

## Topic 1

# Building a child safe culture in education and care services



The National Child Safety Training aims to enhance safety for children and strengthen child-safe culture across the education and care sector by introducing shared language, responsibilities, and understanding. The training was developed in partnership between Australian Centre for Child Protection (ACCP) and the Queensland Government on behalf of Australian governments.

The first level of training, Foundations of Child Safety, includes two eLearning courses:

- **Course 1:** Understanding Child Safety
- **Course 2:** Understanding and Identifying Child Abuse and Neglect

To complement the mandatory eLearning courses, a suite of non-mandatory Community of Practice resources has been developed to extend learning and support the application of knowledge in education and care settings. Whilst the Community of Practice are a voluntary component of the National Child Safety Training, they provide structured opportunities for discussion, reflection, and shared learning over time, helping staff build confidence and consistency in practice.

These resources contain prompts and suggested activities aligned with each course topic. They are designed to be flexible and may be selected, adapted, shortened, or revisited to suit different service types, team sizes, and meeting formats. The intention is to support practical conversations, not to prescribe a fixed program. There is no expectation that all topics and activities will be used and it is at your discretion how you use these resources.

Child safety is everyone's responsibility in places where children learn and grow. Harm can affect a child's wellbeing, learning, and development throughout childhood, and its impacts can continue into adulthood. When child safe practices are not in place, children are more at risk of harm.

By completing the mandatory eLearning training alongside some non-mandatory Community of Practice activities, you can strengthen your understanding of your role in protecting children, responding to concerns, and supporting a child safe environment in your service.



Australian  
Centre for  
Child Protection



Queensland  
Government

## Building a Child Safe Culture in Education and Care Services

Topic 1 focuses on what a child safe culture looks like in everyday education and care. A child safe culture is a shared set of values, behaviours, and systems where everyone actively prioritises children's safety and wellbeing. It is visible in the way people speak, act, make decisions, and respond when something is not right.

Child safe culture is not one policy or one person's job. It is **everyone's business**, from leadership and governance through to daily routines with children. It includes listening to children, using clear and respectful boundaries, reducing risk through practical prevention, and having trusted processes for raising and responding to concerns.

Child safe culture must also be culturally responsive. Children, families, educators, and staff from diverse cultural backgrounds may experience and express safety, boundaries, communication, and respect in different ways. Assumptions about what "feels safe" or "looks appropriate" are often shaped by the dominant culture within a service or community. Education and care professionals remain aware of this influence and actively consider whose perspectives are centred in decision-making.

This topic reinforces that:

- Child safety is a shared responsibility across all roles.
- Children should be listened to, taken seriously, and supported to speak up.
- Preventing harm means putting strong prevention measures in place and actively identifying, reducing, and regularly reviewing risks.
- Diversity and culture must be respected, and decisions and responses should be inclusive and culturally safe for all children.
- Safety is understood through multiple cultural lenses, and services must remain open to different expressions of safety, respect, and belonging.



## Reminder




You **do not** need to run all three activities.

Select, adapt, shorten, or spread activities across sessions to suit your group and available time.

Activities can also be adapted for one-on-one supervision, mentoring conversations, or team meetings. You may choose to use a single scenario, question, or reflective prompt to guide discussion.

These activities are designed to be flexible and responsive to your service context.



<b>Activity 1: Child safe culture in action</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	To help participants recognise what a child-safe culture looks like in everyday practice by exploring child-safe behaviours, languages and systems across different roles and settings, including how cultural perspectives may influence experiences of safety, supervision, communication and respect.
<b>Time</b>	30-50 minutes
<b>Format</b>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p><i>Small Group Activity</i></p>  </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p><i>Whole Group Activity</i></p>  </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p><i>Individual Reflection</i></p>  </div> </div>
<b>Materials needed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Culture in action' scenario prompts</li> <li>• Butchers paper or a whiteboard</li> <li>• Markers</li> <li>• Sticky notes</li> </ul>



## Activity plan

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### Facilitator preamble

*“Child safe culture isn’t just a policy. It’s what children experience every day, in our words, routines, supervision, and how we respond when something feels off.”*

*As we talk, remember that children, families, and educators from different cultural backgrounds may experience and interpret safety, boundaries, language, and supervision differently. There isn’t only one way safety looks and feels. Staying aware of this helps us build a culture that is inclusive as well as safe.”*

### Remind participants

- Keep examples de-identified and general.
- Focus on practices and systems, not individuals.
- Different services will do things differently.
- Be mindful that cultural perspectives can influence how behaviour, supervision, language, tone of voice, boundaries, and responses are understood.

### Step 1: Set up the three headings (3 minutes)

- Write three headings where everyone can see them:
  1. What children should experience.
  2. What staff should do and say.
  3. What the service should have in place.
- Briefly explain: *“These headings help us think about child safe culture from three perspectives: children’s experience, staff actions, and service systems.”*

**Step 2: Small group brainstorm (8-10 minutes)**

- Divide participants into small groups (3-4)
- Ask participants to talk together and come up with examples for each heading.
- They can write directly under the headings or jot ideas on sticky notes first.
- Encourage quick, practical examples rather than perfect wording.
- Ask participants to focus on what this looks like in their service right now. If there is a gap between what should happen and what consistently happens, simply notice it. This activity is about awareness and reflection.
- You might prompt with:
  - *“What helps children feel safe here?”*
  - *“What do staff do that shows safety is taken seriously?”*
  - *“What systems or processes support this?”*
  - *“Are there cultural differences that might influence how these practices are experienced by children and families?”*

**Step 3: The “Spot It” round (10-12 minutes)**

- Read out the *Culture in Action* scenario prompts.
- After each example, ask the whole group one simple question: *“Which heading does this best fit under?”*
- Keep this fast-paced and light.
- Briefly acknowledge that different cultural perspectives may interpret the scenario differently, without turning the activity into extended discussion.

