

Consulting, Coaching and Accreditation Services



CHILD WISE
creating child safe communities

About Child Wise

Established in 1991, Child Wise has over 25 years' experience in helping organisations build and sustain child safe environments. In Australia, Child Wise pioneered the use of Child Safety Standards within organisations where children and young people spend time. Based on the principles of capacity building and prevention, Child Wise continues to work with organisations to create and embed systems, processes and approaches that create a child safe culture and mindset.

Child Wise is a social enterprise of Save the Children Australia. Save the Children and Child Wise share a common vision: that all children are safe from violence, exploitation and abuse.

Child Wise Consulting Services

Child Wise can provide tailored consulting services designed to help your organisation strengthen its child safety practice. This may include undertaking a child safety review of your organisation to identify gaps and strengths and supporting you in developing an improvement plan. It may also involve the development and implementation of child safe policies, procedures and processes. We are holistic, rigorous and child-focused in our approach, and always aim to deliver tailored support which facilitates lasting change.

Organisations which engage Child Wise consulting services may go on to participate in the Child Wise Accreditation Program which is described in more detail below. The Accreditation Program is delivered in modules; each of these modules can be purchased individually or in bundles as part of a tailored consultancy package. Outcomes of services delivered as part of a consultancy package can later be utilised to inform the Accreditation process.

Child Wise Coaching Services

We understand that not all organisations will want to undergo Child Wise Accreditation or have an external organisation evaluate their operations. To support these organisations, we offer a Child Wise coaching program that works with leadership teams or child safety officers and provides them with the tools to build child safety capacity.

This program includes a variety of coaching packages on offer that organisations can choose from to meet their needs. A vast library of tools and resources is available to support organisations on their child safe journey, as well as monthly coaching sessions for the leadership team.

Each coaching session focuses on a particular aspect of child safety. Leaders attending the sessions will gain an in-depth understanding of each element of child safety and will be supported to develop action plans to address any gaps. This program is best delivered across a year when the organisation has prioritised a focus on child safety.



Child Wise Accreditation Program

Accreditation is a visible recognition that Child Wise has worked in partnership with an organisation and is satisfied that it provides a safe environment for children.

We offer Child Wise Accreditation to organisations that work with children and can demonstrate that their policies, processes and culture are consistently child safe. Child Wise accredits against a child safe organisations framework that is strongly based on the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (National Principles). The National Principles were endorsed by every Australian state and territory government as the foundation of a nation-wide approach to child safety.

In addition to the National Principles, the Child Wise Accreditation Framework further includes legislation relevant to specific jurisdictions, including state-based Child Safe Standards, and Child Wise 'success criteria', including specific indicators and evidence expected in organisations with a well embedded child safe culture.

Child Wise uses a systems approach to assess the quality of child safety practice and support organisations to make sustained improvements. This approach considers all aspects of an organisation, including culture, leadership, policies and procedures, workforce and resources, and pays particular attention to the experience of children, young people and families. It is a holistic approach aimed at examining an organisation from a range of perspectives and it takes seriously the views of children and young people, their families and the wider community. Furthermore, this approach considers the broader environmental context in which the organisation operates. A systems approach assesses the numerous factors that underpin an organisation's culture and impact on the experience of its most important and vulnerable stakeholders – children and young people. Whilst not endorsed by Commonwealth, State or Territory governments, Child Wise Accreditation is underpinned by extensive research which can be accessed [here](https://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/issues-papers) and more than 2 decades of sector experience.

Accreditation decisions are made by a minimum of two Child Wise representatives with qualifications in social work, psychology and education, and 20+ years' experience in the child safety sector. Decision makers are always independent of the Accreditation projects they are assessing. Once Accreditation is achieved, it is a three-year arrangement during which Child Wise partners with organisations to support continuous improvement, integrate new legislative requirements and emerging best practice, whilst ensuring Accreditation requirements continue to be met.

