

Empowered to Protect:

A Collaborative Approach to Child Protection and Child Safety

OVERVIEW

Creating child safe environments is a shared responsibility, and it requires more than compliance or checklists. *Empowered to Protect* equips educators with the foundational knowledge, reflective capacity and practical strategies needed to embed a genuinely child-centred culture in their everyday work. This workshop explores and explains real-world applications of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and state-specific Child Safety Standards with versions of the training available for every state.

Through an engaging blend of evidence, real-world scenarios and reflective discussion, educators explore how child safety is strengthened through relationships, equitable practices and inclusive decision-making. The workshop highlights the importance of listening to children, noticing early warning signs, and responding with clarity, compassion and confidence.

Whether delivered as a short introductory session or a full five-hour professional learning experience, *Empowered to Protect* prepares educators to advocate for safer environments in early childhood and OSHC settings, ensuring every child feels heard, valued and protected.

***Please note: This course provides essential knowledge, but does not replace mandatory child protection training.*

WE WILL...

- Explore the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and unpack what a child-centred, rights-focused culture looks and feels like in your settings.
- Examine indicators of harm and risk through evidence-informed, reflective scenarios that support educators to recognise early signs of concern.
- Strengthen educators' confidence in responding to and reporting child safety concerns with clarity around roles, responsibilities and legislative expectations.
- Engage in critical reflection to understand how relational practices, inclusive environments and strong family partnerships contribute to child safety and wellbeing.
- Explore Child Protection, Mandatory Reporting, Child Safe Standards, Reportable Conduct Schemes and legislative requirements relevant to your jurisdiction.

DELIVERY MODE:

Option 1: Self-paced online course

Option 2: Whole day face-to-face delivery

Option 3: Online webinar series options

Option 4: In-service after hours workshops with teams.

"The information given was in easy to understand language and was to the point. It was also put in an early childhood setting and made relevant."
- Naomi W

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PARTICIPANT OUTCOMES

By the end of this workshop, participants will possess:

1. A strong foundational understanding of child safety principles relevant to your specific state or territory as well as the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and their application in everyday practice.
2. A thorough understanding of Child Protection legislative requirements as well as the ethical implications of practice, roles and responsibilities in this process.
3. Confidence in identifying signs of abuse, neglect and harm, including subtle indicators that may otherwise be missed.
4. The capability to respond to and report safety concerns in ways that uphold children's rights, dignity and wellbeing.
5. Increased capacity to create inclusive, culturally responsive and emotionally safe environments where children feel empowered to speak up.
6. A deeper understanding of how relational, reflective practice and collaboration with families strengthen protective factors within the service community.

THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

These principles provide the core foundation for understanding what safe cultures, safe environments and child-centred practices look like across all early childhood and OSHC settings.

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

The Commission's findings inform the workshop's emphasis on prevention, early identification of harm and the systemic changes needed to protect children in organisational contexts.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child UNICEF

A rights-based lens shapes the workshop's focus on children's agency, dignity and participation, ensuring decisions prioritise each child's best interests.

ECA Code of Ethics Early Childhood Australia

The ECA Code of Ethics underpins the workshop by guiding educators to act with integrity, respect and responsibility, ensuring that all decisions and actions prioritise children's rights, safety and overall wellbeing.

KEY LINKS – NATIONAL

Alignment with National Quality Standard

Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety

- Elements 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.2.3: Strengthens educators' capabilities in supervision, risk awareness and child protection.

Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children

- Elements 5.1.1, 5.1.2: Supports safe, trusting relationships where children's dignity, voices and rights are upheld.

Quality Area 7 – Governance and Leadership

- Elements 7.1.2, 7.2.1: Builds strong organisational systems that embed child safe principles into policy and everyday decision-making.

Alignment with EYLF v2.0

Principles:

- Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships: Essential for creating safe environments where children can express concerns without fear.
- Equity, inclusion and high expectations: Reinforces safe, culturally responsive practice that values every child's rights and diverse needs.
- Collaborative partnerships with families: Strengthens shared responsibility for supporting children's safety and wellbeing.

Practices:

- Holistic, integrated and interconnected approaches: Emphasises child safety as woven through curriculum, relationships and environments.
- Reflective practice: Supports educators to question assumptions, identify risks and strengthen protective factors.
- Responsive and meaningful interactions: Positions everyday relational moments as protective and empowering.

Learning Outcome:

- Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world: Inclusive, culturally safe practices promote children's participation and trust.
- Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing: Emotional safety and protective relationships form the basis of healthy development.

Alignment with MTOP v2.0

Principles:

- Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships: Creates environments where children and young people feel safe to speak up and be taken seriously.
- Equity, inclusion and high expectations: Upholds every child's right to safety through inclusive, culturally responsive practice.
- Critical reflection and ongoing professional learning: Supports educators to reflect on assumptions and responsibilities to strengthen ethical child-safe practice.
- Partnerships: Builds shared responsibility for child safety through respectful collaboration with families and communities.

Practices:

- Holistic, integrated and interconnected approaches: Embeds child safety across relationships, routines, environments and everyday practice.
- Collaboration with children and young people: Values children's voices and agency in decisions affecting their safety and wellbeing.
- Assessment and evaluation for wellbeing, learning and development: Uses reflection and evidence to strengthen protective practices and responses.

