

Putting Standard 5 into practice in your organisation

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





Author details

Office of the Independent Regulator

Email: contact@oir.tas.gov.au

Visit: www.oir.tas.gov.au

Acknowledgements

The guidance on the Universal Principle for Aboriginal Cultural Safety in this resource has not been changed or amended from the *Interim compliance guidance for organisations*.

This guidance was originally developed with the valued cultural expertise and leadership of the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre, and in consultation with Aboriginal organisations across the state. Their contribution was central to shaping the Universal Principle and the associated compliance indicators—both of which uphold the right of Aboriginal children and young people to grow up safe, with meaningful connections to culture, community and identity.

Accordingly, the Universal Principle and its compliance indicators have been carried into this resource as they were—without change, addition or removal—out of respect for the integrity of the original work and the leadership of Aboriginal community members in shaping it.

We acknowledge and thank the young artists from the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre for developing the artwork featured throughout this guidance.

Disclaimer

This educational resource references key elements of the *Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023*. However, it does not cover the full legislation and is **not** legal advice.

While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, no responsibility is accepted for any errors or omissions. For complete and precise information, refer directly to the *Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023*.

Before we begin

This resource is designed to support your organisation to embed Child and Youth Safe Standard 5. Guidance is organised under compliance indicators, that explain what implementation can look like in organisations.

 Compliance indicators are

- statements which, if followed by an organisation, indicate compliance with a Child and Youth Safe Standard.
- guides to help organisations understand what compliance might look like in practice.

 Compliance indicators are not

- equally applicable or relevant to all organisations. It's important to remember that each organisation is unique. Some indicators may be more relevant than others—and they may be adapted or expanded on to better suit your organisation's needs
- the only way to demonstrate compliance—organisations may use additional or different approaches to uphold the Child and Youth Safe Standards and the Universal Principle for Aboriginal Cultural Safety.

Most of the artwork featured in this guidance comes from the *Interim compliance guidance for organisations* and was created by young Aboriginal Tasmanians from the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre.

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



What it means

People who work with children and young people are the right people—trusted, respectful, and committed to their safety and wellbeing. They receive proper training to keep children safe and supported at all times.



Why it matters

Children and young people are at greater risk of harm when people working with children and young people are not suitable and do not reflect child-centred values.



The value of getting it right

Child-focused human resource practices help screen out people who are unsuitable for working with children, or discourage them from applying in the first place.

We know this because young Tasmanians like Tek have told us:

“Organisations can show me they’re safe for children and young people by having people who enjoy their job, so you don’t feel like they’re just paid to be there.”



What compliance with Standard 5 looks like

The following compliance indicators illustrate how this Standard may be applied in practice in organisations.

It’s important to remember that each organisation is unique. Some indicators may be more relevant than others—and they may be adapted or expanded on to better suit your organisation’s needs.

Compliance Indicators

through early engagement and real decision-making power

[Page 6–7](#)



The organisation **employs Aboriginal staff** or **meaningfully involves** Aboriginal people in recruitment processes to **increase cultural safety** for Aboriginal children.



[Page 8](#)

Recruitment, including advertising, referee checks and worker pre-employment screening **emphasise child safety and wellbeing**.

include a clear statement about your child safe values

sight and verify

[Pages 9–10](#)



Relevant staff and volunteers have **current registration to work with vulnerable people check** or equivalent background checks.

appropriate to the risks and responsibilities associated with the role

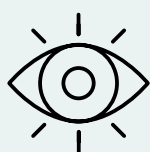
[Pages 11–12](#)



All staff and volunteers receive an **appropriate induction** and are **aware of their responsibilities** to children and young people, including record keeping, information sharing and reporting obligations.

consistent and regular oversight

[Pages 13–15](#)



Ongoing supervision and people management is **focused on child safety and wellbeing**.

Reflect on risk factors for this Standard

- *Child safety isn't part of recruitment*
Do job ads and interviews include child safety values or fail to check for relevant experience?
- *Background checks are inconsistent and not documented*
Are staff starting with the right checks—or are checks rushed, patchy, or never followed up?
- *New staff are left to 'figure it out'*
Is child safety missing from induction, leaving new staff unclear about what's expected?
- *Supervision doesn't cover safety*
Are managers avoiding regular conversations about child wellbeing and safety concerns?
- *No cultural safety considerations in recruitment*
Is cultural safety being overlooked in hiring decisions, with little value placed on Aboriginal knowledge or lived experience?

