



Hyde Street Youth Band

Child Safety Standards – A case study

Overview

What are Child Safety Standards and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

How were they implemented for HSYB

Why we need them

Who will they apply to what responsibilities will people have

What can you do



Hyde Street Youth Band

- Established in 1928, originally as a school band but now playing as a community youth band
- Consists of 40 young musicians across 3 bands:
 - Training Band
 - Junior Band
 - Youth Band
- Administered by a voluntary parent committee



National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

Background

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse uncovered some shocking abuse by institutions around Australia

As a result, National Principles for Child Safe Organisations were developed and endorsed by Commonwealth, state and territory governments

These Principles have been implemented through various state-based departments



National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

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.

Child Safety Standards - Victoria

- Victoria has introduced compulsory minimum standards that will apply to organisations that provide services for children.
- These standards are currently being revised to align with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. Organisations will need to comply with the new Standards by 1 July 2022
- Hyde Street Youth Band provide a service for children and therefore, are required to implement the Child Safety Standards and demonstrate:
 - that they have created and maintained an environment that is safe for children.
 - commitment to child safety and
 - That the implementation of these standards aligns with our organisation's values



What did we do

- Assessed the risk within the organisation
- Used the support material provided by the Victorian Government for guidance
- Consulted with parents, kids and musical directors
- Developed a set of documentation:
 - Child Safety Code of Conduct
 - Child Safety Policy and Statement
 - Human resources practices for child safe organisations
 - Recruitment practices for child safe organisations
 - What to do when an allegation of child abuse is made
 - Child safety incident report template
- Implemented training and awareness raising



Child Safety Standards - Training

- Following an assessment of risk, the Management Committee determined that the following people will receive training:
 - Musical Directors for all bands
 - Management Committee
 - Any other adult who is involved with the band who does not have children participating in the band (volunteers)
 - Parents are not required to attend the training but may do so if they choose

Tip – hold training annually and invite parents to come along



Child Safety Standard 1 – Culture & Leadership

- **Organisations must have strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements.**



Child Safety Standard 1 – Culture & Leadership - Implementation

- We must act to protect children from abuse in our organisation, and ensure we continue to have an environment where children feel respected, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential.
- This requires a culture of child safety to be embedded throughout our organisation so that child safety is part of everyone's everyday thinking and practice. Such a culture is achieved through proactive leadership in demonstrating the appropriate values, attitudes and behaviours of an organisation.
- Children and adults should know what to do if they observe or are subject to abuse or inappropriate behaviour.
- All musical directors, parents and volunteers must consider the safety of all children, and recognise the importance of cultural safety for Aboriginal children, cultural safety for children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability.

Child Safety Standard 1 – Culture & Leadership – Roles and Responsibilities

Hyde Street Youth Band Management Committee will:

- Identify and analyse risk of abuse
- Develop and implement a child safety policy
- Develop and implement a child safety code of conduct
- Have strategies in place to choose suitable people to work with our children
- Support, train and supervise these people who will be working with our children
- Promote inclusion of children with a range of backgrounds and abilities
- Empower and promote the participation of our band members in decision making

Musical Directors, parents and other volunteers will:

- Familiarise themselves with the HSYB Child Safety Standards documentation
- Report any abuse or inappropriate behaviour

Hyde Street Youth Band members will

- Report any abuse or inappropriate behaviour

Child Safety Standard 2

- Child Safe Policy or Statement of Commitment

- **Organisations must have a child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety.**



Child Safety Standard 2 - Child Safe Policy or Statement of Commitment - Implementation

- Our **Child Safe Policy** is an overarching document that provides an overview of key elements of our approach to child safety
- Our Child Safe Policy will be:
 - Available on the website
 - Available in hard copy if requested
 - Provided to all music directors for reading and signing
 - Provided to all parents and other volunteers for reading and signing

Child Safety Standard 2 - Child Safe Policy or Statement of Commitment – Roles and Responsibilities

- All Hyde Street Youth Band Members, including musical directors, parents and volunteers, have obligations for child safety
- Our Child Safety Policy outlines our approach to ensuring this and all members should be familiar with it
- The committee of management are committed to implementing the Child Safety Policy and ensuring that we provide a safe and inclusive environment for our children

Tip – make sure that you include information about Child Safety when a new member joins your organisation. It is also a good idea to include this information on written documentation for band events.

Child Safety Standard 3 – Code of Conduct

- **Organisations must have a code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children.**



Child Safety Standard 3 – Code of Conduct – Implementation

- Hyde Street Youth Band have a Code of Conduct for Child Safety. This Code will be:
 - Available on the website
 - Available in hard copy if requested
 - Provided to all music directors for reading and signing
 - Provided to all parents and other volunteers for reading and signing



Child Safety Standard 3 – Code of Conduct – Roles and Responsibilities

- All members of Hyde Street Youth Band Inc. including musical directors and volunteers are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children
- Our Code of Conduct covers:
 - Ways that we will conduct ourselves, treat others, listen and respond and promote safe inclusion.
 - The participation of children in relevant decision making
 - Our commitment to act quickly and according to our policies if an allegation is made
 - Some rules regarding interactions with children



Child Safety Standard 4 – Human Resources

- **Organisations must have screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel.**



Child Safety Standard 4 – Human Resources - Implementation

- Human resources practices include the recruitment, training and supervision of all personnel.
- It is important for organisations to have strong human resources practices to help protect children from abuse. Robust human resources practices are a good way to help with this.



