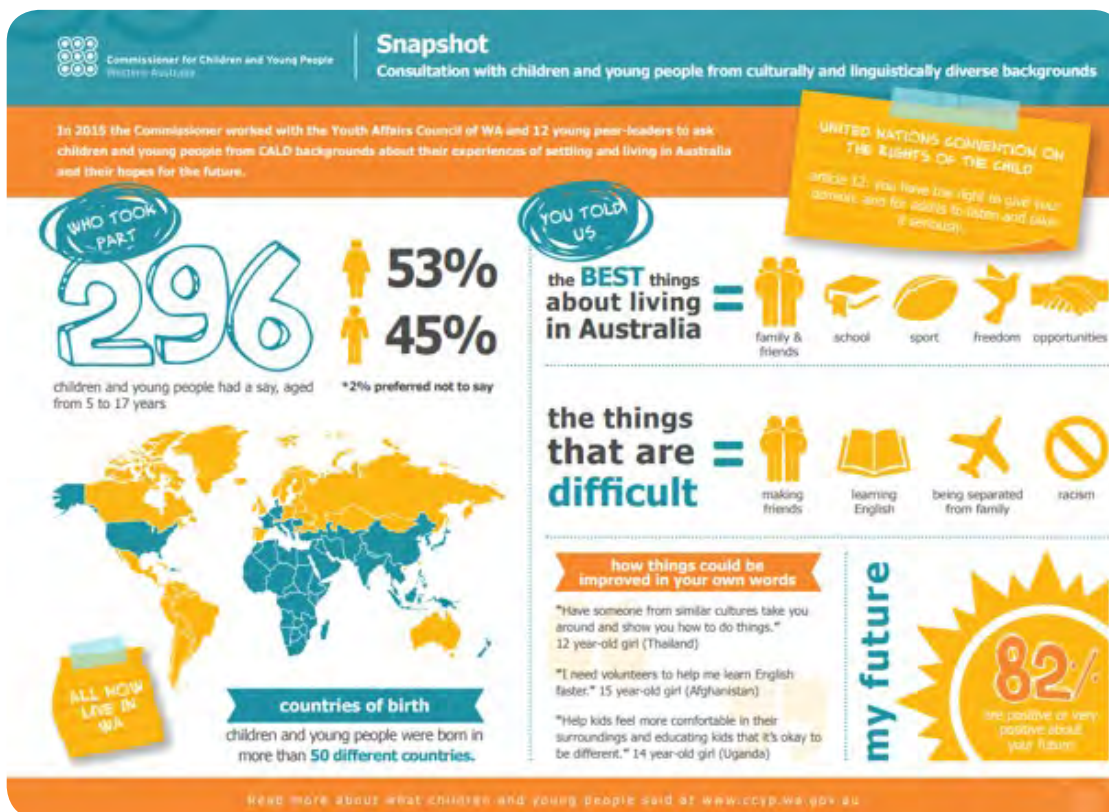
When evaluations or engagement surveys are done it is recommended to use simple language that is then easily translatable or if only available in English, avoid using unnecessary big words and complicated language. Whilst these are good measures to have in place, they should not be seen as sufficient to meeting the diverse needs of such communities.

However, meeting the needs of diverse communities are more than just linguistic. Considerations need to be given to the importance of family name, family cohesion and racism within these groups. When an interpreter or multi-language documents are provided these three issues are not necessarily addressed. Therefore, it is important to be aware that in particular diverse communities there are some cultural challenges when managing child abuse or protection cases. These include the protection of the family name coming at all costs (including the safety of children and young people) and a perceived shame or risk of community exclusion should police or authorities become involved.

With this in mind, it is important to use caution so as not to label or stereotype communities. Cultural awareness training will help here and should be based around the demographics and cultural groups you work with in your local Y.

The below graphic is taken from the Commissioner for Children and Young People and offers a snapshot of what children and young people from CALD backgrounds have said about their experiences in Western Australia. Further information can be found here: <https://www.cryp.wa.gov.au/info-for-children-and-young-people>





## Inclusive Language

Language is a powerful tool that can build both inclusion and exclusion. Using inclusive language in policies, procedures and in practice enables diverse people to feel valued and respected. How we speak to and about one another influences how we treat each other, and this in turn builds culture. At the Y we want all children and young people to feel safe, and be safe, creating an inclusive environment is vital in achieving this.

