# Supplementary material 2:Embedding cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in an integrated Queensland child safe organisations system

Ensuring that cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children is embedded into any proposed child safe organisations system is a priority for the Queensland Government. We heard there is strong support for cultural safety during our 2021 targeted consultations on *Growing child safe organisations in Queensland: Child safe standards and a reportable conduct scheme*.

Our next step is to hear from you about the best approach for Queensland. We welcome input from everyone, and we are particularly interested in hearing from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples about what you would need or want to see in a culturally safe system.

## The Royal Commission’s findings on cultural safety

There are many definitions of cultural safety. We acknowledge that only Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have the authority to define what is culturally safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and children. We also acknowledge that what feels culturally safe for one person, may not feel culturally safe for another person.

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (Royal Commission) found that a strong connection to culture is a protective factor against child sexual abuse for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children because:

* it builds resilience in communities to help mitigate the negative consequences of past policies and contemporary racism;
* strong attachments with multiple caregivers, a high self-esteem and positive social connections act as protective factors against child sexual abuse; and
* racism and disconnection from culture heighten the vulnerabilities that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children face in institutions.[[1]](#footnote-1)

## Key approaches under consideration

We are exploring two key approaches to embed cultural safety in a Queensland child safe organisations system. We are seeking your consideration and feedback on these approaches, or if there is another approach that responds better to the Queensland context.

1. *Create an additional CSS*: The Victorian Government has introduced an 11th CSS: ‘Establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued’. The benefit of this approach is that a specific standard puts cultural safety at the forefront and makes it clear that dedicated actions are needed to make an organisation culturally safe. However, it could also mean organisations do not consider cultural safety fully in their application of the other standards.
2. *Include cultural safety as a guiding principle across all CSS:* The Tasmanian Government includes a universal principle that sits across all 10 CSS to ensure the right to cultural safety of children who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander is respected. The benefit of this approach is that a guiding principle could encourage consideration of cultural safety across all standards. However, a guiding principle could also be less obvious to organisations as it may not be clear the principle has legal status or requirements for its compliance.

Embedding cultural safety in the CSS will also, by extension, apply to the systems that organisations put in place to prevent, detect and respond to reportable conduct.

**We want to hear from you about:**

* How can we best embed cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people into the child safe standards (CSS)? Do you prefer (and why):
1. an additional standalone 11th CSS, or
2. a guiding principle for cultural safety across the 10 CSS, or
3. an alternative approach?

For further details on proposed approaches, see pages 48 and 49 of the Consultation Regulatory Impact Statement (CRIS).

* What support would your organisation need to apply cultural safety and best consider the diverse needs of children and young people in implementing the CSS and a reportable conduct scheme (RCS)?
* Is there anything else we need to consider to ensure cultural safety is appropriately embedded in a Queensland child safe organisations system as a whole (comprising CSS and RCS)?

For the full list of consultation questions, please see the CRIS and / or the template for feedback provided. We would like to hear from you whether you respond to all, or only some, of the questions.

## Recognising diversity in child safe organisations system

We acknowledge that children in Queensland have a range of diverse needs that must be accommodated in a child safe organisations system. Pages 50 to 51 of the CRIS explore cultural safety for children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds as well as the needs of children with disability, very young children, children with previous experiences of trauma, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children.

It is expected that as part of its role to educate and support organisations, an oversight body for a Queensland child safe organisations system would also provide guidance on culturally safe practices and recognising diversity.

1. Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, *Final Report Volume 6: Making institutions child safe,* Sydney, 2017, page 176. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)