Don't know where to start?

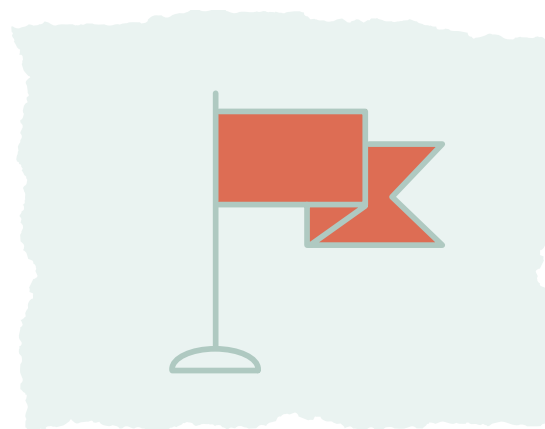
Reflect on the risks outlined above and your organisation's current practices. Consider beginning with this Standard by exploring the following focus areas:

- Child-safe recruitment page 8
- Relevant and current background checks pages 9–10
- Appropriate induction, including child safety responsibilities and practices pages 11–12

Recruitment Red Flags

An important aspect of child safe recruitment is identifying 'red flags', or signs that an applicant may not be suitable to work with children and young people.

Red flags might be present in an applicant's written application, their response to interview questions, their written or verbal referee report, or in their induction or trial.



Take note of your concerns and feelings, discuss them with your co-workers, and don't hesitate to ask for more information, re-phrase a question, request documentation or alternative referee details.



Examples of red flags

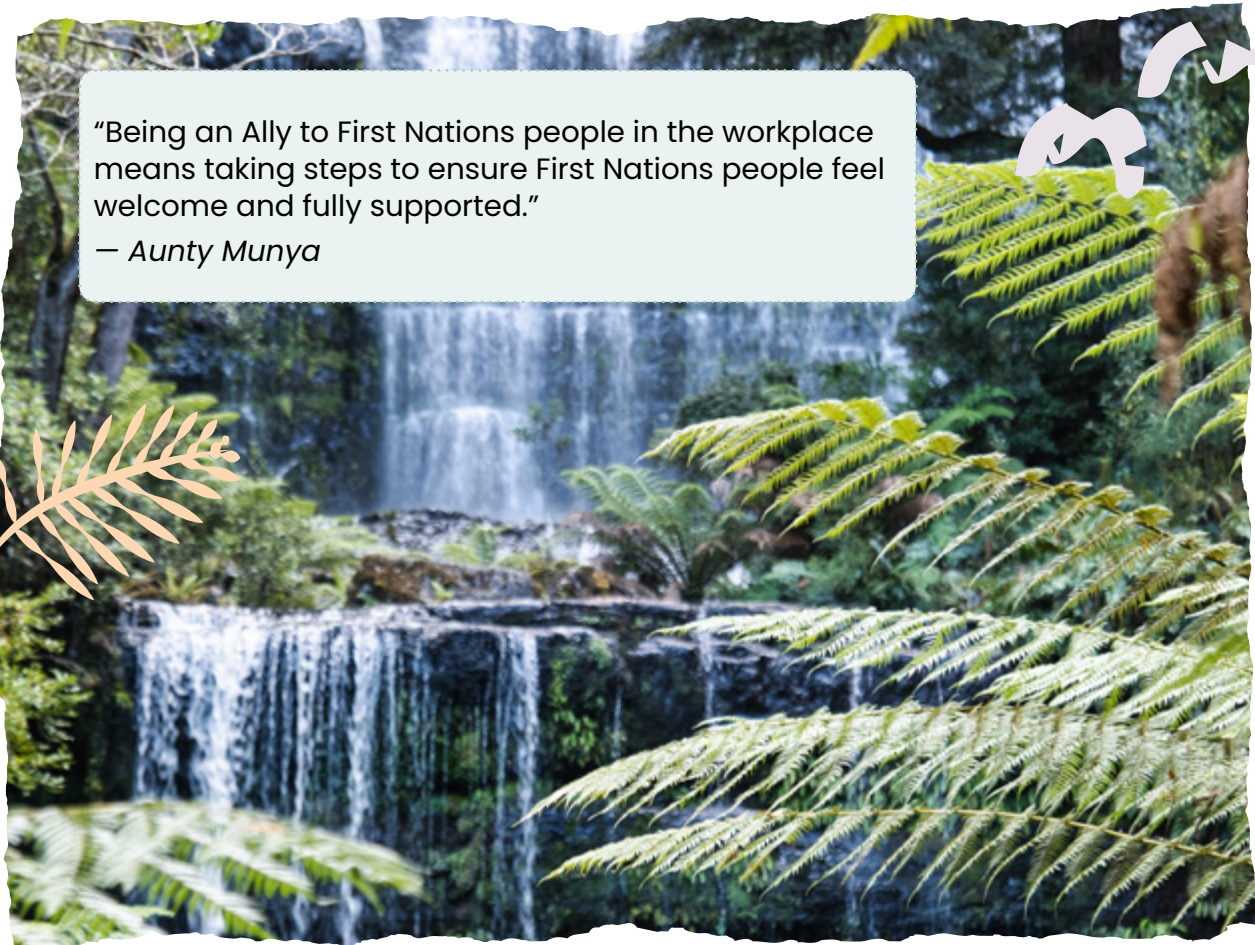
- Frequent 'job-hopping' from one organisation to another.
- Expressing excessive interest in working with children of a particular age or gender.
- Avoiding questions or being inconsistent in responses.
- Inappropriate comments about children.
- A referee who seems reluctant or declines to answer certain questions.
- A referee who does not know the applicant well.
- A referee who is a close personal friend or family member.