Benefits of Accreditation

Child Wise is a sector leader, and as such our Accreditation will serve as credible, visible evidence of your organisation's commitment to child safety. It will reassure stakeholders, including children, young people and families, that your organisation prioritises child safety and has invited external scrutiny to ensure a child safe culture exists.

Child Wise will remain involved with your organisation during the period of Accreditation, and as such will support continuous improvement, adaptation to change and risk management. Child Wise remains abreast of emerging risks, research and legislative changes and will provide regular briefings to all accredited organisations to ensure they are kept up to date with the latest advancements in the sector.

The Child Wise Approach

The Accreditation program draws upon current research whilst integrating key messages from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and other State and Territory inquiries. We work in partnership with your organisation to assess policies, procedures, systems and strategies. We then gather input from children, young people, families, volunteers, staff and leaders, in order to gain an in-depth understanding of organisational culture and the approaches that can be implemented to deliver real, sustained change. The program then facilitates capacity building through internal education, leadership support and policy development.

The Child Wise framework is multi-dimensional and aims to ensure your organisation has the capacity to:

- Prevent risk to children by building an open and aware culture, whilst targeting specific environmental and situational factors;
- Identify child safety concerns and intervene in child-focused ways;
- Respond to disclosures and allegations of abuse;
- Learn from serious incidents to drive continuous improvement; and
- Empower children of all ages to contribute to increasing their safety.

Accreditation Requirements in a Nutshell

The following is a brief overview of the requirements you will be expected to achieve in order to be accredited by Child Wise:

- Child safe leadership arrangements and evidence which indicates leaders have established a culture of child safety;
- Evidence that children, young people, families and communities are empowered and actively involved in, and consulted about, child safety;
- Evidence that equity is prioritised, diversity is valued, and meaningful steps are taken to ensure accessibility and inclusion of all children and young people;
- Child safe policies, procedures and codes of conduct which are widely available and understood by children, young people and families, volunteers, staff and leaders.
- Child safe arrangements for recruitment, selection, supervision and management of staff and volunteers, which are well understood and consistently applied;
- Evidence of robust, child-focused risk management;
- A sustainable model of internal child safety education which is accessible to all staff and volunteers, and includes a proportionate number of Child Safety Champions who are local experts equipped to offer safeguarding advice, guidance and training.
- Evidence that the organisation's child safety infrastructure, including policies, processes, systems, support structures and education packages, are regularly reviewed.

Accreditation Program Modules

Unless otherwise indicated, the following modules are essential for Accreditation. Organisations, however, can identify one or more modules to undertake as part of a tailored consultancy service outside of the Accreditation program.



Module 1: Project Establishment

This phase of the process involves working with project leads from your organisation to establish and plan the project. The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and other State/Territory inquiries into child abuse all point to the critical role leaders have in influencing how organisations develop and sustain child safe culture. Child Wise also recognises this, and as such prioritises leadership engagement at the commencement of an Accreditation project.

Project Establishment includes:

- Project Planning - An initial project planning meeting with the named project lead(s) from your organisation; you may also opt to include other senior leaders in this meeting.
- Leadership Briefing - A leadership engagement meeting at the commencement of the project to provide an overview, summarise timescales and deliverables.
- 'Leading a Child Safe Organisation' training (optional) - A two-hour tailored training session specifically designed for organisational leaders, which is optional for Accreditation and can be purchased as a stand-alone product or component of a tailored consultancy project.



Module 2: Self-Assessment

The Self-Assessment is an essential component of Accreditation, as it enables a more accurate understanding of strengths and priorities for development.

The Self-Assessment is structured around the Child Wise Accreditation Framework and encourages a critical examination of child safety capacity across the organisation. The completed Self-Assessment tool is then used to shape the Child Safety Review.



Module 3: Child Safety Review

This module uses a whole-system approach to enable your organisation and Child Wise to develop a deeper understanding of child safety across the organisation. By necessity, Child Wise undertakes this phase of the program without fear or favour, recognising that the most important beneficiaries of the process are children and young people.