**Step 4: One strength, one thing to strengthen (8-10 minutes)**

- Ask each group to pause and agree on:
  - One thing their service already does well to support child safe culture
  - One small thing they could strengthen (something realistic and within everyday practice)

- Reassure groups that this is not a gap analysis or audit.
- Encourage groups to consider whether their practice reflects and responds to cultural diversity of children, families, and staff within their service.

### Step 5: Share and capture (5-8 minutes)

- Invite each group to share one strength or one idea to strengthen.
- Ask groups to place their sticky notes under the relevant role or heading on the board.
- Allow a brief pause for participants to read across the ideas from other groups.
- Capture key words or themes on the board.
- Where possible, cluster similar ideas together so patterns become visible.
- Highlight patterns or shared ideas across groups, noting similarities, differences, and any actions that individuals or groups may not have previously considered.

### Step 6: Closing reflection

- Invite participants to finish the sentence: *“One small thing that strengthens child safe culture in my role is...”*
- Optional additional reflection: *“One way I can remain aware of different cultural experiences of safety in my role is...”*



#### Facilitator tip

If discussion slips into *“who is doing it wrong,”* redirect to: *“What would a child-safe system look like here?”*

Keep it strengths-based and practical.



## Online adaptation (MS Teams or Zoom)

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This activity can be delivered online using shared slides, a digital whiteboard, breakout rooms, and chat-based responses. The purpose remains the same: to help participants recognise what child safe culture looks like across children's experiences, staff actions, and service systems, including how cultural perspectives may influence how safety and respect are experienced.

### Platform preparation (before the session)

- Prepare a slide or shared whiteboard with the three headings clearly visible.
  - What children should see and feel.
  - What staff should experience.
  - What the service should have in place.
- If using breakout rooms, prepare instructions to display before opening rooms.
- Ensure you have access to screen share, chat, and (if available) a shared document or collaborative board.
- Include a short prompt on your slide reminding participants that experience of safety, supervision, and respectful communication may differ across cultural contexts.

### Step 1: Create psychological safety

- Begin with the facilitator preamble.
- Provide a wellbeing reminder.
- Remind participants that sharing is optional.
- Participants can step away from the computer if needed.
- Encourage cameras on or off based on comfort.
- Remind participants support pathways are available (e.g., EAP, supervision etc.).

- Acknowledge that cultural background may shape how people interpret safety, behaviour, supervision, and respectful language.

### Step 2: Introduce the three headings

- Share your screen with the three headings visible.
- Briefly explain that these headings help participants think about child safe culture from three perspectives: children's experience, staff behaviour, and service systems.
- Allow a short pause so participants can read the headings.
- Reinforce that these experiences may look different depending on children's cultural backgrounds and family expectations.

### Step 3: Breakout brainstorm

- Place participants into breakout rooms of three to four people.
- Before opening rooms, provide clear instructions:
  - Ask each group to generate practical examples for each heading.
  - Encourage quick, everyday examples rather than polished statements.
  - Participants may type directly into a shared document, add notes to a whiteboard, or nominate one person to record ideas.
- Remind groups to focus on what child safe culture looks like in action.
- Display or paste prompts into the chat before opening rooms.
  - *What helps children feel safe here?*
  - *What do staff do that shows safety is taken seriously?*
  - *What systems or processes support this?*
  - *Are there cultural differences that might influence how these practices are experienced by children or families?*
- Provide a time warning one minute before closing breakout rooms.

### Step 4: The "Spot It" round

- Bring participants back to the main room.
- Share the Child Safe Culture in Action scenario prompts on screen.

- After reading each example, ask participants to respond in the chat with the heading they think it best fits under.
- Keep the pace steady and light.
- Encourage quick responses rather than extended debate.
- Clarify that the goal is recognition and shared understanding.
- Where relevant, briefly acknowledge that cultural perspectives may influence how the scenario is interpreted.

### **Step 5: One strength, one thing to strengthen**

- Return participants to breakout rooms.
- Ask each group to agree on one existing strength in their service that supports child safe culture.
- Ask them to also identify one small, realistic action they could individually take that could strengthen practice.
- Remind participants that this is not an audit or compliance review.
- Encourage them to focus on practical, achievable improvements within everyday roles.
- Invite consideration of whether current practices reflect the diversity of children, families, and staff in their service community.

### **Step 6: Share and capture**

- Bring everyone back to the main room.
- Invite each group to share one strength or one area to strengthen.
- Capture key words on a shared slide or digital whiteboard.
- Highlight common themes or repeated ideas, including any themes related to cultural safety or inclusion.

### Step 7: Closing reflection

- Invite participants to type in the chat or say aloud: *“One small thing that strengthens child safe culture in my role is...”*
- You may also invite: *“One way I can remain aware of different cultural experiences of safety in my role is...”*
- Acknowledge responses and reinforce collective responsibility.





## Scenario prompts: Child safe culture in action

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The following scenarios are designed to support Activity 1: Building a child safe culture. They provide short, practice-based examples that reflect everyday situations in education and care settings.