The organisation employs Aboriginal staff or meaningfully involves Aboriginal people in recruitment processes to increase cultural safety for Aboriginal children.

What it means

Aboriginal children's cultural safety can be protected by employing Aboriginal staff who have a personal understanding of the experiences of their communities. Where this is not possible, Aboriginal community members should be involved in the recruitment process to ensure staff who are employed understand the historic and contemporary experiences of Aboriginal people, or demonstrate a commitment to learning.



"Being an Ally to First Nations people in the workplace means taking steps to ensure First Nations people feel welcome and fully supported."

— Aunty Munya

	This should look like	This shouldn't look like
Recruitment 	Employment advertising includes the organisation's commitment to child and youth safety and wellbeing and to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and young people.	• Inconsistently including information in job advertising welcoming applicants from diverse backgrounds. • Encouraging applications from Aboriginal people but not taking steps to provide a culturally safe workplace.
Building Cultural Safety 	• Diversity is encouraged and celebrated in the organisation. • The cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people is promoted and encouraged by all staff and volunteers, including senior leaders. • Staff and volunteers are provided regular Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness training.	An acknowledgement of country is infrequently given by staff or leaders, and Aboriginal staff are disproportionately asked to provide one on behalf of their communities. Staff recognise only NAIDOC week and consider this to be their recognition of aboriginal culture for the year.



Recruitment, including advertising, referee checks and worker pre-employment screening emphasise child safety and wellbeing.

The importance of child safety and wellbeing to your organisation should show up in every part of your hiring process—from how you write job ads to how you check references. This means being clear about your child safety expectations and only hiring people who are safe and right for the job.

Why it matters

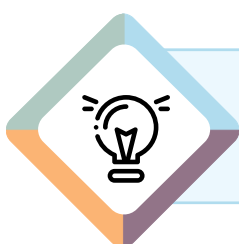
Hiring with child safety in mind helps stop unsafe people from working with children. It shows that your organisation takes safety seriously and deters those who may be a risk to children from applying at all. It's a proactive way to protect children and young people.

You'll know it's working when

- **Child safety expectations are clear:** Job advertisements and role descriptions highlight child safety and values.
- **Thorough checks are routine:** Reference checks and screening always include questions about how applicants are around children.
- **Staff understand their role:** New staff get clear child safety training as soon as they start.