The Child Safety Review aims to:

- Equitably and proportionately examine child safety across the organisation;
- Engage all stakeholders, especially children, young people and families;
- Provide a transparent, system-wide view of child safety in the organisation;
- Identify strengths, areas for development, risks and mitigation; and
- Provide your organisation with meaningful, achievable and tailored recommendations designed to shape an improvement plan.

Your organisation is then able to utilise the findings from the Child Safety Review to support continuous improvement.

Phases of the Review

Organisational Child Safety Reviews include the following phases:

i. Desktop Review

Examines key child safety policies, procedures and other documentation against the Child Wise Accreditation Framework. Evidence reviewed during this phase of Accreditation includes:

- Child Safety Policy;
- Child Protection Reporting Policy and Procedure;
- Complaints Policy;
- Code of Conduct;
- Staff and volunteer recruitment and supervision policies and procedures;
- Examples of position descriptions, recruitment adverts and employment contracts;
- Staff and volunteer training requirements and content;
- Website and social media platforms;
- Poster, brochures or flyers / videos / online induction or training modules aimed towards children, young people, families, staff and volunteers.

ii. Leadership Interviews

One on one interviews conducted with senior managers and executives, CEO and/or governance personnel.

iii. Staff and Volunteer Engagement

Surveys and focus groups conducted with staff and volunteers.

iv. Stakeholder Engagement

Surveys and focus groups conducted with children, young people and families involved with the organisation.

v. Site Visits

Visits and child safety assessments of facilities where children and young people spend time. Site visits include a review of:

- Physical space and any risky areas, e.g. areas without sight lines;
- The extent to which child-friendly information is on display;
- Signing in/out procedures; and
- Site security, including reception and CCTV coverage.

Presentation of Child Safety Review Findings

At the conclusion of the Child Safety Review, Child Wise will analyse data and compile a report with recommendations for improvement. Child Wise can also present findings to a meeting of organisational leaders if this is requested.

For clients who purchased a Child Safety Review only, this will conclude Child Wise's engagement.



Module 4: Improvement Planning

In most cases, the Child Safety Review will make recommendations which your organisation will need to implement in order to progress toward Child Wise Accreditation. At the conclusion of the Child Safety Review, Child Wise will work with your organisation to develop a tailored improvement plan which addresses how, when and by whom recommendations will be implemented.



Module 5: Capacity Building

Your organisation may opt to engage Child Wise to support with capacity building, although this is optional for Accreditation.

Additional services that Child Wise can offer organisations include:

Policy development

Child Wise can support your organisation by:

- Reviewing and editing draft policy and procedure documents; and
- Writing of documents e.g. policies, procedures, strategies, tailored to the organisational context.

Child Safety Organisational Framework

An organisational child safeguarding framework can be developed that is specific to your organisation. The framework will integrate all child safety policy requirements and will be informed by the outcome of the Child Safety Review, if one was undertaken. The framework includes the following elements:

- The legislative and social context of service delivery;
- An organisational statement of commitment to child safety;
- Roles and responsibilities;
- Policies and procedures relating to keeping children and young people safe including:
 - Identifying child abuse, exploitation and neglect;
 - Responding to and reporting child safety concerns;
 - Promoting the wellbeing of children and young people;
 - Participation of children and young people;
 - Promoting diversity, equity and inclusion.
 - Online and physical safety;
 - Conducting internal investigations;
 - Risk Management;
 - Recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers;
 - Training and support of staff and volunteers;
 - Responding to historical abuse.

The framework can also include a compliance table that sets out examples of what the organisation needs to have in place in order to achieve the relevant child safety standards.

Community of Practice

Child Wise can offer your key child safety staff access to our Child Wise Community of Practice which gives them the opportunity to attend our webinar series and receive regular policy and practice updates.