These scenarios are intended to help participants recognise how child safe culture is expressed through children's experiences, staff actions, and service systems. They are not assessments or "right answer" exercises. The purpose is to prompt reflection and strengthen shared understanding of what child safe practice looks like in action.

Facilitators are not expected to use every scenario. Select a small number that best suit the group, available time, and service context.

**Scenario 1:** A child knows they can say "stop" during play with peers or in interactions with adults, and sees adults respond calmly and take them seriously.

**Scenario 2:** Staff use child-centred, respectful, language when talking about behaviour, focusing on support rather than blame, and remain aware that interpretations of behaviour can be influenced by cultural expectations.

**Scenario 3:** Children are greeted warmly each day and know which adults they can go to if they feel worried or unsafe, including knowing how to contact a trusted adult if the primary educator is temporarily unavailable.

**Scenario 4:** The service has clear reporting pathways, and staff know who to speak to if they are worried about a child or a colleague.

**Scenario 5:** An educator feels unsure about a boundary and says, "I'm not certain, I'll check with my supervisor," rather than deciding alone.

**Scenario 6:** A child shares something upsetting and is listened to without being rushed, questioned, or dismissed.

**Scenario 7:** A staff member documents a concern using factual, objective language and shares it through the correct process.

**Scenario 8:** A clear child safe environment policy is in place. It is easy to access, introduced during induction, revisited through team meetings or professional development, and regularly reviewed to ensure it remains inclusive and responsive to the cultural diversity of children, families and staff.

**Scenario 9:** Leaders and coordination staff regularly talk about child safety and model openness by welcoming questions and concerns.

**Scenario 10:** Children experience predictable routines and feel reassured when transitions are explained and supported, while remaining flexible to individual and cultural differences in routines and expectations.


**Scenario 11:** An educator notices a change in a child's behaviour over time and raises it in supervision or with their coordination unit, even though there is no disclosure.

**Scenario 12:** The physical environment is reviewed regularly to reduce risks and facilitate supervision, including visibility during toileting, rest time, and transitions, while considering cultural expectations around privacy, supervision, and dignity.

**Scenario 13:** A family day care educator ensures that communication with families occurs through agreed service channels and using a service-authorised device (e.g., approved messaging apps or documented communication logs), rather than private or informal accounts, to maintain transparency.

**Scenario 14:** A family day care educator works alone and has clear plans in place for managing supervision during toileting, rest time, or emergencies, and knows how to contact their coordination unit promptly if concerns arise.

**Scenario 15:** In a family day care service while the educator is providing education and care to children, a visiting adult (e.g., a tradesperson or family member) is present. The educator follows service procedures to maintain visibility, supervision, and child safety.

<b>Activity 2: Roles and shared responsibility</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	It helps participants to clarify how different roles contribute to a child safe culture by strengthening shared responsibility, shared language, and role-appropriate action.
<b>Time</b>	40–60 minutes
<b>Format</b>	
<b>Materials needed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four role headings on paper (or on a board): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Everyone (all roles, including those who don't work directly with children, volunteers and students)</li> <li>○ Staff working directly with children</li> <li>○ Leaders/managers/nominated supervisors</li> <li>○ Persons with management or control / governance</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Roles and responsibilities scenario cards</li> <li>• Paper or sticky notes</li> <li>• Pens</li> </ul>



## Activity plan

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### Facilitator preamble

*“Child safety doesn’t belong to one person or one role. It’s built through shared responsibility. Everyone has a role, and when roles are clear, it becomes harder for harm to be missed or minimised. This activity helps us connect child safety responsibilities to real work across the service.”*

### Remind participants

- This activity focuses on the responsibilities that different roles have for keeping children safe.
- Job titles may differ across services, think about roles and responsibilities not titles.
- Keep discussion de-identified and practice-focused

### Step 1: Frame the activity (2 minutes)

- Briefly explain: *“Everyone within the organisation has a role to play to keep children safe. Everyone’s actions and attitudes help to build and maintain safety and child safe culture. A strong child safe culture makes it clear who does what, so concerns don’t sit with one person alone.”*
- Point out the four role headings and clarify that groups will look at how roles work together, not in isolation.

### Step 2: Read and understand the scenario (5 minutes)

- Ask participants to create small groups of 3-4.
- Give each group one scenario.
- Ask them to read it together and answer four simple questions:
  - *What is the concern?*
  - *Who is affected?*
  - *What responsibilities do different roles have in this scenario?*

- *What makes this situation complex or challenging?*
- Reinforce they are not deciding what happened, only how child safety would be supported in this scenario and the responsibilities of different roles.

### **Step 3: Map role-appropriate actions (15-20 minutes)**

- Ask each group to look at their scenario and work through each role heading one at a time.
- For each heading, write one or two practical actions that role could take to support child safety in this situation.
- Remind participants to keep actions realistic and based on everyday practice.
- Encourage participants to work through the headings in this order:
  - Everyone (all roles, including those who don't work directly with children, volunteers and students)
    - What shared expectations or everyday behaviours help create safety here? (e.g., speaking up early, following policies, supporting colleagues)
  - Staff working directly with children
    - What actions support the child's safety, wellbeing, and voice? (e.g., noticing patterns, documenting concerns, responding calmly)
  - Leaders /managers/ nominated supervisors
    - What guidance, oversight, or decision-making supports staff to act early? (e.g., supervision, clarifying processes, escalating concerns)
  - Persons with management or control/governance
    - What systems, policies, or resources need to be in place to support this response? (e.g., clear procedures, training, environment design, review processes)

**Step 4: Share and learn (5-10 minutes)**

- Bring everyone back together.
- Ask each group to place their sticky notes under the relevant role heading on the board or wall.
- Allow a few minutes for participants to read across the actions identified by other groups, even where scenarios were different.
- Invite each group to briefly highlight one action they identified that felt particularly important or practical. As a whole group, notice similarities, differences, and emerging themes across the four role headings.
- Where possible, cluster similar actions together so patterns become visible.