Child Safety Standard 4 – Human Resources – Roles and Responsibilities

HSYB Human Resources practice will include

- Appointment of a Child Safety Officer (President of the Committee of Management)
- Training and Development for all musical directors and volunteers
- Supervision at appropriate levels for all musical directors and volunteers
- Performance and Development review for all musical directors and volunteers
- A recruitment process that includes selection criteria, advertising, interviews, pre-employment screen and probation that reflect our child safety standards



Child Safety Standard 5 – Reporting and Responding

- **Organisation must have processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse.**



Child Safety Standard 5 – Reporting and Responding - Implementation

- HSYB have a process for reporting and responding to allegations of child abuse
- This process is included in the document “What to do when an allegation of child abuse is made” This document will be provided to all management committee members and musical directors and available on request to all families and volunteers.



Child Safety Standard 5 – Reporting and Responding – Roles and Responsibilities

If a child discloses an incident of abuse to you

- Try and separate them from the other children discreetly and listen to them carefully.
- Let the child use their own words to explain what has occurred.
- Reassure the child that you take what they are saying seriously, and it is not their fault and that they are doing the right thing.
- Explain to them that this information may need to be shared others, such as with their parent/carer, specific people in your organisation, or the police.
- Do not make promises to the child such as promising not to tell anyone about the incident, except that you will do your best to keep them safe.
- Do not leave the child in a distressed state. If they seem at ease in your company, stay with them.
- Provide them with an incident report form to complete, or complete it together, if you think the child is able to do this.
- As soon as possible after the disclosure, record the information using the child's words and report the disclosure to Hyde Street Youth Band Child Safety Officer, police or child protection.
- Ensure the disclosure is recorded accurately, and that the record is stored securely. Please use the Incident Report Form provided.



Child Safety Standard 5 – Reporting and Responding – Roles and Responsibilities

If a parent/carer says their child has been abused in our organisation or raises a concern

- Explain that we organisation have processes to ensure all abuse allegations are taken very seriously.
- Ask about the wellbeing of the child.
- Allow the parent/carer to talk through the incident in their own words.
- Advise the parent/carer that you will take notes during the discussion to capture all details.
- Explain to them the information may need to be repeated to authorities or others, such as Hyde Street Youth Band Management Committee or Child Safety Officer, the police or child protection.
- Do not make promises at this early stage, except that you will do your best to keep the child safe.
- Provide them with the Incident Report Form to complete, or complete it together.
- Ask them what action they would like to take and advise them of what the immediate next steps will be.
- Ensure the report is recorded accurately, and that the record is stored securely.



Child Safety Standard 5 – Reporting and Responding – Roles and Responsibilities

- While the child safe standards focus on organisations, every adult who reasonably believes that a child has been abused, whether in their organisation or not, has an obligation to report that belief to authorities.
- The **failure to disclose** criminal offence requires all adults (aged 18 and over) who hold a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria by an adult against a child under 16 to disclose that information to police (unless they have a reasonable excuse not to, for example because they fear for their safety or the safety of another).
- More information about failure to disclose is available on the Department of Justice and Regulation website
- While failure to disclose only covers child sexual abuse, all adults should report other forms of child abuse to authorities. Failure to disclose does not change mandatory reporting responsibilities.



Child Safety Standard 6 - Detect and prevent (risk management)

- **Organisations must have strategies to identify and reduce or remove the risk of child abuse.**



Child Safety Standard 6 - Detect and prevent (risk management)

- HSYB have completed a risk assessment for child safety
- The outcome of this risk assessment is available on request
- The areas of risk that were assessed included:
 - Weekly band rehearsals
 - Concert performances
 - Band camp and other camps
 - Transporting children
 - Events where alcohol may be present
- Our risk management strategy includes the implementation of our policy, code of conduct, HR process and reporting processes.
- Implementation of these risk management processes has reduced our risk profile for instances of child abuse to low





Child Safety Standard 7 – Empowering Children

- **Organisations must have strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children.**

Child Safety Standard 7 – Empowering Children

HSYB will:

- Continue to encourage musical directors and volunteers to use methods of empowering children and encouraging children's participation.
- Continue to encourage participation and empowerment of children in organisational activities, such as organisational planning and decision making where appropriate
- Continue to encourage children from a diverse range of backgrounds and abilities to join and participate in the HSYB and continue to support these children in ways that recognise their cultural background or specific abilities.
- Provide children and their parents with information regarding our approach to child safety and their rights and responsibilities. Specific conversations regarding aspects of child safety and child abuse will continue to be the responsibility of the parents of band members.

Tip – involve children in decision making. Give them options and ask them what they prefer. This lets them know that their opinions are important and may encourage them to speak up if they have any concerns.



What are our responsibilities

- Responsibilities for committee members, Musical Directors, parents and volunteers
 - Follow Child Safety Policies and Procedures
 - Report any concerns regarding Child Safety to the Child Safety Officer or other senior committee member
 - Adhere to HSYB child safety rules



Child Safety Rules for HSYB

- The Hyde Street Youth Band Inc. has a no locked door policy. Adults and unrelated children should not be alone in any room with a locked door
- Unrelated adults and children must avoid contact outside of their normal family interactions when not at band events. This doesn't include events where other family members are present e.g. two families being at the same event
- Adults and children must avoid interaction on social media that is not in an open forum where each party is clearly identifiable





What can you do....

- Check the requirements for your state
- Start the conversation with your committee
- Consult with your band community
- Assess risk
- Develop and implement policies, training and awareness
- Keep going, the safety of our children is an ongoing concern



Questions or Comments