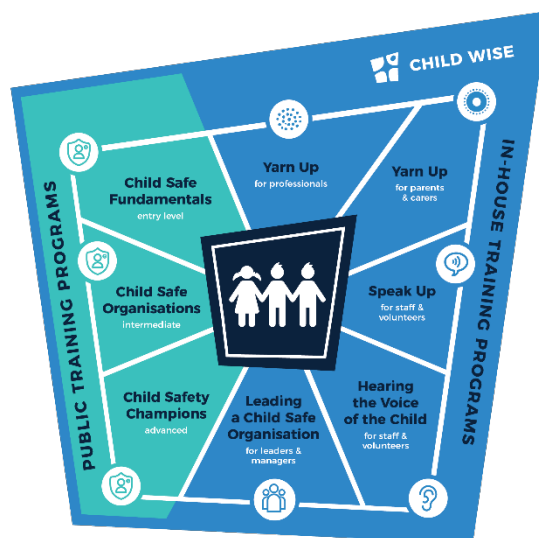
Embedded model

Child Wise can support your organisation's capacity building by embedding one of our Child Wise Advisors in your organisation over an agreed period of time. The Child Wise Advisor can offer valuable expertise as your organisation continues its journey along the child safety continuum. This may include: Developing or reviewing policies and procedures; delivering internal education; consulting with staff and volunteers; coaching of managers and leaders, undertaking learning reviews in relation to breaches of child safety policy; and supporting managers conducting child safety investigations.

Training of staff and volunteers

Child Wise can also support your organisation to develop sustainable child safety capacity through internal education. This may involve assessing and strengthening existing approaches or introducing new education programs.

Through our awareness, prevention and early intervention training programs, Child Wise can equip your organisation's staff and volunteers with vital knowledge and skills to help keep children safe from harm.



Child safety training programs provided by Child Wise are outlined [here](#)

For detailed information about child safety training, visit www.childwise.org.au.



Module 6: Accreditation

Accreditation is a formal designation agreed by Child Wise Accreditation Decision-Makers. At least two Decision-Makers will be involved in awarding Accreditation to organisations; more than two Decision-Makers may be involved in larger, complex projects. Decision-Makers are professionals with significant (20+ years) experience in child safety related work and are contracted by Child Wise to independently assess whether organisations have reached the benchmark for Accreditation.

Following the implementation of the Improvement Plan and when significant progress has been achieved, your organisation can be assessed for Accreditation. If 12 months have passed since the completion of the Child Safety Review, this will need to be repeated before Accreditation can be considered (at additional cost). Whilst it is appreciated that some Improvement Plan recommendations are longer-term endeavours that may not be completely implemented at the point of Accreditation, Decision-Makers will need to see significant signs of progress and clear plans for ongoing development. Your Child Wise Advisor can support you in determining when your organisation is ready for Accreditation.

In preparation for presentation to Accreditation Decision-Makers, the Child Wise Advisor and client organisation will update the Improvement Plan noting:

- Evidence of progress since the Child Safety Review;
- Any contextual issues relevant for decision making (e.g. organisational changes, challenges, parallel Accreditation processes);
- Any primary evidence which might assist the Panel's decision making;
- Plans for ongoing improvement.

Accreditation Decision-Makers will review the Child Safety Review Report and updated Improvement Plan. This process usually takes place as a desktop review however, Decision Makers may also request discussions with representatives from your organisation and/or the Child Wise Advisor to raise questions and clarify aspects of written materials. Decision-Makers will then conclude whether the benchmark for Accreditation has been met.

Decision-Makers will then either:

1. Agree Accreditation with no additional recommendations;
2. Agree Accreditation with additional recommendations to be monitored via the mid-Accreditation Self-Assessment process; or
3. Not agree Accreditation, then set out the rationale for this decision and the steps that must be taken for Accreditation to be re-considered.

A written summary of the decision will be sent to your organisation along with any new recommendations made by Decision-Makers and/or Advisor. If successfully Accredited, your organisation will be provided with the electronic Accreditation Stamp, guidance on how to use this and a Certificate of Accreditation.