Outcome:

- Outcome 2 – Children and young people are connected with and contribute to their world: Inclusive, rights-based practice supports participation, trust and belonging.
- Outcome 3 – Children and young people have a strong sense of wellbeing: Emotionally safe environments and relationships support wellbeing and healthy development.

KEY LINKS – NATIONAL CONTINUED

Alignment with Australian Professional Standards for Teachers

- **Standard 1.1** – Physical, social and intellectual development: strengthens educators' understanding of children's vulnerability, safety needs and developmental risk factors.
- **Standard 4.4** – Maintain student safety: deepens knowledge and confidence in recognising, responding to and reporting child safety concerns.
- **Standard 7.2** – Comply with legislative requirements: supports accurate interpretation of reporting obligations and organisational responsibilities.

Alignment with National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

This workshop is designed to explore, break down and deeply reflect on how services can meaningfully implement each of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations in ways that honour children's rights, strengths and lived experiences. The workshop supports educators to understand the intent behind each principle and translate it into everyday relational practice, organisational systems and cultural habits that genuinely prioritise children's safety and wellbeing. Through reflective dialogue, practical scenarios and evidence-informed guidance, participants examine what child-centred leadership looks like, how to elevate children's voices, how to embed cultural safety, and how to create environments where risks are minimised and protective factors are strengthened.



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Alignment with the Kindy Uplift Key Priority Areas

Culturally safe, inclusive and responsive programs

- Builds educator capability to recognise bias, embed equitable practices and create safe environments for all children.
- Strengthens reflective conversations about cultural safety and the impact of educator decision-making on children's experiences.

Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives

- Encourages authentic engagement with First Nations voices to shape safer, more culturally responsive practice.
- Encourages understanding of cultural protocols, connection to Country and community-led child safe approaches.

Equity and Access for All

- Reinforces inclusive practices that remove barriers to safety and participation.
- Strengthens educators' ability to identify risks that disproportionately affect marginalised or vulnerable children.

Social and Emotional Learning

- Builds educator confidence in recognising stress responses and providing co-regulation in moments of vulnerability.
- Strengthens relational safety, trust and protective connections within the learning environment.

Alignment with QKLG

Wellbeing

- Strengthens educators' understanding of safety, stress and emotional regulation, ensuring children experience emotional and physical security.
- Supports practices that identify risk early and uphold children's rights, dignity and protective needs.

Identity

- Encourages environments where children feel valued, respected and safe to express concerns or seek help.
- Affirms children's agency and voice as central to their safety and self-advocacy.

Connectedness

- Reinforces collaborative partnerships with families and communities that protect and support each child.
- Builds inclusive practices that nurture a sense of belonging and cultural safety.

QLD Child Safe Standards and Reportable Conduct Scheme

This workshop translates the 10 Queensland Child Safe Standards and the Reportable Conduct Scheme into clear, practical strategies that educators can apply in their daily practice. Participants explore what each requirement looks like in real scenarios, strengthening their confidence to recognise risks, respond to concerns and maintain environments where children feel safe, respected and able to speak up.

The workshop also reinforces the Universal Principle, supporting teams to build shared understandings and emphasising that decisions must always prioritise each child's best interests, safety, dignity and wellbeing.

KEY LINKS – VIC

School Readiness Funding Menu

Please note this workshop is not on the SRF menu. It can however be utilised under flexible funding provisions. For more information on flexible funding go to the Victorian Department of Education website here:

For more information on the Phoenix Support SRF offerings, including those on the menu as well as flexible funding options, head to our website here:



Alignment with the SRF Priority Areas for use under Flexible Funding Options

Access & Inclusion

- Builds educator capability to identify and remove barriers that compromise safety for vulnerable or marginalised children.
- Strengthens reflective practice that challenges bias, ensuring safer and more equitable experiences for all children.

Wellbeing (Social and Emotional)

- Reinforces relational safety, trust and co-regulation as protective factors that support children's wellbeing.
- Equips educators with evidence-informed strategies to respond to emotional distress or behaviours that signal unmet safety needs.

Alignment with the VEYLDF

Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity

- Supports safe, affirming environments where children feel respected, valued and able to assert their rights.
- Strengthens educators' reflective capacity to ensure their own assumptions and decisions do not compromise children's safety or sense of self.

Outcome 2: Children are connected with, and contribute to, their world.

- Fosters relationships and partnerships that promote safety, collaboration and shared responsibility across the community.
- Builds educators' capability to engage families and community partners in culturally responsive child safe practices.

Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing

- Emphasises emotional and physical safety as foundational to children's wellbeing and capacity to learn.
- Strengthens strategies that help children recognise feelings, seek help and build protective, trusting relationships.

VIC Child Safe Standards and Reportable Conduct Scheme

This workshop supports Victorian educators to confidently navigate the 11 Victorian Child Safe Standards and the Reportable Conduct Scheme by unpacking what these frameworks mean in practical, everyday contexts. Through discussion and applied examples, participants examine how each requirement can be enacted in ways that embed children's rights, cultural safety and wellbeing.

The workshop helps services translate the Standards into consistent actions that strengthen safety, accountability and trust within their communities. Educators explore key expectations such as empowering children, creating culturally safe environments, and strengthening participation for diverse and vulnerable groups.