You need to strengthen it if

- **Child safety is missing from recruitment materials:** Job ads and position descriptions don't mention child safety.
- **Referee checks are superficial:** Referees aren't asked about the person's behaviour around children.
- **Screening is delayed or inconsistent:** Staff start before all checks are done.
- **Red flags are overlooked:** Concerns or gaps in checks aren't followed up.



See resource: Four steps for following a child-safe recruitment process



Relevant staff and volunteers have current working with children checks or equivalent background checks.

What are working with children checks or equivalent background checks?

In Tasmania, the main check is the **Registration to Work with Vulnerable People** (RWVP). Anyone who wishes to work or volunteer with vulnerable people, including children, in a regulated activity must hold a RWVP.

Why it matters

RWVP is an important tool for protecting children—but it won't identify everyone who poses a risk. Many people who harm children don't have a criminal record or prior incidents. That's why background checks should be combined with other, more in-depth screening practices.

Other key tools include:

- police checks
- referee checks
- identity and qualification checks
- interview questions that explore values, attitudes, and behaviour around children.

What's the difference between RWVP and police checks?

RWVP is ongoing and monitored.

RWVP includes background checks and risk assessments of past behaviour to see if someone may pose a risk of harm. It is also an ongoing process: once someone has a RWVP, they will continue to be monitored, to help keep vulnerable people, including children, safe.

Police checks are a snapshot in time.

A police check shows criminal history up to the date it was issued. It doesn't update if new offences occur, unless another check is requested.

What does a police check tell me that RWVP doesn't?

A **police check** provides **specific details** about a person's criminal history. This can include the type of offence, when and where it occurred, and the outcome. It may cover offences unrelated to children or vulnerable people but still relevant to a role.

Checklist

What you can do right now

- ☐ **Audit current staff and volunteer RWVP status:** Make sure everyone who needs it has a valid check. Set a date to do this again in the future.
- ☐ **Update recruitment procedures:** Include police checks, referee checks, and interview questions about child safety.
- ☐ **Start asking referees specific questions:** For example, "Have you ever had concerns about this person's interactions with children?"
- ☐ **Display a clear message in job ads:** Let candidates know child safety checks are a requirement and priority.

What you can do next

- ☐ **Build a layered screening policy:** Outline all the checks you use and why, not just RWVP.
- ☐ **Train hiring managers on red flags:** Help them know what to look for in interviews, applications and references.
- ☐ **Review your onboarding checklist:** Make sure background checks are completed before anyone starts work.
- ☐ **Regularly review and verify RWVP status:** Include this in your annual compliance or HR audits.





All staff and volunteers receive an appropriate induction and are aware of their responsibilities to children and young people, including record keeping, information sharing and reporting obligations.

An appropriate induction is a structured way to introduce new staff and volunteers to your organisation's child safety expectations, policies, and procedures. It ensures everyone understands their role in keeping children and young people safe—and what's expected of them from day one.

Why it matters

A **strong induction sets the tone for a child-safe culture**. It reduces risk, clarifies responsibilities, and ensures staff and volunteers know how to respond if they're concerned about a child. It also helps prevent harm by making sure no one is left uncertain about their role—and supports you to hold people accountable if their actions don't reflect what they've been trained to do.

In practice this looks like...

New starters receive clear guidance on child safety, record keeping, and reporting.

Induction includes practical examples and real-world scenarios.

Staff are told where and how to report concerns, both internally and externally.

Expectations are reinforced during probation, training, and supervision.

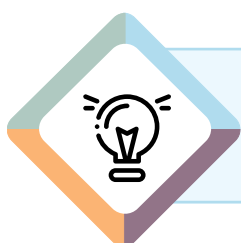
What you can do right now

- **Give every new staff member a child safety pack:** Include your Child Safety Policy, Code of Conduct, reporting steps, and key contact names.
- **Talk through what to do if they're worried about a child:** Use real examples or a quick scenario to explain how and who to report to.
- **Explain what information can be shared, and when:** Use a one-page summary of information sharing obligations and who to ask for help.
- **Record acknowledgement:** Ask new staff to sign a declaration that they've read and understood child safety responsibilities.

