

Child Safeguarding Framework

Effective Date: August 2025

This strategy applies to:

All persons who conduct work for Guide Dogs Victoria in a paid or unpaid capacity, regardless of whether that person's role relates to Children, including employees, volunteers, contract and subcontract workers, agency on-hire staff, consultants, and students.

1. General

Guide Dogs Victoria is committed to protecting children from harm and creating an environment where children feel safe, respected, and empowered.

2. Purpose

At Guide Dogs Victoria, we acknowledge that child safety is everyone's responsibility. Through this comprehensive strategy, we aim to embed a culture of safety, trust, and accountability so that all children can feel secure and supported while engaging with our people and services.

3. Our Child Safe Pillars

Our Child Safeguarding Strategy is built on four interconnected pillars:



People – Skilled, Accountable and Empowered Workforce

Ensure all staff, volunteers and contractors understand their responsibilities, are well-trained, and uphold child safety as a shared, non-negotiable duty.

Culture – Embedding Child Safety in Organisational DNA

Build and sustain a culture where child safety is part of everyday thinking, decision making and behaviours.

Operations – Safe Systems, Policies and Environments

Ensure that GDV systems, policies, programs, online and physical environments are designed to keep children safe from harm.

Child's Voice – Listening to and Empowering Children

Ensure children are heard, respected, and involved in decisions that affect them, and that their perspectives shape service delivery.

4. People: Our Foundation of Safety



Recruitment & Screening

Rigorous safety checks including Working with Children Check, NDIS Worker Screening or Police Check, referee screening and behavioural interview questions aligned with child safety.



Training & Induction

Mandatory child safety training for all new staff and volunteers, with annual refresher training and specialised training for high-risk roles and key personnel.



Clear Responsibilities

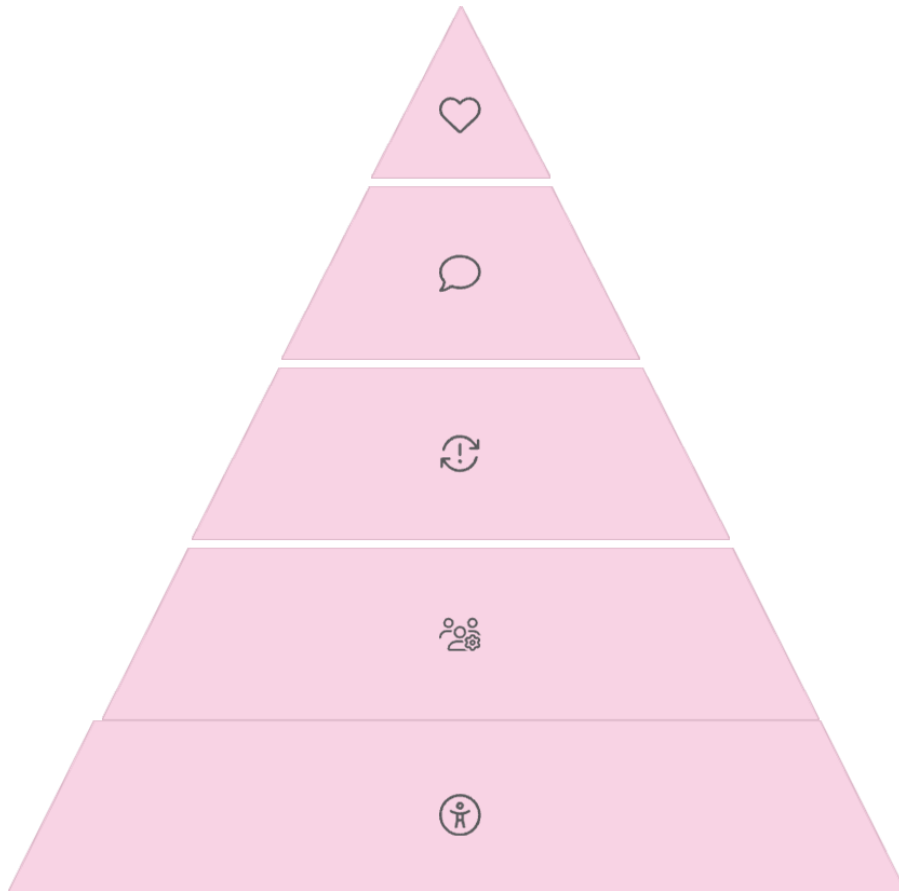
Code of Conduct, position descriptions and performance reviews include specific references to child safety responsibilities.



Supervision and Support

Ongoing monitoring to identify and address concerns and support safe practices

5. Child Safe Culture



Leadership Commitment

Senior leadership actively champion child safety and model appropriate behaviour.

Psychological Safety

A workplace where staff and children feel safe to speak up, raise concerns and challenge unsafe behaviour.

Continuous Improvement

Regular policy and process reviews based on feedback, audit, incidents and best practices.

Accountability Structures

Designated Executive level Child Safety Officer

Equity and Inclusion

Culturally safe practices for all children.

6. Operational Safety Systems

Policies & Procedures

Comprehensive child safety documentation and dedicated website page

Incident Management

Clear reporting and investigation procedures



Risk Management

Proactive identification of potential child safety issues across all areas

Safe Environments

Physical and online spaces designed for safety

7. Amplifying Children's Voices



Participation & Empowerment

Children actively contribute to decisions that affect them through feedback mechanisms, advisory groups and consultation.



Accessible Information

Child friendly resources explain rights, help-seeking and complaint procedures.



Safe and Trusted Relationships

Staff are trained to listen, respond appropriately and build trust with children.



Continuous Learning

Child feedback directly shapes our programs, training and improvement efforts.