**Step 6: Closing reflection (5 minutes)**

- Invite participants to complete the sentence: *“One role-appropriate action I can take to support child safe culture is...”*

**Facilitator tips**

If groups get stuck, use these prompts:

- *“Who supports the person holding the concern?”*
- *“What stops this from becoming one person’s burden?”*
- *“What would make it easier to act early next time?”*



## Online adaptation (MS Teams or Zoom)

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This activity can be delivered online using breakout rooms, shared slides or a digital whiteboard, and chat-based reflection. The activity clarifies how different roles contribute to child safe culture and reinforce shared responsibility across the service.

### Platform preparation (before the session)

- Prepare one slide or digital whiteboard with four clearly labelled headings:
  - Everyone (all roles)
  - Staff working directly with children
  - Leaders / managers / nominated supervisors
  - Persons with management or control / governance
- Upload or prepare digital copies of the scenario prompts so they can be shared easily in breakout rooms.
- Ensure all links to collaborative tools are tested before the session.
- If using a collaborative platform such as a shared document or whiteboard, create separate spaces for each group in advance.
- Provide alternative ways to access scenarios if participants encounter tech difficulties.

Have the links ready before the session begins.

### Step 1: Create psychological safety

- Begin with the facilitator preamble.
- Provide a brief wellbeing reminder.
- Emphasise voluntary sharing; participants may step away from the screen if needed.
- Encourage cameras on or off depending on comfort.

- Remind participants that support pathways (e.g., supervision, EAP) are available.
- Monitor breakout rooms to answer clarifying questions without leading responses.

### Step 2: Frame the activity

- Share your screen displaying the four role headings.
- Explain that child safety concerns often require action at more than one level.
- Clarify that the activity focuses on roles and systems rather than individuals.
- Emphasise that the goal is to explore how responsibilities connect, not to assign blame.

### Step 3: Scenario discussion in breakout rooms

- Divide participants into breakout rooms of three to four people.
- Before opening rooms, explain the task clearly.
- Provide each group with one scenario by posting it in the chat, sharing a slide, or placing it in a shared document.
- Ask each group to read the scenario together and discuss four questions.
  1. *What is the concern?*
  2. *Who is affected?*
  3. *What responsibilities do different roles have in this scenario?*
  4. *What makes this situation complex or challenging?*
- Reinforce that participants are not deciding what happened but considering how child safety would be supported.
- Encourage one person in each group to record brief notes in the shared document or whiteboard space.
- Send a one-minute time reminder before closing breakout rooms.

#### Step 4: Map role-appropriate actions

- Keep participants in their breakout rooms.
- Direct groups to work through each of the four role headings one at a time.
- Ask them to identify one or two practical actions that each role could take in response to the scenario.
- Encourage realistic, everyday actions rather than idealised responses.
- Suggest that they work in the following order:
  - Everyone (all roles): Discuss shared expectations or behaviours that support child safety, such as speaking up early or following procedures.
  - Staff working directly with children: Identify actions that support the child's safety, wellbeing, and voice, such as documenting concerns or responding calmly.
  - Leaders, managers or nominated supervisors: Discuss what guidance, oversight, or escalation processes are needed to support early action.
  - Persons with management or control/governance - Identify systems, policies, or resources that must be in place to enable safe responses.
- Ask groups to type their responses directly under each heading in the shared document or whiteboard.
- If technology limits collaboration, ask groups to nominate one spokesperson to report back verbally.

#### Step 5: Whole group sharing

- Bring participants back to the main room.
- Share your screen so all role headings are visible.
- Invite each group to share one example.
- Cluster similar examples visually on the digital whiteboard to highlight patterns. Highlight patterns across groups, particularly where shared responsibility is visible across levels.

### Step 6: Closing reflection

- Invite participants to respond in the chat or verbally to the sentence: *“One role-appropriate action I can take to support child safe culture is...”*
- Pause briefly to allow responses.
- Acknowledge and thank participants for their contributions and reinforce that strong child safe culture relies on coordinated action across roles.





## Scenario cards: Roles and responsibilities

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These scenario cards are designed to support discussion about how different roles contribute to child safe culture. Each card presents a brief, de-identified situation that may require action at more than one level of a service.

Facilitators may select the scenarios most relevant to their group and adapt language to reflect local roles, structures, and service contexts.

### **Scenario 1:**

A new educator notices that different staff comfort children in different ways. They feel unsure what behaviour is appropriate in regard to physical touch. When they raise this with a colleague, they are told, "I don't really know, everyone just does it differently." The supervisor is busy, and the policy, including the new offence of inappropriate conduct, hasn't been discussed in team meetings for some time.

### **Scenario 2:**

An educator notices a child becomes distressed during nappy changes. They mention it briefly to another staff member, who says the child is "just sensitive." The educator is unsure whether to document it or raise it further.

