

A safe organisation is a successful organisation

A safe organisation is a place where everyone can enjoy the sport they love, free from harm. Creating this environment is one of the most important things your sport and recreation organisation can do.

This guide provides simple, practical tools to build a safe and fair organisation by focusing on the policies and culture that keep your members safe.



We'll cover:

- Your obligations under Queensland's 10 Child Safe Standards
- How to use the sport-specific National Integrity Framework
- How to support the emotional and mental wellbeing of your members

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

From the committee to coaches, parents and players, everyone has a role to play in creating a safe and positive environment. This guide provides the simple tools to help you do it together.

Sport integrity policies

You don't necessarily need to write policies from scratch. The first step is to check with your state or national governing bodies to see which policies they provide. You can then simply adopt the policies provided by your sport, amending them if necessary to tailor them to your organisation.

Your key people

Policies are only effective when you have the right people to bring them to life. These roles are crucial for maintaining a safe environment.

Proactive leaders

Your management committee is responsible for championing a safe culture from the top.

A Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO)

Appoint and train one or more volunteers or staff as a confidential first point of contact for any concerns or questions about the organisation's policies. See Play by the Rules for more information.

Putting the Child Safe Standards into action

The 10 Child Safe Standards are part of the mandatory framework for child safe organisations in Queensland¹. Under the *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024*, sporting organisations are considered 'child safe entities'. This means your organisation will need to comply with the 10 Child Safe Standards by the designated date:

- From 1 April 2026, clubs and organisations that deliver activities primarily for children (like junior sport, coaching programs or swim schools) must commence compliance
- Organisations that provide camps or overnight stays (like Scouts and Guides) must comply earlier, from 1 January 2026

The Child Safe Standards are a comprehensive framework designed to create and embed a culture of safety and wellbeing for all children in Queensland. The standards aim to protect children from harm and promote their safety, wellbeing and best interests when they interact with organisations.

A snapshot of the 10 Child Safe Standards

Here is a high-level overview of what each standard means for your organisation.

1. Leadership and culture

Your committee leads by example, making child safety a priority in all decisions

2. Voice of children

You actively listen to children and involve them in decisions that affect them.

3. Family and community

You communicate openly with parents and carers about your safety policies and practices.

4. Equity and diversity

Your organisation is fair and respects the diverse needs of all children.

5. People

You have a clear, child-focused process for responding to complaints and concerns.

6. Complaints management

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7. Knowledge and skills

Your volunteers are trained and equipped with the knowledge they need to keep children safe.

8. Physical and online environments

You manage risks in your physical spaces (e.g. grounds, clubhouse) and ensure your organisation's online communications are safe and appropriate.

9. Continuous improvement

You regularly review your practices and seek feedback to find ways to improve.

10. Policies and procedures

Your commitment to safety is written down in clear, accessible documents.

The Universal Principle

The Universal Principle establishes the foundation for keeping all children safe. It requires organisations to create a culturally safe environment where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children feel welcome, valued and respected. This is because if an organisation isn't culturally safe, it can't be truly safe for everyone. The Universal Principle serves as a lens through which all 10 standards need to be viewed.

Your child safe action plan

Getting started doesn't have to be overwhelming. Remember, this is a journey of continuous improvement. Here are the key actions your organisation can take, working in partnership with your sport's governing body.

Connect with your sport

Your first port of call should be your state or national sporting organisation. They may be able to provide guidance specific to your sport to help you implement the Child Safe Standards.

Adopt your sport's policies

Your state or national sporting organisation will provide you with the National Integrity Framework (NIF) policies you need to adopt. This includes child safety and wellbeing, codes of conduct and complaints processes.

Use sports training resources

Utilise available resources (see Play by the Rules) to train your committee, coaches and MPIO.

Talk to your community

Actively seek feedback from children and families on what makes them feel safe. It is important that you ask Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families for their views on cultural safety.

Understand your sport's processes

Your sport's policies will define a formal complaints process. Make sure your committee understands how it works and who is responsible for what.



Responding with care: reporting and support

Even with the best prevention strategies, issues can still arise. A safe organisation is one that is prepared to respond. This means having clear pathways for formal complaints and a compassionate, supportive approach to the general wellbeing of your members.

Making a complaint or report

It's important to know where to go to raise a concern. The National Integrity Framework (NIF) provides a process for where different matters are handled.

Who handles what?

For sports signed up to the NIF, contact Sport Integrity Australia (or your sport's national sporting organisation directly if not signed up to the NIF) for issues involving:

- Child safeguarding
- Discrimination

Contact your sport (e.g. your state sporting organisation) for other issues, such as:

- Bullying or harassment between adults
- Breaches of the Code of Conduct

A full list of sports signed up to the NIF is available on the Sport Integrity Australia website.

If you are unsure where to go, you can submit a report to Sport Integrity Australia and they will provide advice on the best pathway. You can make a complaint or report via the online form on their website or by calling 1300 027 232.

The National Integrity Framework (NIF) is a set of policies that helps keep sport safe, fair and healthy for everyone by providing a clear process for managing integrity issues².

Sport Integrity Australia also provides:

- Sport Integrity Policy Standards for organisations that can't adopt the Framework because they are not eligible, are unable or chose not to
- Alternative best practice integrity policy templates for organisations that don't meet the eligibility criteria to access

Supporting member wellbeing

A key part of a safe culture is supporting the mental and emotional wellbeing of your members. It's about creating a supportive environment where people know how to help a member who might be struggling.

Your role: a signpost, not a counsellor.

You are not expected to be a mental health expert. Your role is to be supportive and notice if someone is struggling, listen without judgment and refer them to professional support. For practical tips on how to start a safe conversation, see the resources on the [Medicare Mental Health website](#).

In an emergency

If an individual is in immediate danger or a life is at risk, call the Police on 000.

Suspicious of child harm

If you have a reason to suspect a child in Queensland is experiencing harm, or is at risk of experiencing harm or being neglected, contact Child Safety Services Centres.

Mandatory reporting

Queensland law has been strengthened to increase protection of children from the risk of sexual abuse. The offences target behaviours that ignore or hide the sexual abuse of children including:

- Failure to report: All adults in the community that reasonably believe (or should reasonably believe) that a child is being or has been the victim of sexual abuse must report it to the police – unless they have a reasonable excuse
- Failure to protect: Adults in an institutional setting (including sport and recreation organisations) must protect children from the risk of a sexual offence being committed against them

Adults in positions of power or responsibility within an organisation that has children in its care, supervision and control will be required to reduce or remove any known risk of sexual offending against a child by an adult associated with the organisation. The ways that adults can remove or reduce risk will depend on each organisation's operating environment. Generally, adults are not required to take unnecessarily expensive or risk-averse actions.

Endnotes

1 State of Queensland (Queensland Family and Child Commission). Child Safe Standards. Retrieved 21 July 2025 from <https://www.qfcc.qld.gov.au/childsafestandards>

2 Sport Integrity Australia. (n.d.). National Integrity Framework. Retrieved 19 July 2025 from <https://www.sportintegrity.gov.au/what-we-do/national-integrity-framework>