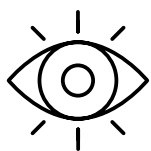


What you can do next

- **Create a structured induction module on child safety:** Develop consistent training content that covers policies, procedures, and real-life examples.
- **Build in supervision and probation reviews:** Use early check-ins to reinforce child safety messages and answer questions.
- **Tailor induction to the role:** Make sure it's relevant to the risks and responsibilities of different roles and service types.
- **Include legal information sharing obligations:** Make sure new starters understand their responsibilities under child safety and information sharing laws.
- **Track and refresh knowledge over time:** Keep records of who has completed induction and offer refreshers regularly, especially after policy changes.



See resource: What to include in a child-safe induction package



Ongoing supervision and people management is focused on child safety and wellbeing.

What it means

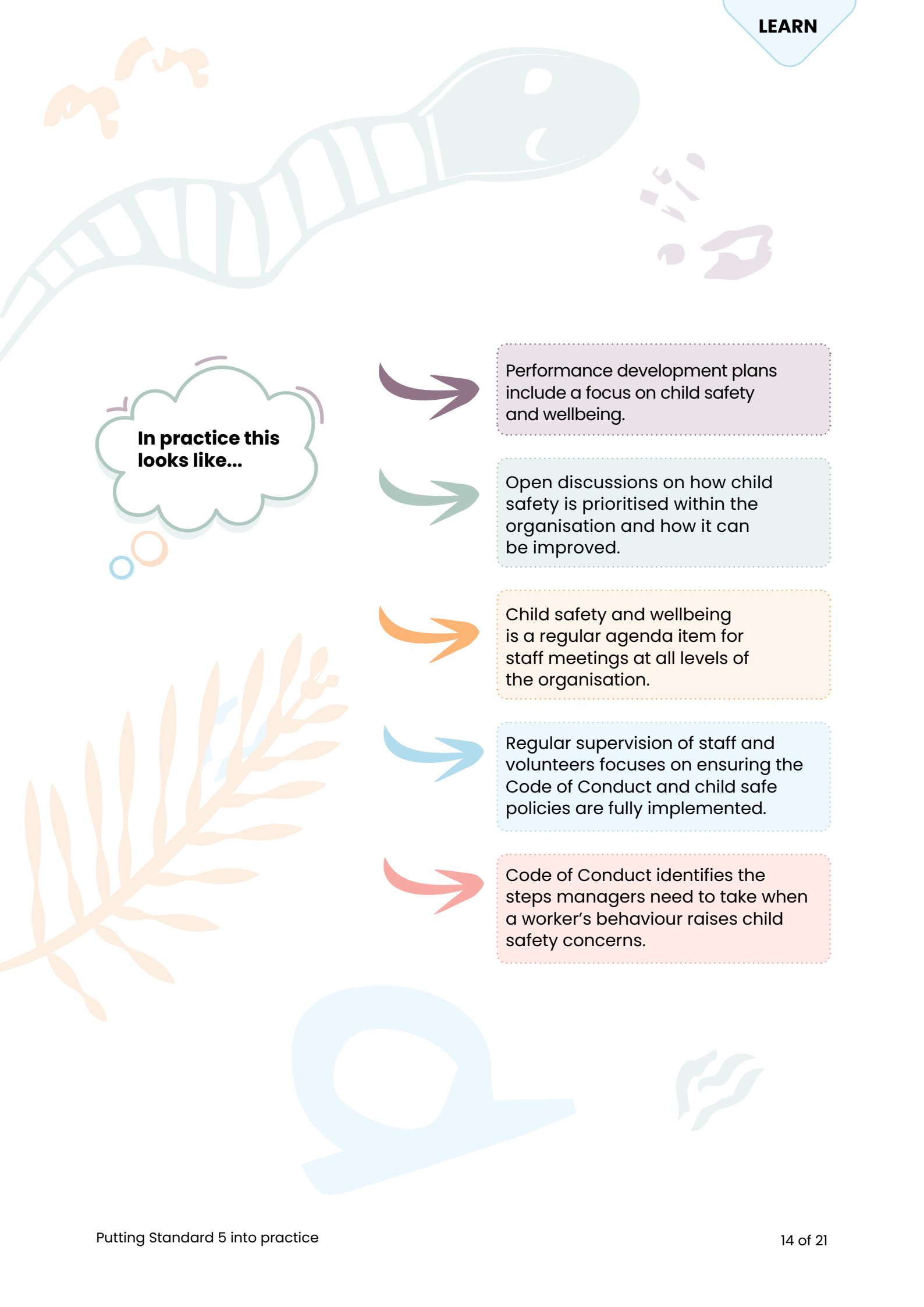
Supervision refers to an organisation's oversight of their staff and/or volunteers' conduct. It may include providing training and support.