**Scenario 3:**

A staff member notices a colleague spending a lot of one-on-one time with a particular child, often in areas that are not visible to other staff members. The staff member is unsure whether this is appropriate conduct or what the policy is regarding on-on-one time with children. The staff member worries about damaging relationships or causing a fuss. She feels uncertain and is unsure how leaders might respond, or even who she should raise the observation with.

**Scenario 4:** A volunteer at a long day care centre service notices that parts of a room are not clearly visible to staff. Educators seem to be managing as best they can, but supervision is limited and at times challenging. The volunteer has raised this with an educator before, but no changes have been made.

**Scenario 5:**

A parent casually raises a concern to an outside school hours care staff member about how their child was spoken to by another staff member at the service. The staff member to whom the concern was reported is unsure how to respond to the parent and does not know if the concern needs to be documented or escalated.

**Scenario 6:**

A casual educator at an outside school hours care service overhears a child using sexually explicit language and gestures towards another child at the service. The staff member is new to the service and is unfamiliar with the reporting process, leaving them unsure whether any action is required in response to the observation. The casual educator is also unsure who the appropriate person is to speak to about what they saw and heard.

**Scenario 7:**

An educator has documented concerns about a child and shared them with their supervisor. The supervisor is unsure whether the issue requires further escalation or can be managed internally. The educator is left waiting and feeling uncertain.

**Scenario 8:**

After a partial disclosure from a child, one educator wants to raise the concern promptly with their supervisor, while a colleague feels they should “wait and see” whether more information emerges before acting. As leaders have not clearly communicated service requirements for responding to disclosures, both staff members are left uncertain about how to proceed.

**Scenario 9:**

During a busy afternoon transition, an educator notices a child make a comment that raises a child safety concern. She considers checking it immediately with the nominated supervisor, but the office door is closed, and leadership are tied up with families and phone calls. Unsure whether to interrupt, she decides to wait until the end of the day.

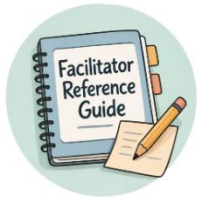
When the concern is raised later, she is told it should have been escalated straight away. The experience leaves her feeling hesitant and unsure about when and how to seek guidance during busy periods.

**Scenario 10**

The service has a child safe environment policy in place, but staff describe the policy as “hard to find” and “not very practical.” New staff rely on informal guidance from colleagues instead.

**Scenario 11**

Several educators have raised concerns with the centre director about a staff member who often volunteers to be alone with children and does not always respect children’s attempts to move away.



## Facilitator reference guide: Roles and shared responsibility

This guide is for facilitator preparation only. It provides examples of how different roles may contribute to child safety in each scenario. These are not the only appropriate responses. Participants may identify other actions or language that are equally valid and relevant to their role and context.

Scenario	Everyone (regardless of role)	Staff Working Directly with Children	Leaders/Managers/Non-minor Supervisors	Persons with Management or Control/Governance
<p><b>Scenario 1:</b> A new educator notices that different staff comfort children in different ways.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow the service’s code of conduct and ensure compliance with policies on behaviour guidance and appropriate physical contact.</li> <li>Use safe, respectful and developmentally appropriate ways to comfort children.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow the service’s code of conduct and policies on behaviour guidance and appropriate physical contact.</li> <li>Use safe, respectful and developmentally appropriate ways to comfort children.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure the service meets obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations</li> <li>Model consistent, policy-aligned practice.</li> <li>Provide clear guidance about what appropriate comfort</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure the service meets obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations Provide adequate staffing, supervision and resources</li> <li>Ensure child safe environment policy is</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask questions if unsure about what is appropriate.</li> <li>• Raise concerns early rather than relying on informal advice.</li> <li>• Reflect on your own practice and remain open to feedback.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask questions if unsure about what is appropriate.</li> <li>• Document and report concern early to a nominated supervisor if you are concerned about a colleague’s behaviour towards a child.</li> </ul>	<p>looks like in that setting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create space for discussion in team meetings.</li> <li>• Support new staff to understand expectations.</li> <li>• Address inconsistencies before they become risks.</li> </ul>	<p>implemented and reviewed regularly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foster a culture of child safety and accountability across the organisation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Scenario 2:</b> An educator notices a child becomes distressed during nappy changes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep the child’s dignity, safety and wellbeing at the centre.</li> <li>• Respond appropriately based on observation and policy.</li> <li>• Raise concerns early.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond calmly and respectfully to the child’s distress.</li> <li>• Consider whether the practice feels safe and appropriate from the child’s perspective.</li> <li>• Use developmentally appropriate language with the child to describe what you</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure nappy change procedures align with policy and regulatory requirements.</li> <li>• Observe practice if needed to ensure it is respectful and safe.</li> <li>• Provide guidance or coaching to staff where practice may need strengthening.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure clear, current policies exist for intimate care and safeguarding, and that they are being implemented.</li> <li>• Provide training on consent and recognising possible signs of harm.</li> <li>• Ensure staffing ratios and supervision</li> </ul>