Module 7: Mid-Accreditation Self-Assessment

The Mid-Accreditation Self-Assessment process is an essential component of ongoing Accreditation, as it evidences whether organisations are progressing along the child safety continuum.

The Self-Assessment process is three-fold:

- Firstly, your organisation utilises the Improvement Plan to self-assess and update progress in relation to each recommended area of improvement;
- The updated Improvement Plan is then sent to Child Wise prior to the year 18-month Accreditation anniversary;
- Child Wise Decision-Makers then review the outcome of the Self-Assessment, provide feedback, make recommendations for further improvement and determine if the benchmark for Accreditation continues to be met.

If Decision-Makers determine that the benchmark for Accreditation is no longer met, the rationale and recommendations for improvement are shared with your organisation. Your organisation then has several options:

- Conclude their engagement with Child Wise;
- Implement recommendations of the Decision-Makers and re-present for Accreditation; note that this will incur additional costs and a new proposal and contract will be required;
- Invoke the dispute resolution process.

Re-Accreditation

Towards the end of Year 3 of the Accreditation cycle, should your organisation wish to be re-Accredited for a further 3-year period, Child Wise will develop a proposal outlining timescales and costs for a further Accreditation Project.

Whilst the updated Child Safety Review must be rigorous in its approach, provided Self-Assessments have been undertaken regularly and demonstrate evidence of continuous improvement, it is likely to result in fewer recommendations than the original one.

Should you have questions or wish to discuss any aspect of our services please contact Child Wise on 1300CHILDWISE or email info@childwise.org.au. We welcome the opportunity to discuss your needs and how we may be able to tailor a program to suit your organisation.

Child Wise Training Programs

TRAINING PROGRAM	OVERVIEW	WHO SHOULD ATTEND
Leading a Child Safe Organisation (2 hours)	This program is designed for leaders and senior managers to gain an understanding of legislative and policy requirements of organisations to protect children and young people in their care.	Leaders, management and executive members in organisations where children and young people spend time. Prior training or knowledge of the topic is not required.
Speak Up (2 hours)	An introductory training program which aims to help you identify and recognise signs and indicators of child abuse and build confidence about what to do if you have concerns about a child.	Staff and volunteers that work with children and/or young people and have no prior knowledge of child abuse.
Child Safe Fundamentals (3 hours)	This program provides an overview of the elements of child safe practice and culture based on the findings of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.	Staff and volunteers who work with children and/or young people and have some prior understanding of child abuse.
Child Safe Organisations (1 day)	This program unpacks the actions that organisations need to take to ensure they are safe for children and meet their obligations under state and federal Government Child Safe Standards and Principles.	Anyone in a leadership or management position in an organisation that engages with children, or has responsibility for keeping children safe via a child safeguarding portfolio.
Child Safety Champions (2 days)	An intensive training program designed to give you the skills and knowledge to lead a child safeguarding portfolio or reform in your organisation.	Child Safety Officers and other professionals that have a responsibility to lead the implementation of a child safe environment for children and young people.
Yarn Up for Professionals (1 day)	The Yarn Up program was designed to build the capacity of professionals that work with indigenous children and young people to ensure their safety in the organisations where they spend time.	This program is for anyone in an organisation in a leadership or management position, or who has responsibility for keeping children safe via a child safeguarding portfolio.
Yarn Up for Parents & Carers (3 hours)	The Yarn Up program was designed to inform Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and carers about child abuse and factors that holistically increase child, family and community safety and well-being.	This program is recommended for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and carers.
Hearing the Voice of the Child (3 hours)	Hearing the Voice of the Child aims to help you empower children and young people to speak up about what makes them feel safe or unsafe in your organisation. This training aims to unpack relevant standards/principles and help you implement them in your organisation.	Suitable for staff and volunteers that work with children and/or young people. Prior training or knowledge of child protection is recommended.