Non-inclusive language contributes to and continues stereotyping and can cause harm to people who are not only targeted but witness the language, this is especially the case for children and young people. When working with children and young people it is important to focus on the person rather than the demographic or diverse group they may represent and keep an open mind, for example, putting the child or young person before their disability.

The Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy makes reference to any additional considerations relating to LGBTQIA+, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, disability and CALD communities. This should also be reflected in any local Y procedures and practices to ensure it is truly inclusive.

If you are unsure on certain terms used or what they may mean, a definition of key terms list can be found in [Appendix 1](#). These can be incorporated into your policies and procedures.



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### QUICK TIP!

Sometimes diversity and inclusion conversations can be uncomfortable, this is totally normal. However finding a shared language is important and creates a level playing field. Therefore, if you are unsure what terms someone prefers – just ask them. Children and young people are the experts in their own lives and their own experiences.

## Education and Training

Education and training should reflect the diverse needs of children and young people but also if specific communities or programs are evident in your Y then the training needs to be relevant e.g. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural safety and awareness training or unconscious bias training for hiring managers and Y People working in People and Culture. This assists Y People to feel more confident and be better equipped when working with particular groups or communities and in turn will enhance cultural safety for those groups. This training should also be part of all Y People's induction process.

There are a number of key organisations who can assist with education and training content and delivery as well as seeking expert advice in situations where you may not be sure. Please see example national organisations below.

**Acon (Pride in Diversity):** <https://www.acon.org.au/what-we-are-here-for/pride-inclusion-programs>

**Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies:** [https://aiAboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.gov.au/explore/articles/indigenous-australians-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-people](https://aiAboriginalandTorresStraitIslanders.gov.au/explore/articles/indigenous-australians-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-people)

**Australian Institute of Family Studies:** <https://aifs.gov.au>

**Children and Young People with Disability Australia:** <https://www.cyda.org.au>

**Disability Council Australia:** <https://www.dca.org.au/topics/disability-accessibility>

**Diversity Council Australia:** <https://www.dca.org.au>

**Reconciliation Australia:** <https://www.reconciliation.org.au>

**Our Watch:** <https://becausewhy.org.au/Because-Why/Home>

**Wear it Purple:** <https://www.wearitpurple.org>





### QUICK TIP!

One way of demonstrating your commitment to diversity and inclusion can be creating a calendar of events that you celebrate in your Association or Y Centre. For example celebrating NAIDOC Week by having a morning tea using Indigenous caterers and a guest speaker or running some training to educate Y People on the meaning of NAIDOC Week.

## Accessibility and Information

Ensuring a welcoming environment is a vital step in meeting the diverse needs of a community and supporting children and young people. A welcoming environment can be achieved by the following:

- Having culturally diverse and friendly posters, signage and resources visible – you can't be what you can't see
- Having information accessible in various formats (e.g. pictures, imagery, flowcharts, braille, Auslan)
- Having information in multiple languages
- Make sure the physical environment does not pose access difficulties for children and young people with a disability
- Engage the children and young people as well as families on their culture and support needs
- Focus particular attention on additional risks and environments that may be closed or segregated



### QUICK TIP!

Y WA have shown great leadership and advocacy by acknowledging the Traditional Custodians of our land and demonstrating their commitment to equality, inclusion and respect in their email signatures.



## **References:**

<https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/understanding-safeguarding-practices-children-disability-when-engaging>  
<https://www.ccyp.wa.gov.au/our-work/resources/lgbti-children-and-young-people>  
<https://www.ccyp.wa.gov.au/about-us/advisory-committees/lgbti-advisory-committee-resources>  
<https://lgbt.foundation/about-us/safeguarding-and-confidentiality>  
<https://www.childline.org.uk>  
<http://www.socialworkerstoolbox.com>  
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk>  
<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/2017/keeping-our-children-safe>  
<https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/child-protection-and-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-children>

## **Appendix:**

1. [Definitions of Key Terms](#)
2. [Gender Diversity Safeguarding Guidance](#)



## **Appendix 1:**

### **Definitions of Key Terms**

#### **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander**

A person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent who identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and is accepted as such by the community in which he or she lives.

