



CAPS Child Safe Leaders



About CAPS

Founded in 1973, the Child Abuse Prevention Service is the oldest child abuse prevention organisation in Australia.

Our story began when nurse and mother Dorothy Ginn began volunteering at the Wayside Chapel in King's Cross.

There she helped to care for runaway children and people struggling with addiction. Through this work she began to notice that childhood maltreatment and neglect were often the root cause of the trauma being experienced by the people in her care.

One day Dorothy encountered a distressed man in the chapel. His wife had killed their baby that morning. He asked her "Where do you go when something like this is happening, before it's too late?".

Dorothy would soon have the answer. She and a handful of other volunteers went on to found Prevention, the first-ever organisation in Australia dedicated to preventing all forms of child abuse.

Today, we are just known as CAPS. We are a non-government, non-religious charitable organisation. Our vision is simple but powerful, it is that "Every child is safe, supported and loved".

How can CAPS help you?

We provide evidence-based educational programs, bespoke child safe organisation solutions and child rights consulting to build well-being, emotional resiliency and forever break the cycle of abuse.

With over 40 years' experience delivering front-line child protection services we are all too aware of the need for organisations to have in place the people, policies and processes that will keep our most vulnerable safe from abuse.

We want to share everything that we have learned with organisations of all sizes to help them understand their child safety obligations and create the environment where every child under their care is safe, happy and engaged.

Utilising a positive, place-based approach, we make it as easy as possible for staff to understand the child protection system and learn how to comply with all duty of care and reportable conduct requirements.

We appreciate that every organisation is on its own child protection journey and will have unique requirements and goals. At CAPS, we work within your organisation's existing framework and provide whatever support is needed to embed a child safe culture at its very heart.

What is a child safe organisation?

Any organisation that provides services to children should be child safe. This includes schools, sports clubs, local government, law firms, community organisations and religious institutions.

Even if your organisation does not work directly with children, becoming child safe means that it can proudly demonstrate its commitment to championing the rights of children everywhere. It is the responsibility of everyone to know how to support our most vulnerable and keep them safe!

As defined by the Australian Human Rights Commission, a child safe organisation is one that:

- Embeds children's safety and wellbeing at the centre of all thoughts, values and actions
- Places emphasis on the genuine engagement with, and valuing of, children
- Creates conditions that reduce the likelihood of harm to children and young people
- Creates conditions that increase the likelihood of identifying any harm
- Responds to any concerns, disclosures, allegations or suspicions of harm.

The critical need for all organisations that work with children to be child safe was reflected in the findings of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

This led to the creation of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, which are designed to place child safety at the core of every organisation that provides services to children.

At CAPS we use the National Principles as the best practice model to implementing a child safe culture at your organisation.



Child Safe Organisations National Principles

- 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.

For information and resources, go to <https://childsafef.org.au>

What do the National Principles mean for my organisation?



The National Principles were endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments (which includes the Prime Minister and all state and territory leaders) in February 2019.

At the current time, Australian organisations that provide services to children are not legally required to implement the National Principles. However, they must meet the existing child protection obligations of their state or territory.

For example, NSW organisations that involve children in their work are obliged to adhere to the Child Safe Standards.

These reflect the National Principles and include legally mandated child protection requirements, such as the Working with Children Check, the Reportable Conduct Scheme and the need to report information to the police and the NSW Department of Communities and Justice.

By working with CAPS to implement the National Principles well before any legal need to do so, your organisation will send a clear message to customers and stakeholders everywhere that it is committed to creating environments where children's rights are recognised and supported.

CAPS is nationally registered to deliver our services across Australia. Wherever you are, whatever your needs are, we want to help you protect the children under your care!

The CAPS approach

- **Strengths-based:** we build on whatever previous child protection work your organisation has already undertaken and empower staff at all levels to become Child Safe Leaders.
- **Place-based:** we utilise your organisational structure to drive change from within. Any new policies and processes created by CAPS are owned by your organisation and will complement the existing staff and culture.
- **Flexible:** We provide only the services that are relevant to your organisation's unique needs and goals.
- **Accountable:** All of our child safety solutions are of the highest standard and are underpinned by both the National Principles and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

What we will do for your organisation?



Phase 1

- CAPS will conduct a thorough child protection review of your organisation. This means that we will assess existing programs and processes that concern children in relation to the National Principles and all other child protection obligations in your state or territory.
- We then provide your organisation with a CAPS Health Check, a concise, high-level report showing

how well the organisation reflects each of the ten National Principles and the state or territory child protection requirements.

- The CAPS Health Check also includes clear guidance on exactly what work needs to be done for your organisation to become one that actively protects, listens to and supports children and young people.

Phase 2

- We work with your organisation to deliver a bespoke child protection solution that is based on its unique accountabilities and needs. Every organisation has different goals and is on its own child protection journey. The services we offer include:
- The development of a tailor-made Child Safe Policy that provides a clear framework for all interactions with children and reflects your organisation's culture and goals. The policy will take into account the National Principles, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and all relevant legal obligations.

- The delivery of training workshops where all staff will learn about child safety, their role in supporting and protecting children, and the need for child safe policies and frameworks including the National Principles and the state or territory child protection obligations.
- The provision of master classes for experienced childcare professionals that will teach them how to champion child rights, manage potential risks, and drive the implementation of an exemplary child safe culture at their work.

Phase 3

- Once we are satisfied with the impact of our services CAPS will certify your organisation as a CAPS Child Safe Leader
- This sends a clear message to your community that your organisation has a child safe culture verified in accordance with the National Principles, along with a deep commitment to protecting children and promoting child rights.



Benefits of CAPS certification

Certification as a CAPS Child Safe Leader means that your organisation can publicly promote its commitment to:

- Recognising and implementing the National Principles and complying with all legal obligations regarding the protection of children
- Supporting our most vulnerable and keeping them safe
- Responding to all child safety concerns in an accountable manner that prioritises the best interests of the child
- Protecting the rights of children in all interactions with them
- Giving children a meaningful voice in all decisions that affect them.

CAPS will also provide ongoing child safety and wellbeing support to certified Child Safe Leaders as needed, including expert advice on how to handle any child protection issues that may arise.



Contact CAPS today to discuss how we can make your organisation child safe!

**hello@capsau.org
(02) 8080 4600**

