Practical steps boards can take to ensure child safety

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This resource was developed to provide boards with clear, practical actions they can take right now to strengthen child safety in their settings.

The following checklist provides questions that board members can use to guide discussion and decision-making:

Contact Us
If you need further assistance or advice, please do not hesitate to contact our dedicated team on (03) 9843 2119.

1. Reaffirm the board's commitment

- [ ] Does the board lead by example in promoting a culture of safety and accountability?
- [ ] When did the board last make a formal statement of its commitment to child safety? A clear message from the board that child safety is a priority and is supported at the highest levels can help reinforce a strong culture and guide expectations.
- [ ] How is the board's commitment communicated to staff, volunteers, families and children?

2. Check capability and knowledge

- [ ] Has the board undertaken recent training or received updates on legal obligations and child safety standards?
- [ ] Does the board's skills matrix include child safety expertise or experience?
- [ ] When was the skills matrix last reviewed, and are any gaps being addressed?

3. Request evidence of implementation

- [ ] When were the organisation's child safety policy and processes last reviewed?
- [ ] How does the board know that the child safety policy and processes have been effectively implemented?
- [ ] What evidence has been provided to the board showing compliance with child safety policies and the Child Safe Standards?
- [ ] Are regular reports provided on matters such as training completion, incident reporting, and risk assessments?

4. Ensure integration with broader governance

- [ ] Is child safety a standing item on board agendas?
- [ ] Is it adequately reflected in the organisation's risk register and strategic planning documents?
- [ ] Does the board receive regular updates on progress against child safety objectives?

5. Ensure risk management frameworks are robust

- [ ] Does the organisation's risk management framework clearly identify child safety risks and mitigation strategies?
- [ ] Has the board considered its risk appetite in relation to child safety including scenario planning and stress testing? All organisations should have a very low appetite for child safety risks and zero tolerance for harm.
- [ ] Is there regular review of how child safety risks are assessed and managed, including scenario planning and stress testing?

6. Support transparency and responsiveness

- [ ] Are there accessible and well-communicated reporting channels for concerns or complaints?
- [ ] Does the board receive reports on how concerns are handled and what actions have been taken?
- [ ] Does the organisation encourage a "speak up" culture, and is there evidence that it is working in practice?

This resource was developed in response to the Childcare and Early Education reform commitment made by the Victorian and Commonwealth Government in July 2025. To stay up to date on these reforms and access updated resources – visit our dedicated website page here.