#### **Bisexual**

An individual who is sexually and/or romantically attracted to people of the same gender and people of another gender. Bisexuality does not necessarily assume there are only two genders.

#### **Culturally and/or linguistically diverse**

People from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds originate from countries in which English is not the main language.

#### **Cultural Safety**

An environment that is safe for people: where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their identity, of who they are and what they need. It is about shared respect, shared meaning, shared knowledge and experience, of learning, living and working together with dignity and truly listening.

#### **Disability**

Any person with a limitation, restriction or impairment, which has lasted or is likely to last, for at least six months and restricts everyday activities. Self-care, mobility and communication are defined as core activities. Core activity restriction can be mild, moderate, severe or profound.

#### **Discrimination**

Discrimination occurs when a person, or a group of people, is treated less favourably than another person or group because of their background or certain personal characteristics.

#### **Diversity**

Diversity refers to the mix of people in an organisation – that is, all the differences between people in how they identify in relation to their:

**SOCIAL IDENTITY** e.g., Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background, age, caring responsibilities, cultural background, disability status, gender, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity, intersex status, and socio-economic background.

**PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY** e.g., profession, education, work experiences, organisational level, functional area, division/ department, and location.

These aspects come together in a unique way for each individual and shape the way they view and perceive their world and workplace – as well as how others view and treat them.

#### **Gay**

An individual who identifies as a man and is sexually and/or romantically attracted to other people who identify as men. The term gay can also be used in relation to women who are sexually and romantically attracted to other women.



### **Gender identity**

The gender-related identity, appearance or mannerisms or other gender-related characteristics of a person (whether by way of medical intervention or not), with or without regard to the person's designated sex at birth.

### **Gender diverse**

An umbrella term that includes all the different ways gender can be experienced and perceived. It can include people questioning their gender, those who identify as trans/transgender, genderqueer, non-binary, gender non-conforming and many more.

### **Homophobia**

Refers to negative beliefs, prejudices and stereotypes that exist about people who are not heterosexual.

### **Intergenerational Trauma**

In some cases, trauma is passed down from the first generation of survivors who directly experienced or witnessed traumatic events to future generations. This is referred to as intergenerational trauma, and can be passed on through parenting practices, behavioural problems, violence, harmful substance use and mental health issues.

### **Inclusion**

Seeking out, identifying, understanding, and removing barriers to full participation and belonging; intentionally including additional difference in a group or process; and encouraging high levels of both individuality and belonging.

### **Intersex**

Having physical, hormonal or genetic features that are neither wholly female nor wholly male, a combination of female and male, or neither female or male. The term intersex does not describe a person's gender identity (man, woman, neither or both). A person with an intersex variation may identify as a man, woman, neither or both.

### **Lesbian**

An individual who identifies as a woman and is sexually and/or romantically attracted to other people who identify as women.

### **LGBTQIA+**

Abbreviation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual. An umbrella term that is used to refer to the community as a whole.

### **Non-binary**

A term used to describe a person who does not identify exclusively as either a man or a woman.



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### **Pronouns**

Are a grammatical means of referring to a person or persons. Conventional pronouns are 'she/her/hers' and 'he/him/his'. Some people prefer to use gender neutral pronouns, such as 'they/them/their'.

### **Sex**

Refers to a person's biological sex or sex characteristics. These may be genetic, hormonal, or anatomical.

### **Transgender (commonly abbreviated to 'trans')**

A general term used to describe a person whose gender identity is different to the sex they were assigned at birth. Being transgender is about how an individual describes their own gender. It is not necessarily about their biological characteristics. A person whose birth certificate originally described them as female, who now identifies as a man, may use the label 'trans', 'trans man' or 'man'. Similarly, a person originally described on their birth certificate as male, who now identifies as a woman, may use the label 'trans', 'trans woman' or 'woman'.

