



Statement

National Child Safe Standards

19 March 2019

As authorities responsible for the delivery of youth justice services within each state and territory across Australia, the Australasian Youth Justice Administrators (AYJA) is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in our care. AYJA recognises that children's rights need to be respected, their views and voices valued and heard, and their concerns taken seriously and acted upon.

AYJA notes the National Child Safe Standards (the Standards) that were developed by the Royal Commission during the course of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (RC CSA). The Standards are outcome focused and allow flexibility in their application across institutions including youth justice detention centres.

- 1) Child safety is embedded in institutional leadership, governance and culture
- 2) Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
- 3) Families and communities are informed and involved
- 4) Equity is upheld and diverse needs are taken into account
- 5) People working with children are suitable and supported
- 6) Processes to respond to complaints of child sexual abuse are child focused
- 7) Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training
- 8) Physical and online environments minimise the opportunity for abuse to occur
- 9) Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is continuously reviewed and improved
- 10) Policies and procedures document how the institution is child safe.

AYJA notes recommendation 6.4 from the RC CSA Final Report that stipulates "*All institutions should uphold the rights of the child. Consistent with Article 3 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, all institutions should act with the best interests of the child as a primary consideration. In order to achieve this,*

institutions should implement the Child Safe Standards identified by the Royal Commission”.

AYJA acknowledges that some jurisdictions have their own Child Safe Standards, which similarly seek to implement equivalent measures around embedding an organisational culture of child safety.

Each state and territory will be responsible for aligning policy and practice in youth detention centres with the Standards (or their own equivalent Standards) as they implement the Royal Commission recommendations in order to strengthen the protection of children and young people in custody.

In addition, Child Safe Standards will be a standing item on the AYJA face-to-face meeting agenda to discuss progress.

19 March 2019