		<p>are doing and seek the child’s consent where possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observe and document patterns, frequency or changes in behaviour.</li> <li>• Follow the service’s nappy changing, supervision and child safe environment policy.</li> <li>• Raise concerns promptly with a supervisor if the distress is persistent, unusual or concerning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider whether the behaviour could indicate broader wellbeing or safeguarding concerns.</li> <li>• Follow child protection requirements where applicable.</li> </ul>	<p>arrangements support safe practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain effective child protection reporting systems.</li> <li>• Monitor compliance and respond appropriately to identified risks.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Scenario 3:</b> A staff member notices a colleague spending a lot of one-on-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritise children’s safety, maintain transparency in practice, and act early rather than waiting for certainty.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remain professionally curious.</li> <li>• Reflect on whether the behaviour aligns with the service’s supervision and child</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take any concerns or reports about professional conduct seriously.</li> <li>• Review supervision practices and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure clear policies on supervision, visibility and professional boundaries are in place and implemented.</li> </ul>

<p>one time with a particular child, often in areas that are not visible to other staff members.</p>		<p>safe environment policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid making assumptions, but recognise potential professional conduct / boundary concerns</li> <li>• Document factual observations.</li> <li>• Raise the concern promptly with a supervisor or nominated supervisor.</li> </ul>	<p>physical environment visibility.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speak with the staff member involved.</li> <li>• Escalate under reportable conduct or safeguarding procedures if required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure relevant roles have completed mandatory child safety and child protection training including on topics such as grooming behaviours and maintaining safe boundaries.</li> <li>• Ensure the physical environment supports adequate supervision.</li> <li>• Oversee investigation and reporting processes if concerns meet reporting thresholds.</li> <li>• Foster a culture where raising concerns supported.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Scenario 4:</b> A volunteer at a long day</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise visibility or supervision concerns promptly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess whether blind spots impact active supervision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct a risk assessment of the space to ensure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the physical environment</li> </ul>

<p>care centre notices that parts of the room are not clearly visible to staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow the service’s child safe environment policy.</li> <li>• Remain observant and report concerns.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjust positioning of staff to ensure children are always visible.</li> <li>• Review room layout and daily routines to reduce risk.</li> <li>• Document and report environmental risks to leadership.</li> </ul>	<p>adequate supervision is always possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reconfigure furniture or learning areas to improve line of sight.</li> <li>• Ensure staffing arrangements support adequate supervision.</li> <li>• Communicate policy around active supervision clearly to all staff and volunteers.</li> <li>• Escalate concerns if required.</li> </ul>	<p>supports adequate supervision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocate resources for layout changes, staffing changes or modifications if required.</li> <li>• Ensure compliance with National Law and Regulations relating to supervision.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Scenario 5:</b> A parent casually raises a concern to a staff member about how their child</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treat concerns as opportunities to strengthen practice.</li> <li>• Take all concerns seriously and document and report appropriately in line with service policy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen calmly and respectfully to all concerns raised by a parent without becoming defensive.</li> <li>• Thank the parent for raising the concern.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledge the concern formally.</li> <li>• Review the context, including speaking with relevant staff member.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure a clear complaints handling procedure is in place.</li> <li>• Ensure staff are trained, have access to, and can implement the policy</li> </ul>

<p>was spoken to by another staff member at the service</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid dismissing or minimising the issue.</li> <li>• Record the concern factually in line with service procedures.</li> <li>• Notify the room leader or nominated supervisor promptly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess whether practices align with policy.</li> <li>• Keep the parent informed within appropriate boundaries.</li> <li>• Escalate if the matter conduct meets reportable conduct thresholds.</li> </ul>	<p>relating to positive behaviour guidance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet regulatory notification requirements where applicable.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Scenario 6:</b> A casual staff member overhears a child using sexually explicit language and gestures towards another child at the service.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritise safety and wellbeing of all children involved in the incident.</li> <li>• Respond appropriately to stop the behaviour.</li> <li>• Ensure all children involved are supported.</li> <li>• Document and report the concern.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond immediately to stop the behaviour calmly and safely.</li> <li>• Ensure the other child is supported and feels safe.</li> <li>• Avoid shaming or labelling the child who displayed the behaviour</li> <li>• Record factual observations, including exact words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take all concerns raised to you by staff members seriously.</li> <li>• Review documentation and assess risk.</li> <li>• Consult child protection guidelines where relevant.</li> <li>• Escalate incidents under mandatory reporting laws if required.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure clear policies exist on responding to harmful sexual behaviours.</li> <li>• Provide training on recognising and responding to concerning sexual behaviours.</li> <li>• Ensure reporting pathways are understood and followed.</li> </ul>


