

Four steps for following a child-safe recruitment process

Child-safe recruitment helps protect children and young people. It makes sure that the people working or volunteering in your organisation are safe and suitable.

Here are four key steps to follow when hiring someone new—from advertising the role through to supervision and management once they've started.

1. Planning and advertising the position

Planning

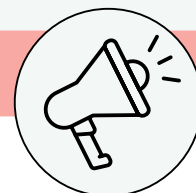


Before advertising a job, think carefully about how the role can promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

This means considering:

- Does this role have contact with children and young people—directly (e.g. face-to-face) or indirectly (e.g. handling private information)?
- Should this role require a Registration to Work with Vulnerable People (RWVP), relevant qualification or professional registration?
- Will you ask applicants to provide a National Police Check?

Advertising



When advertising the role, clearly show that your organisation puts child safety first. Review the job advertisement or position description:

- Does the advertisement clearly show your organisation's commitment to keeping children and young people safe?
- Have you stated that you do not tolerate child abuse or harm?
- Are the child safety responsibilities of the role, following the organisation's child-safe policies clearly explained?
- Are applicants from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities explicitly welcomed or encouraged?
- Have the skills, personal values and experience needed been explicitly listed—especially those linked to creating a safe and respectful place for children?

2. Reviewing applications and interviewing

Reviewing applications



Choose interview panel members who take child safety seriously and can bring different views.

Ask yourself:

- Do you have at least two people on the interview panel?
- Can you involve children or young people in the process, like helping develop questions or joining the panel?
- Can you involve Aboriginal people, to bring cultural knowledge and insights?
- Can you include people from different genders, backgrounds or life experiences?

Interviewing



Ask questions that show how the applicant thinks, feels and acts when working with children and young people.

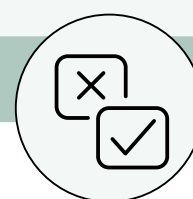
You could ask:

- What's been your best experience working with children and young people?
- Can you explain any gaps in your work history?
- Why do you think cultural safety is important for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people?
- What do you think children need to grow well, physically and emotionally?
- How would you make sure children can have a say in decisions that affect them?
- What experience do you have—paid or unpaid—working with children or youth organisations?
- What's appropriate or inappropriate behaviour between adults and children?
- What would you do if you thought a colleague was acting inappropriately with a child?
- How do you build positive relationships with children and young people?
- How have you supported a child who was upset or distressed?
- How would you respond if you were worried about an adult's behaviour around a child?
- What professional boundaries are important to you, and why?

- How do you keep those boundaries clear?
- What would you do if a child sent you a friend request on social media?
- Can you describe a difficult moment working with children? What would you do differently now?
- Why do you want to work with children and young people?
- Why is child safety important in this role?
- If a child was acting differently than usual, how would you respond—and how would you talk with their family?

3. Doing background checks

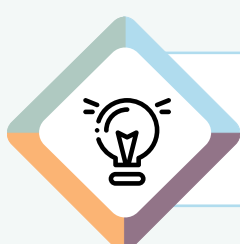
Background checks



Background checks help confirm that someone is who they say they are and that they're suitable for working with children.

Have you:

- checked the person's identity using at least 100 points of ID?
- made sure they have a current Registration to Work with Vulnerable People (RWVP) (if required)?
- called at least two referees—ideally people who've seen them work with children recently?
- asked referees questions that focus on child safety, such as:
 - ◊ Have you seen them work with children or young people? What were they like?
 - ◊ Did you ever have any concerns about how they worked with children?
 - ◊ Have they ever been involved in any investigations or had any charges or convictions?
 - ◊ Would you hire them again?
 - ◊ Are you comfortable with them being alone with children at times?
 - ◊ Can you describe how they handled difficult behaviour from a child?
 - ◊ Were there any issues with their behaviour or following the Code of Conduct?



See checklist: What to include in a child-safe induction package on pages 20–21.

4. Inducting and supporting new staff and volunteers

Onboarding



Consider how new team members will learn about your child-safe policies and how to follow them. Have you:

- Provided an induction pack that includes your Child and Youth Safe Policy, Code of Conduct and other key procedures?
- Explained these documents clearly and in plain language?
- Confirmed that the new team member understands the documents and how they apply to their role?

Ongoing training and development



Staff and volunteers need to keep learning about child safety in their role.

Training topics should include:

- spotting and responding to signs of child abuse or harm
- helping someone who speaks up about child harm
- managing risks of abuse or harm
- supporting children's voices and rights
- keeping clear records and sharing important information
- knowing reporting rules and how to follow them
- respecting culture and making sure everyone feels included and safe.

Supervision and support should continue after training. Include child safety in:

- regular check-ins or supervision
- professional development plans
- team meetings and staff discussions.

If someone doesn't follow child-safe policies or the Code of Conduct, action must be taken. This could include:

- having a direct conversation about the concern
- supporting them to change their behaviour
- undertaking an investigation and changing their duties or disciplinary actions.

No matter what action is taken, even if no action is taken, it is important that you clearly document the incident and what the outcome was.

After an incident, you should review your policies and code of conduct to see if you need to address any gaps or amend any processes.