



*Safety and Wellbeing of
Children and Young People
Framework*

PRINCIPLE 1

Child and youth safety and wellbeing is embedded in The Salvation Army leadership, governance and culture.

The Salvation Army aims to create welcoming and safe spaces for all children and young people. Our personnel are accountable to the children who access our services, and we make sure our child-safe practices are continually reviewed and improved. At every level of our organisation we're focused on the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

Key commitments

- We're committed to preventing, identifying and mitigating all risks to children and young people.
- We have risk management strategies that identify, prevent and mitigate harm to children and young people.
- We make sure our processes and policies are clear and accessible to everyone we work with.
- We have a governance structure that ensures compliance with the framework and legislative requirements.
- Child safety is embedded in our policies and processes.
- Our Code of Conduct provides guidelines on expected behavior and responsibilities.

PRINCIPLE 2

Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

The Salvation Army takes responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people in our care, and we encourage them to understand their rights. We take the time to explain what 'child rights' means for children and young people of different ages and abilities, and from different cultures. We create environments where children and young people can ask questions and are involved in decisions that affect them.

Key commitments

- We inform children and young people about their rights. This includes their right to safety, access to information and participation.
- We understand the importance of friendships for children and young people. We encourage children and young people to support each other, create strong bonds and develop emotional maturity.
- We ensure children and young people know who to talk to when they feel unsafe.
- Information about our child-safe policies and processes is accessible for children of different ages, abilities and cultures.



PRINCIPLE 3

Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.

The Salvation Army understands the importance of families. We work closely with parents and carers to help them understand and transform our approach to child safety and wellbeing. We encourage families to share their experiences, and voice their opinions on issues that are important to them and their children. We embrace the wide range of family structures that make up our community and we respect the wisdom that arises from a diverse range of cultures.

Key commitments

- We include families in decisions affecting their children.
- We work with families and the community to continually improve our approach to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.
- We share information about our policies and processes with parents, caregivers and the community.

PRINCIPLE 4

Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.

Embracing diversity creates stronger families and communities. We value the wide range of children and young people who connect with our services and ministry, and we encourage them to express their opinions and unique experiences. We embrace children and young people of all cultures, beliefs and abilities, and we strive to create safe spaces for expression, growth and – if necessary – healing.

Key commitments

- We strive to understand the diverse circumstances of children and young people.
- We support the unique needs of children and young people. This includes those with disabilities, culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people, children who are unable to live at home, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) young people.

PRINCIPLE 5

The Salvation Army personnel who work with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.

We are committed to recruiting the very best personnel to work with children and young people. With a large and diverse workforce across Australia, we undertake a range of checks and provide support mechanisms to ensure all personnel work with children and young people in a safe and supportive way.

Key commitments

- We have a comprehensive and thorough recruitment process for new staff and volunteers. Our process prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.
- All personnel who work directly with children and young people must have a current Working with Children Check and other background checks.
- All personnel receive ongoing training on their responsibilities to children and young people.

PRINCIPLE 6

Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child and youth focused.

The Salvation Army has a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of child abuse and harm. We take all complaints seriously and we always respond promptly. Our personnel are trained to identify and respond to incidents of child harm, and we work with children, young people and their families to make sure they understand their rights and how to make a complaint.

Key commitments

- Our complaint management processes clearly explain how personnel must respond to reports of child harm.
- All complaints are taken seriously, and responded to promptly and thoroughly.
- Our processes make it clear when to report complaints and concerns to relevant authorities and law enforcement bodies.
- We uphold the law and we are committed to our reporting, privacy and employment law obligations.



PRINCIPLE 7

The Salvation Army personnel are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.

We provide our personnel with training on child safety and wellbeing. We tailor this training to the needs of personnel, and give them the skills and resources – and the confidence – to best support children.

Key commitments

- Our personnel receive training and support in child safety and wellbeing. This includes how to create safe spaces for children and young people.
- Our personnel receive training on how to recognise and respond to indicators of child harm, including harm caused by other children and young people.
- Our training framework includes mandatory modules for all personnel, as well as specific training for personnel in child-related activities.

PRINCIPLE 8

Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.

Children and young people use a wide range of environments to learn, play, connect and grow. We are committed to creating safe spaces for children and young people – both online and in person. Where we work with children and young people in online environments, we ensure these spaces are safe. Our physical spaces are welcoming for all children, are well maintained and comply with our safety policies.

Key commitments

- Our processes help us create safe and welcoming spaces for children and young people, both online and in person.
- We identify and respond to risks in our online and physical environments.
- We support children and young people's rights to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.
- We create risk-management plans for all child-related activities.
- We provide training to relevant personnel on how to create safe, online environments for children and young people.

PRINCIPLE 9

Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved.

We are committed to providing children and young people with the highest standards of safety and wellbeing. We continually review the way we work and improve our processes. When we're reviewing our safety and wellbeing policies, we include the insights of children and their families. We also share stories of good practice and learning.

Key commitments

- We regularly review, evaluate and improve our safety and wellbeing practices.
- We analyse all complaints, concerns and safety incidents, and seek to identify systemic causes that can improve the way we work.
- We share the findings of our reviews with our personnel, children and young people and their families.

PRINCIPLE 10

Policies and procedures document how The Salvation Army is safe for children and young people.

All state and territory governments have endorsed the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. These 10 principles are the foundation of our framework and all child-related policies and processes. Keeping children and young people safe is everyone's responsibility, and our policies and processes support our personnel in their work and help guide them to consistently apply best-practice approaches.

Key commitments

- Our processes address the national child safe principles for all Salvation Army Australian programs, both nationally and internationally.
- Our policies and procedures are documented and easy to understand.
- We develop our policies and procedures using best-practice models and stakeholder consultation.
- Our leaders prioritise and champion the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, and they make sure all personnel understand and implement our policies and procedures.
- We audit compliance with our policies and procedures.
- We will seek feedback from children, young people, families and personnel to assess whether our processes support safety for children and young people.

Foundations for this framework

[National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#)

[Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse](#)

[Final Report – Preface and executive summary](#)

[Final Report – Volume 6: Making institutions child safe](#)

[Final Report – Volume 16: Religious institutions](#)

[The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

More information

If you'd like more information on how we're keeping children and young people safe, please contact the Professional Standards and Quality team:

03 8878 4500

Safeguarding Children and Young People

If you'd like to report an incident of child harm or abuse related to The Salvation Army's activities, please contact:

professionalstandards@salvationarmy.org.au

If you need additional support, please contact:

Lifeline Australia: **13 11 14**

Kids Helpline: **1800 55 1800**

Both services are available from anywhere in Australia 24 hours a day (toll free) and provide generalist crisis counselling, information and referral services.