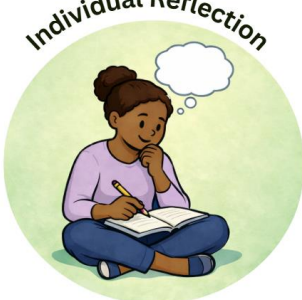
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Act in line with child safe environment policy.</li> </ul>	<p>or gestures where appropriate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report the incident promptly to the room leader or nominated supervisor in line with policy.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Scenario 7:</b> An educator has documented concerns about a child and shared them with their supervisor but is left waiting and unsure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure concerns about children do not sit unresolved.</li> <li>Act on concerns early by documenting them clearly and objectively and reporting in line with service policy and mandatory reporting laws/any reportable conduct schemes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure concerns are documented factually and clearly.</li> <li>Follow up with supervisor if no response is received within a reasonable timeframe.</li> <li>Continue to monitor and document any further observations.</li> <li>Escalate to the reporting authority the matter feels urgent or unresolved.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acknowledge receipt of the concern promptly.</li> <li>Review documentation.</li> <li>Clarify next steps with the educator.</li> <li>Act in line with child safe environment policy, mandatory reporting laws or any reportable conduct schemes.</li> <li>Avoid delaying where reporting thresholds may be met.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure clear reporting pathways and timeframes are in place.</li> <li>Ensure a clear child safe environment policy is in place.</li> <li>Provide training on mandatory reporting/reportable conduct responsibilities</li> <li>Foster a culture where raising concerns is supported.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritise the child’s safety if immediate risk is identified</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek guidance if unsure.</li> <li>• Support staff through the reporting process</li> <li>• Provide clear communication about actions taken, within confidentiality limits.</li> <li>• Ensure compliance with regulatory obligations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversee compliance with regulatory obligations.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Scenario 8:</b> After a partial disclosure from a child, one educator wants to raise the concern promptly with their supervisor, while a colleague feels they</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uncertainty is not a reason to delay action.</li> <li>• When a child makes a partial disclosure, the responsibility is to follow policy and reporting requirements promptly, rather than waiting for certainty</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen calmly and respond supportively to the child without leading questions.</li> <li>• Avoid investigating or seeking further details beyond what the child voluntarily shares.</li> <li>• Document the disclosure factually, using the child’s own</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond immediately when informed of a disclosure</li> <li>• Assess whether mandatory reporting thresholds are met</li> <li>• Act in line with child protection law and child safe environment policy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure all staff are trained in responding to disclosures.</li> <li>• Ensure there is a clear child safe environment policy in place and being followed.</li> <li>• Reinforce that concerns must be acted on, not delayed</li> </ul>

<p>should “wait and see”</p>	<p>or further confirmation.</p>	<p>words where possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow the service’s reporting procedure promptly.</li> <li>• Do not delay action due to uncertainty or differing personal views.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide guidance and reassurance to staff about next steps.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor compliance with mandatory reporting and reportable conduct obligations.</li> <li>• Foster a culture where early action is expected and supported.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Scenario 9:</b> Educator with child protection concern unsure whether to interrupt leadership. Hesitant about what to do next time.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The safety, rights and best interests of the child is the paramount consideration in all decisions.</li> <li>• Child safety concerns must take priority over operational demands or leadership business.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond calmly and ensure the child feels heard and safe.</li> <li>• Document the comment factually as soon as practicable.</li> <li>• Prioritise escalation of child safety concerns, even during busy periods.</li> <li>• Interrupt leadership if the matter may involve risk of harm</li> <li>• Seek clarification later if unsure about</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make it clear that child safety concerns warrant interruption</li> <li>• Establish a clear process for urgent escalations.</li> <li>• Respond without criticism when staff raise concerns</li> <li>• Clarify expected timeframes for reporting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure policies clearly define reporting responsibilities and steps for escalation.</li> <li>• Ensure the relevant roles undertake mandatory child protection and child safety training in accordance with the National Law and National Regulations.</li> <li>• Set expectations that child safety overrides</li> </ul>

		child protection responsibilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Debrief and support staff after incidents to build confidence.</li> </ul>	<p>operational busyness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address systemic barriers that delay reporting.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Scenario 10:</b></p> <p>The service has a child safe environment policy in place, but staff describe the policy as “hard to find” and “not very practical</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speak up when something is unclear or inconsistent.</li> <li>• Raise concerns early.</li> <li>• Seek clarification if policies are hard to find or confusing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make reasonable efforts to familiarise themselves with policies.</li> <li>• Raise concerns if policies are unclear, inaccessible or impractical.</li> <li>• Seek clarification from a supervisor or child protection lead rather than relying on informal practice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure policies are easily accessible in daily practice.</li> <li>• Translate policy into practical guidance for example during team meetings.</li> <li>• Identify gaps between written policy and real-world practice.</li> <li>• Escalate feedback if policies are outdated or unclear.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure policies are current, compliant and clearly written.</li> <li>• Make policies readily accessible in multiple formats if needed.</li> <li>• Review policies regularly with staff input.</li> <li>• Monitor whether systems are working in practice, not just on paper.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Scenario 11</b></p> <p>Several educators have raised</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take concerns about children’s safety seriously and do not ignore or minimise worrying behaviour.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notice and document concerning behaviour or boundary crossings involving children.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen to staff concerns and take them seriously without dismissing or delaying action.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the service has a child safe environment policy, clear reporting procedures, and a</li> </ul>

<p>concerns with the centre director</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow the service’s child safe environment policy and reporting procedures when concerns arise.</li> <li>• Speak up and share concerns with the appropriate person rather than assuming someone else will act.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise concerns promptly with a room leader, nominated supervisor, or service leader according to service procedures.</li> <li>• Continue to support children’s safety and wellbeing in the moment, including respecting children’s cues and boundaries.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow service policies and regulatory requirements to assess the concern and determine next steps.</li> <li>• Take immediate steps to prioritise children’s safety while the concern is considered (for example, adjusting supervision or roles if needed).</li> </ul>	<p>culture where concerns can be raised safely.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support leaders to respond appropriately to concerns about staff behaviour.</li> <li>• Prioritise children’s safety over reputation, relationships, or operational convenience.</li> </ul>
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<b>Activity 3: Speaking about child safety</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	<p>This activity supports participants to reflect on and practise shared, child-centred language when talking about child safety concerns.</p> <p>It helps participants to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notice how language can make speaking up easier or harder.</li> <li>• Build confidence using calm, respectful wording.</li> <li>• Strengthen shared understanding across roles.</li> <li>• Reduce fear of “saying the wrong thing”.</li> </ul>
<b>Time</b>	20-30 minutes
<b>Format</b>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p><i>Whole Group Activity</i></p>  </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p><i>Individual Reflection</i></p>  </div> </div>
<b>Materials needed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None</li> </ul>