People management involves making sure that staff and/or volunteers have the suitable knowledge and skills to perform their role, and that they consistently perform their duties to the expected standard.

Why it matters

When supervision and people management is focused on child safety, staff understand that it is **everyone's responsibility**, and risks can be addressed **before** they become incidents.





In practice this looks like...

Performance development plans include a focus on child safety and wellbeing.

Open discussions on how child safety is prioritised within the organisation and how it can be improved.

Child safety and wellbeing is a regular agenda item for staff meetings at all levels of the organisation.

Regular supervision of staff and volunteers focuses on ensuring the Code of Conduct and child safe policies are fully implemented.

Code of Conduct identifies the steps managers need to take when a worker's behaviour raises child safety concerns.

Formal and informal supervision

It is important to offer varied types of supervision because workers at different levels have **different responsibilities, risks, and support needs**.

Formal supervision provides **structured learning, clear expectations, and accountability**, while informal supervision provides **day-to-day guidance and real time observation**. Both are essential for maintaining child safety across the organisation and to ensure the **Code of Conduct and all child safe policies are consistently followed**.

Formal supervision practices may include:

- ✓ regular, planned meetings between a worker and their supervisor
- ✓ assessments of a worker's behaviour, and how they meet the organisations child-safe policies



- ✓ structured sessions to identify child safety training needs, skill gaps, and goals
- ✓ structured group sessions to review child safety practices
- ✓ qualified specialist overseeing complex decision-making and child-safe practices.

Informal supervision practices may include:

- ✓ supervisors observing day-to-day interactions between workers and children and young people
- ✓ immediate feedback after seeing a situation or workers' behaviour
- ✓ conversations to clarify expectations
- ✓ workers ask questions, seek advice, or raise concerns with the supervisor without needing to book in a meeting
- ✓ supervisor works alongside workers to model best practice
- ✓ peer support.



Four steps for following a child-safe recruitment process

Child-safe recruitment helps protect children and young people. It makes sure that the people working or volunteering in your organisation are safe and suitable.

Here are four key steps to follow when hiring someone new—from advertising the role through to supervision and management once they've started.

1. Planning and advertising the position

Planning

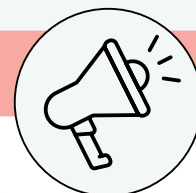


Before advertising a job, think carefully about how the role can promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

This means considering:

- Does this role have contact with children and young people—directly (e.g. face-to-face) or indirectly (e.g. handling private information)?
- Should this role require a Registration to Work with Vulnerable People (RWVP), relevant qualification or professional registration?
- Will you ask applicants to provide a National Police Check?

Advertising



When advertising the role, clearly show that your organisation puts child safety first. Review the job advertisement or position description:

- Does the advertisement clearly show your organisation's commitment to keeping children and young people safe?
- Have you stated that you do not tolerate child abuse or harm?
- Are the child safety responsibilities of the role, following the organisation's child-safe policies clearly explained?
- Are applicants from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities explicitly welcomed or encouraged?
- Have the skills, personal values and experience needed been explicitly listed—especially those linked to creating a safe and respectful place for children?

2. Reviewing applications and interviewing

Reviewing applications



Choose interview panel members who take child safety seriously and can bring different views.

Ask yourself:

- Do you have at least two people on the interview panel?
- Can you involve children or young people in the process, like helping develop questions or joining the panel?
- Can you involve Aboriginal people, to bring cultural knowledge and insights?
- Can you include people from different genders, backgrounds or life experiences?

Interviewing



Ask questions that show how the applicant thinks, feels and acts when working with children and young people.