### **Transition or affirmation**

Refers to the social, medical or legal steps that a transgender person takes to affirm their gender identity. A transition or affirmation may or may not involve medical treatment, including surgeries or hormone therapy.

### **Sexual orientation**

Refers to an individual's sexual and romantic attraction to another person. This can include, but is not limited to, heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual and asexual. It is important to note, however, that these are just a handful of sexual identifications – the reality is that there are an infinite number of ways in which someone might define their sexuality. Further, people can identify with a sexuality or sexual orientation regardless of their sexual or romantic experiences. Some people may identify as sexually fluid; that is, their sexuality is not fixed to any one identity.

### **Unconscious bias**

Social stereotypes about certain groups of people that individuals form outside their own conscious awareness. Everyone holds unconscious beliefs about various social and identity groups, and these biases stem from one's tendency to organise social worlds by categorising.

### **Queer**

A term used to describe a range of sexual orientations and gender identities. Although once used as a derogatory term, the term queer now encapsulates political ideas of resistance to heteronormativity and homonormativity and is often used as an umbrella term to describe the full range of LGBTIQ+ identities.



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# Y Safeguarding

## Gender Diversity Safeguarding Guidance

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## Introduction

At the Y, our safeguarding vision is to empower all children and young people to feel safe and be safe at the Y, in their families and their communities.

We are nurturing and believe that enabling a child or young person to have a voice in matters that affect them helps to foster a sense of belonging- which is fundamental to empowering children and young people to feel safe and be safe - including those who may identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex or Asexual (LGBTQIA+).

Developed in consultation with those with lived experience as well as industry experts, peak bodies, Government and Non-Government Organisations, this guidance can assist Member Y's to:

- uphold the [UN Convention of the Rights of the Child](#) Article 12;
- uphold the [Sex Discrimination Act 1984](#) (Commonwealth) (the Act);
- embed Principles 2, 3 & 4 of the National Child Safe Principles;
- embed the Y Safeguarding Children and Young People Licensing Standards; and
- support the inclusion of gender diverse children and young people in our programs and services, specifically around sleeping arrangements and overnight stays.

The implementation of this guidance forms part of the Y's Safeguarding Framework under Environment and '*Diversity*'.

## Equality and Accessible Facilities for Overnight Stays

### Sleeping Arrangements

If a Y program or service includes overnight stays, transgender or gender diverse (a term that includes all the different ways gender can be experienced and perceived, it can include people questioning their gender, those who identify as trans/transgender, genderqueer, non-binary, gender nonconforming and more) children and young people should be allowed to sleep in an arrangement that reflects their age and gender identity so that they feel most comfortable and safe.

For example, if a transgender young person is attending a camp and the sleeping arrangements are separated into cis (a term used to describe people who identify their gender as the same as what was presumed for them at birth) male/female, the young person should be consulted about their preferences for sleeping and personal care arrangements.

If the child or young person is not comfortable sleeping in either cis male/female rooms and/or cabins, then private or separate sleeping quarters can be considered. To avoid the child or young person feeling isolated, shared sleeping quarters with other participants such as friends of the child or young person should be considered.

Whilst the above are good options and strategies, it is not appropriate to insist that a gender diverse or non-binary child or young person use one of these options if they are not comfortable doing so. There should be further engagement and open discussion with the child or young person to ensure they are comfortable.

Any arrangements agreed upon should be incorporated and documented as part of the program or service risk assessment and consultation with the child or young person as well as their parents and/or carers prior to the program or service.

### Change Rooms and Bathrooms

Gender diverse children and young people should also have the choice of accessing toilets and/or change room facilities that match their gender identity.

It is important to discuss with the child or young person options available in an open way that does not put pressure on their decisions. Such facility arrangements are to be made and managed by the program and/or service leader and in consultation with the child or young person and family and other identified support agency persons the child or young person may choose.

Sleeping, change room and bathroom options made to children and young people should not compromise their safety or wellbeing in any way. Some options may include:

- having gender-neutral bathrooms;
- arranging for the child or young person to use the accessible bathroom or having privacy screens within the room to ensure the child or young person feels comfortable using existing facilities; and
- ensuring that timetabling of personal care routine times is sensitive to the needs of all children and young people.

