D1: Child safe volunteering
National Office for Child Safety

Considerations for Child Safe Volunteering: National Principles and Working with Children Checks

Stream D: Volunteering Across the Lifecycle Child Safe Volunteering

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13 February 2023
Today we are meeting on the lands of the Ngunnawal people. I acknowledge members of today’s forum will also be dialling in from multiple nations across Australia and pay my respects to the traditional custodians of those lands as well.

I pay my respects for their continuing care and guardianship of the land on which we meet.

I acknowledge and pay my respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

I also acknowledge and pay my respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples attending today’s forum.
I wish to acknowledge any victims and survivors and their advocates who are present with us today.

The National Office will always endeavour to centre your views and experiences.

We strive to learn from you to better protect children and young people, and dedicate our ongoing efforts to improving supports for all victims and survivors.
Overview of workshop session

- Overview of the National Office for Child Safety and SHINE

- Overview of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
  - Interactive activity: Creating Child Safe Organisations – Sli.do

- Overview of Working with Children Check (WWCC) reforms
  - Interactive activity: WWCC processes – Sli.do
Key recommendation of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

Established July 2018 to enhance children’s safety and prevent future harm.
The National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse (2021-2030)

- The National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse 2021-2030.
- 10 year, whole-of-nation policy framework for preventing and responding to child abuse in all settings.
Who we are

We are passionate about transforming the lives of children and young people affected by the criminal justice system.

What we do

We work together with children, young people and families to break the cycle of intergenerational offending and disadvantage through innovative programs and service delivery.
The Current Challenge

- **Data gap** in every state and territory
- **NO national roadmap or state strategy**
- **75,000** students across the country have had a parent in prison (estimated)
- **45,000** students are currently experiencing parental incarceration (estimated)
- **60%** of all women and **46%** of all men in prison have children
- Children of prisoners are **6x more likely** to end up in prison themselves and **40% more likely** to drop out of school
- **2x as likely to have disability or chronic illness**
  - 16.7% of children disability or chronic illness compared to 7.4% of general population

SHINE for Kids have developed and implemented Australia’s first teacher training program to develop the skills, attitudes, knowledge and confidence of teachers to support the education of students with an incarcerated parent.
Children of Prisoners

- Homelessness
- Stigma and Shame
- Foster Care
- Emotional Distress
- Family Violence
- Poor Education outcomes
- Increased Caring Responsibilities
- Poverty
Our solution: Keeping kids connected
Volunteers at SHINE for Kids

What does volunteering look like @ SFK?
Child and Family Centres – Cottages on prison grounds drop-in center *
Student Placements
Prison in-visits *
Belonging To Family – First Nation Volunteering Program
Community Based Youth Mentoring *
Primary Based School Mentoring *
Head Office Volunteers
Fundraising and Promotional Volunteers
Micro Volunteering *
Virtual Volunteering
Corporate Volunteering
Supported transport *
*Child and young people facing volunteer roles

Volunteer numbers at SHINE for Kids
2018 – 205
2019 – 322
2020 – 208
2021 – 90
2022 – 106
2023 - 127
The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations outline how organisations can create a child safe culture.
The National Principles embed the **Royal Commission's Child Safe Standards**.

Provide a consistent approach to creating organisational cultures and practices that **promote the safety and wellbeing of children in Australia**.

1. Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.
2. Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
3. Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
4. Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.
5. People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
6. Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.
7. Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.
8. Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.
9. Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved.
10. Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.
Creating Child Safe Organisations

- How do you help volunteers understand child safety expectations without increasing the administrative burden?
  - Are there additional resources or other actions that would help you in particular?
- How do you help volunteers be proactive in their approach to child safety?
- What are your problems/pain points in embedding a child safe culture in your organisation?
  - Do you have examples of solutions you’ve used to address these?
  - Or, do you have ideas for possible solutions?

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The Royal Commission released the Working with Children Checks (WWCC) Report in 2015.

- 36 recommendations to improve processes, practices and policies for screening.

The National Standards for WWCC were agreed in 2019 and provide nationally consistent minimum benchmarks for WWCC.
Working with Children Checks processes

- How do you assess and monitor WWCC in your organisation?
- What are the biggest problems/pain points for your organisation and volunteers to access WWCCs?
- Do you have any possible solutions to these/what changes would you like to see in the future?
- What reforms would help you?

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Thank you

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