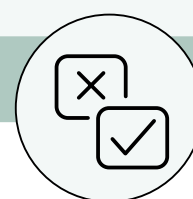
You could ask:

- What's been your best experience working with children and young people?
- Can you explain any gaps in your work history?
- Why do you think cultural safety is important for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people?
- What do you think children need to grow well, physically and emotionally?
- How would you make sure children can have a say in decisions that affect them?
- What experience do you have—paid or unpaid—working with children or youth organisations?
- What's appropriate or inappropriate behaviour between adults and children?
- What would you do if you thought a colleague was acting inappropriately with a child?
- How do you build positive relationships with children and young people?
- How have you supported a child who was upset or distressed?
- How would you respond if you were worried about an adult's behaviour around a child?
- What professional boundaries are important to you, and why?

- How do you keep those boundaries clear?
- What would you do if a child sent you a friend request on social media?
- Can you describe a difficult moment working with children? What would you do differently now?
- Why do you want to work with children and young people?
- Why is child safety important in this role?
- If a child was acting differently than usual, how would you respond—and how would you talk with their family?

3. Doing background checks

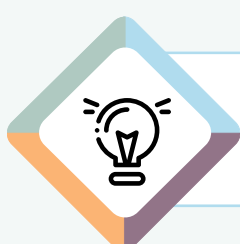
Background checks



Background checks help confirm that someone is who they say they are and that they're suitable for working with children.

Have you:

- checked the person's identity using at least 100 points of ID?
- made sure they have a current Registration to Work with Vulnerable People (RWVP) (if required)?
- called at least two referees—ideally people who've seen them work with children recently?
- asked referees questions that focus on child safety, such as:
 - ◊ Have you seen them work with children or young people? What were they like?
 - ◊ Did you ever have any concerns about how they worked with children?
 - ◊ Have they ever been involved in any investigations or had any charges or convictions?
 - ◊ Would you hire them again?
 - ◊ Are you comfortable with them being alone with children at times?
 - ◊ Can you describe how they handled difficult behaviour from a child?
 - ◊ Were there any issues with their behaviour or following the Code of Conduct?



See checklist: What to include in a child-safe induction package on pages 20–21.

4. Inducting and supporting new staff and volunteers

Onboarding



Consider how new team members will learn about your child-safe policies and how to follow them. Have you:

- Provided an induction pack that includes your Child and Youth Safe Policy, Code of Conduct and other key procedures?
- Explained these documents clearly and in plain language?
- Confirmed that the new team member understands the documents and how they apply to their role?

Ongoing training and development



Staff and volunteers need to keep learning about child safety in their role.

Training topics should include:

- spotting and responding to signs of child abuse or harm
- helping someone who speaks up about child harm
- managing risks of abuse or harm
- supporting children's voices and rights
- keeping clear records and sharing important information
- knowing reporting rules and how to follow them
- respecting culture and making sure everyone feels included and safe.

Supervision and support should continue after training. Include child safety in:

- regular check-ins or supervision
- professional development plans
- team meetings and staff discussions.

If someone doesn't follow child-safe policies or the Code of Conduct, action must be taken. This could include:

- having a direct conversation about the concern
- supporting them to change their behaviour
- undertaking an investigation and changing their duties or disciplinary actions.

No matter what action is taken, even if no action is taken, it is important that you clearly document the incident and what the outcome was.

After an incident, you should review your policies and code of conduct to see if you need to address any gaps or amend any processes.

Checklist: What to include in a child-safe induction package



An induction package could include the following policies, information and resources from your organisation:

Induction package includes

1. Core Policies and Guidelines

Child and Youth Safe Policy

☐

Child and Youth Safe Code of Conduct

☐

Complaint Handling and Reporting Obligations

☐

Record Keeping and Information Sharing Policies

☐

2. Training and Development

Induction Training Modules on child safety

☐

3. Supervision and Behaviour Expectations

Staff Supervision Guidelines (including frequency and content)

☐

Behaviour Boundaries and what to do if concerns arise

☐

4. Support Mechanisms and Resources

Induction package includes

Access to External Support Services

☐

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Details

☐

Clear Reporting and Feedback Channels for staff and children

☐

5. Health, Safety, and Emergency Procedures

Emergency Response Procedures specific to child safety

☐

Health and Safety

☐

6. Acknowledgements and Feedback

Induction Acknowledgement Form (confirming understanding of child safety responsibilities)

☐

Feedback on Induction Process (to improve future inductions)

☐