While many transgender or non-binary people may prefer to use bathrooms, showers and change rooms that align with their gender identity, there may also be a strong preference for privacy. For example: A young person who identifies as non-binary may prefer to use gender-neutral facilities.

Change room and shower arrangements should be considered to ensure they are suitable for all participants. Venues may consider making their existing facilities more inclusive by:

- changing signage on some facilities to all-gender;
- modifying change rooms and bathrooms to create private spaces (higher doors, room dividers, shower curtains etc.); and
- ensuring all change rooms have appropriate waste disposal.

It is important to note that each individual child or young person is different, and arrangements should be made on a case-by-case basis.

Importantly, the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people must be the primary consideration when making any decisions.

## Consultation

It is essential that the child or young person as well as their parents and/or carers are meaningfully consulted throughout these processes.

The aim of this is to ensure there is open and transparent communication so that the child or young person can feel supported, comfortable and safe during their time in the program or service.

All parties should agree on the provisions and arrangements to be accommodated. These must also be documented as part of your risk assessment and planning for the program or service.

## Inclusive Language

The language we use is important and may have a positive or negative effect on others, including gender diverse children and young people.

To use inclusive language is to ensure each person feels validated through the use of their preferred pronouns and name. Avoiding gender stereotypes as well as using non-descript or gendered group terms- such as 'everyone' instead of 'guys'- is an important step towards using language that does not assume others' gender identity and cause unintentional misgendering.

The pronoun a person uses to describe themselves generally reflects their gender identity. Conventional pronouns are 'she/her/hers' and 'he/ him/his'. Some people prefer to use gender-neutral pronouns, such as 'they/them/their/ze'.

An easy way to encourage and facilitate the use of everyone's correct pronouns can be to include them on name badges for Y People as well as participants and to mention them when you introduce yourself at the start of each program.

## Confidentiality

All children and young people have a right to have their personal information protected. Information about a child or young person's gender should only be disclosed or shared by the child or young person themselves or by their parent and/or carer. This means Y People must not share or disclose information about a child or young person's gender unless they have authorisation to do so.

## Risk Assessments

At the Y, it is standard operational practice to complete a risk assessment for all programs and services that run overnight stays. The inclusion of individual needs of gender diverse children and young people attending such programs and services should be incorporated in such assessments.

You can find the national risk assessment template on the Y Extranet.

## Communication

It is important to ensure everyone is aware of the Y's support for all children and young people. Clearly communicating (and demonstrating) our values and inclusive approach will ensure diverse children and young people can feel that they belong at the Y.

Ensuring our policies and guidance documents are easily accessible will also demonstrate transparency and provide an opportunity for any children, young people, parents and/or carers or partners to raise any concerns to the Y or to provide added support to the participant prior to attending an overnight program or service.

**Quote from Nick Payne YNSW Camp Yarramundi** - "The culture within camp is one free of judgement, one of empathy, understanding and opportunity to make a difference.

It is not my job nor my right to pass judgement or direct how things should be done, it is my job to provide a service that takes care of client needs. In short, I treat all conversations as a normal conversation, judgement free. I listen to the needs of client and ensure I hear and any concerns. In addressing needs and concerns I provide options and allow the client to make choices. Finally, I reassure the customer of our commitment to our values."

## Legislative Considerations

### Discrimination

The Sex Discrimination Act 1984, states that it is against the law to discriminate against someone due to their gender identity. Other protected attributes include sex, sexual orientation and intersex status.

There are two types of discrimination,

1. Direct discrimination occurs when somebody is treated unfavourably because of a protected attribute.
2. Indirect discrimination can be less obvious. Indirect discrimination occurs when a condition, requirement or practice that applies to everyone disadvantages another person's of a particular sex or gender identity and the condition, requirement or practice is not reasonable in the circumstances.

### Privacy Act

The Privacy Act 1988 (Privacy Act) protects individuals' personal information regardless of their age. The definition of personal information includes a broad range of information that could identify an individual.

What is personal information will vary depending on whether a person can be identified or is reasonably identifiable in the circumstances.

