

CP.69 Child Safe Awareness

<i>Responsible Department</i>	Development & Community Services
<i>Resolution Number</i>	C.5291
<i>Resolution Date</i>	23/04/2025
<i>Next Scheduled Review</i>	April 2027
<i>Related Shire Documents</i>	<p>Child Safe Awareness Safe Operating Procedure</p> <p>Organisational Risk Register</p> <p>Complaints Process</p> <p>Code Of Conduct – Employees, Volunteers, Contractors and Agency Staff</p>
<i>Related Legislation</i>	<p>Work Health and Safety Act 2020</p> <p>Working with Children Act 2004</p> <p>Child Care Services Act 2007</p> <p>Children and Community Services Act 2004</p> <p>Civil Liability Act 2002</p> <p>Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003</p> <p>Equal Opportunity Act 1984</p> <p>Local Government Act 1995</p> <p>National Principles for Child Safety Organisations</p> <p>Parliamentary Commissioner Act 1971</p> <p>Public Interest Disclosure Act 2003</p> <p>Public Sector Management Act 1994</p> <p>United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (CRC)</p> <p>National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse Act 2018</p>

OBJECTIVE

The Shire of Northam supports, values and is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people.

This Policy aims to reduce the risk of harm and child sexual abuse in our communities by encouraging safe environments to be created and maintained and has been developed in response to the recommendations 6.12 of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

SCOPE

The safety and wellbeing of children is everyone's responsibility.

The Child Safe Awareness Policy applies to Council Members, workers, volunteers, trainees, work experience students and anyone who undertakes work on behalf of the Shire of Northam, regardless of whether their work relates directly to children or young people.

POLICY

The Child Safe Awareness Policy is one of the many ways the Shire of Northam demonstrates its commitment to having a zero tolerance approach to child abuse and providing a safe environment for young people when interacting with the Shire.

The Shire will promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people across the community and demonstrate leadership by supporting organisations and sporting clubs to be child safe and to protect children and young people from harm and / or abuse.

Training will be provided for Council Members, workers, volunteers, trainees, work experience students and anyone who undertakes work on behalf of the Shire of Northam.

The Shire will deliver child safe messages, aligned to the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and Commonwealth Child Safe Framework, to all Shire facilities through resources, awareness raising and sharing relevant information.

PRINCIPLES

- The rights of children and young people are upheld.
- Children and young people are respected, listened to, and informed about their rights.
- Children and young people have the fundamental right to be safe and cared for.
- Children and young people have the right to speak up, be heard and taken seriously without consequence.
- The safety and best interests of children and young people are a primary consideration when making decisions that concern them.

- Access to trusted and reliable information, including the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, helps support organisations to understand what they must do to help reduce the risk of harm and abuse
- Communities are informed and involved in promoting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people including protections from harm.
- Collaboration with a range of community groups and organisations to promote the safety and wellbeing and empowerment of all children and young people.

PROVISIONS

The Shire will ensure that the following resources are developed and available to support the functions of this policy, and responsibilities are assigned to the relevant managers for implementation:

- Develop a process to deliver the child safe messages at all Shire facilities; and
- Connecting and supporting local community groups, organisations, and stakeholders to child safe resources (including culturally safe and inclusive resources).

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

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

DEFINITIONS

Abuse: Abuse is an act, or a failure to act, towards or on behalf of a child that may result in harm. It can occur on one occasion or multiple occasions. Sometimes the impact of multiple events leads to harm that becomes cumulative in nature. Types of abuse include physical, emotional and sexual abuse, and neglect.

Child/Children: Means a person under 18 years of age, and in the absence of positive evidence as to age, means a person who appears to be under 18 years of age.

Child Safe Organisation: is defined in the Royal Commission Final Report as one that:

- Creates an environment where children's safety and wellbeing are at the centre of thought, values and actions.
- Places emphasis on genuine engagement with and valuing of children and young people.
- Creates conditions that reduce the likelihood of harm to children and young people.
- Creates conditions that increase the likelihood of identifying any harm.
- Responds to any concerns, disclosures, allegations, or suspicions of harm.

Note: in the context of local government, this would involve referring concerns to the Department of Communities or WA Police to respond as appropriate.

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

Child safe: For the purpose of this Policy, child safe means protecting the rights of children and young people to be safe by taking actions that can help prevent harm and abuse.

Harm: Harm, in relation to a child, means any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's wellbeing, whether caused by a single act, omission or circumstance; or a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances.

Wellbeing: Wellbeing of children and young people includes the care, development, education, health and safety of children and young people.