Personal Information may include, but not limited to, sensitive information. For the purpose of this guidance, sensitive information is personal information that includes information or an opinion about an individual's sexual orientation or practices but can also include a person's health or religious information.

## FAQs

**Question:** How do I answer questions from other parents or adults about a transgender child or young person?

**Answer:** It is important that you do not disclose or discuss personal information about children or young people in your program or service with others- unless expressly authorised by the child/ young person and their parents/carers.

**Question:** How should I handle specific questions about the look of a transgender child or young person in my program or service?

**Answer:** Everyone is different. There is no rule for how a transgender or non-binary person looks just as there is no rule for how cis-gender people look. At the Y, we pride ourselves on our differences and our ability to ensure that everyone feels a sense of belonging.

Remind the person that bodies are generally considered private, and that it is inappropriate to ask about another child or young person's appearance (and if questioned, specifically their genitals or hormones). You may also like to let them know that such questions can be deemed intrusive and inappropriate – if possible, refer to our values and/or Code of Conduct (including Safe Behaviours).

**Question:** How should I respond if the parent of a child or young person in my program or service expresses concern about their child or young person's physical safety and does not want them using a bathroom with a transgender child or young person?

**Answer:** This is often raised in conversations about denying transgender people access to bathrooms and is recognised as a form of discrimination.

Advise the parent that you expect all children and young people to behave in respectful and appropriate ways (can refer to our values and Safe Behaviours) and that everyone's safety is important to you.

You can also inform them that having a transgender child or young person attend a Y program or service poses no additional risk to their child or young person, and that you will address any concerns about behaviour should they arise.

**Question:** How do I determine what is "Reasonable" under the Act when accommodating arrangements not to disadvantage a child or young person?

**Answer:** The Act provides that the following matters are considered when deciding whether a condition, requirement or practice is reasonable:

- the nature and extent of the disadvantage;
- the feasibility of overcoming or mitigating the disadvantage; and
- whether the disadvantage is proportionate to the result sought.

### **Related Policies and Procedures**

- Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy
- Critical Incident Policy

### **More Information and Further Resources**

- Risk Assessment Template
- [Know Your Rights – Sex Discrimination](#)
- Transcend [Australia](#)
- <https://www.pridecamping.org/resources>
- [Pride in Sport](#)
- [Minus 18](#)
- [Sex Discrimination Act 1984](#)

## Definitions and Common Terms

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Cis gender/CIS    | Is a term used to describe people who identify their gender as the same as what was presumed for them at birth (male / Female) 'Cis' is a Latin term meaning 'on the same side as'.   |
| Gender Diverse    | Is an umbrella term that includes all the different ways gender can be experienced and perceived. It can include people questioning their gender, those who identify as trans/transgender, genderqueer, non-binary, gender nonconforming and many more.   |
| Gender Expression | Refers to the way that a person externally expresses their gender, or how their gender is perceived by others.  |
| Gender Fluid      | Gender fluid people are people whose gender changes over time. A gender fluid person might identify as a female one day and a male the next and may also identify as a gender, bigender or another non-binary identity.   |
| Gender Identity   | Is defined in the Act as 'the gender-related identity, appearance or mannerisms of other gender -related characteristics of a person (whether by way of medical intervention or not) with or without regard to the persons designated sex at birth.   |
| Misgendering      | Is an occurrence where a person is described or addressed using language that does not match their gender identity. This can include the incorrect use of pronouns (She/he/they), familial titles (father, sister, uncle) and at time, the other words traditionally have gendered applications (pretty, handsome etc) It is best to ask a person, at a relevant moment, what words they like to use. |

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| Non-Binary          | Is a term used to describe a person who does not identify exclusively as either a man or a woman. Genders that sit outside of the female and male binary are often called non-binary.  |
| Pronouns            | Are a grammatical means of referring to a person or persons. Conventional pronouns are 'she/her/hers' and 'he/him/his'. Some people prefer to use gender neutral pronouns, such as 'they/them/their/'. The pronoun a person uses to describe themselves generally reflects their gender identity. It is important not to assume someone's pronouns based off of their appearance.  |
| Sex                 | Refers to a person's biological sex or sex characteristics. These may be genetic, hormonal or anatomical.  |
| Sex Characteristics | Refers to physical parts of the body that are related to body development/regulation and reproductive systems.   |
| Sexual Harassment   | Any unwelcome sexual advance, request for favours or conduct of a sexual nature.   |
| The Act             | Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth).   |
| Transgender         | (Commonly abbreviated to Trans) is a general term used to describe a person whose gender identity is different to the sex they were assumed at birth. Being transgender is about how an individual describes their own gender. It is not necessarily about their biological characteristics. Transgender people may position 'being Trans' as a history or experience, rather than an identity and consider their gender identity as simply being female, male or a non-binary identity. Some transgender people connect strongly with their transgender experience, whereas others do not. The process of gender affirmation may or may not be part of a transgender or gender diverse person's life. |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>Transition/<br/>Gender<br/>Affirmation</p> | <p>Is a personal process or processes a transgender or gender diverse person determines is right for them to live as their defined gender and so that society recognises this. Transition may involve social, medical/surgical and/or legal steps that affirm a person's gender. Affirming gender doesn't mean changing gender, 'having a sex change' or 'becoming a man or a woman', and transition isn't the same as being trans. A transgender or gender diverse person who hasn't medically or legally affirmed their gender is no less the man, woman or non-binary person they've always been.</p> <p><b>Social transition</b> is the process by which a person changes their gender expression to better match their gender identity. This may include changing their name, pronouns, and appearance.</p> <p><b>Medical transition</b> is the process by which a person changes their physical sex characteristics to align with their gender identity. This may include hormone therapy, surgery or both.</p> <p><b>Legal transition</b> is the process by which a person changes their identity documents, name, or both, to reflect their gender identity. This may include changing their gender marker on a passport or birth certificate or changing their name on a driver's license or bank card.</p> <p>It is not appropriate to question an individual about the gender affirmation process.</p> |
| <p>Transphobia</p>                            | <p>Refers to negative beliefs, prejudices and stereotypes that exist about transgender/trans and gender diverse people.</p> <p>This can be evidenced by the use of inappropriate or outdated language towards gender diverse people or restrictions on the way that people are allowed to express their gender such as which uniform they are allowed to wear or which toilet facilities they can use.</p> <p>Transphobia can also include abusive threats or actual physical violence, sexual harassment and deliberately excluding someone because of their gender.</p>   |

## Support and Helplines

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <b>Lifeline</b>                                      | 13 11 14   | National number for people in crisis at risk of dying by suicide  |
| <b>1800 RESPECT</b>                                  | 1800 737 732   | 24 hour sexual assault and domestic violence counselling service  |
| <b>Blue Knot</b>                                     | 1300 657 380   | Helpline for people who have experienced childhood trauma and abuse   |
| <b>E Safety Commissioner</b>                         | <a href="http://www.esafety.gov.au">www.esafety.gov.au</a> |   |
| <b>Kidline</b>                                       | 1800 551 800   | Specific counselling support for children and young people aged 5 – 25  |
| <b>Australian Childhood Foundation</b>               | 1800 176 453   | Counselling specifically for children and young people experiencing abuse   |
| <b>Beyond Blue</b>                                   | 1300 22 4636   | Information, counselling and resources for mental health concerns and worries.                                    |
| <b>QLife</b>   | 1800 184 527   | Dedicated helpline for LGBTIQ+ community  |
| <b>Aboriginal Family Domestic Violence Hotline</b>   | 1800 019 123   |   |
| <b>Mensline</b>                                      | 1300 789 978   | Service that specifically supports men and boys who are experiencing difficult home life situations               |
| <b>National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline</b> | 1800 880 052   | A number that can be called to report abuse and neglect of people with a disability                               |
| <b>Suicide Call Back Service</b>                     | 1300 659 467   | Free counselling service, whether a person is suicidal themselves or concerned about someone else who is suicidal |
| <b>Translating &amp; Interpreting Service (TIS)</b>  | 131 450  | TIS is available 24 hours a day if you or someone you know needs something translated via phone                   |