## Activity plan

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### Facilitator preamble

*“When we share a common way of talking about child safety, it becomes easier to notice concerns, support each other, and act early. This reflection activity is about practising language that feels respectful, professional, and focused on children’s safety, not about getting the words perfect.”*

### Remind participants

- This is a reflective conversation, not a role play or test.
- You do not need to share personal experiences.
- Listening is just as important as speaking.
- All examples should remain de-identified.

### Step 1: Set up the reflection circle (2-3 minutes)

- Invite participants to sit in a circle or semi-circle so everyone can see each other.
- Explain that you will offer a series of prompts, and participants can:
  - Share a short response.
  - Pass if they prefer.
  - Or simply listen.
- Reinforce that there is no expectation for everyone to speak.

**Step 2: Guided reflection prompts (15–20 minutes)**

- Read one prompt at a time.
- After each prompt, pause and invite a few voluntary responses before moving on.
- As participants share, capture key words or phrases on a board or large sheet of paper. Let participants see the language building visually.
- Reflection prompts (choose 3-4):
  - *“When something doesn’t feel right, what words make it easier for you to speak up?”*
    - Examples might include *“Can I check something with you?”, “I just want to run this past you”, “From a child safety perspective, I’m wondering...”*
  - *“Is there a phrase you’ve heard that helped normalise checking or asking for guidance?”*
    - Examples might include *“It’s always okay to double-check”, “We’d rather have a conversation than miss something”, “No concern is too small to raise”.*
  - *“What language helps keep the focus on children, rather than blame?”*  
*Examples might include “How does this impact the child?”, “What might the child be experiencing here?”, “Let’s think about what’s safest for the child right now”, “What would best support the child right now?”, “What makes language around child safety feel harder in real settings?”*
    - Examples might include *“Cultural discomfort around certain topics”, “Unsure how to start difficult conversations”, “Worry about over-reacting”.*
  - *“What words or phrases help you feel supported when raising a concern?”*
    - Examples might include *“I’m glad you told me”, “Let’s work through this together”, “You did the right thing by speaking up”, “We’ll follow this up appropriately”, “You’re not alone in this”.*

### Step 3: Strengthening shared language (5 minutes)

- Ask the group:
  - *“What words or phrases could we use more often as a team?”*
  - *“How does shared language support early action and shared responsibility?”*
- Invite participants to identify 3-5 phrases that feel practical and authentic for their team. Circle or highlight these on the board.
- Discuss where these phrases could be displayed or revisited (e.g., staffroom wall, meeting agenda footer, supervision templates).
- Encourage the team to treat this shared language as a reminder of collective responsibility and child-safety intent, rather than as corrective or personal criticism when used.

### Step 4: Closing reflection

- Invite participants to reflect quietly or share: *“One phrase I feel more confident using when raising a child safety concern is...”*
- Let participants know the captured phrases can be transferred to a shared space in the staff area as an ongoing reminder of the team’s commitment to child safety and respectful communication.



## Online adaptation (MS Teams or Zoom)

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This activity can be delivered online using whole-group discussion, chat reflections, and optional breakout rooms. The purpose remains the same: to build confidence using shared, child-centred language when discussing child safety concerns.

### Platform preparation (before the session)

Consider using:

- Breakout rooms
- Chat reflections
- Shared document (e.g., shared Word or Google document)
- Whiteboard (e.g., Zoom whiteboard)
- Polls (optional, to warm up discussion)

Have all links and tools ready before the session begins.

### Step 1: Create psychological safety

- Begin with the facilitator preamble.
- Provide a brief wellbeing reminder.
- Remind participants that sharing is optional.
- Encourage use of chat for those who prefer not to speak.
- Participants may turn cameras on or off based on comfort.
- Remind participants that support pathways are available (e.g., EAP, supervision).

## Step 2: Set up the reflection space

- Explain that this is a reflective conversation, not a role play or test.
- Let participants know they may respond verbally, type in the chat, or pass.
- Reinforce that all examples must remain de-identified.
- Encourage respectful listening and focus on professional practice.
- Guided reflection prompts
- Share one prompt at a time on screen or in the chat.
- After each prompt, pause and invite voluntary responses before moving on.
- Allow responses through microphone or chat.
- If the group is large, consider placing participants into breakout rooms for 5-7 minutes before returning to the main room to share themes.
- Suggested prompts (choose 3-4):
  - *“When something doesn’t feel right, what words make it easier for you to speak up?”*
    - Examples might include *“Can I check something with you?”, “I might be overthinking this, but...”, “I just want to run this past you”, “From a child safety perspective, I’m wondering...”*
  - *“Is there a phrase you’ve heard that helped normalise checking or asking for guidance?”*
    - Examples might include *“It’s always okay to double-check”, “We’d rather have a conversation than miss something”, “No concern is too small to raise”.*
  - *“What language helps keep the focus on children, rather than blame?”*
    - Examples might include *“How does this impact the child?”, “What might the child be experiencing here?”*
  - *“What makes language around child safety feel harder in real settings?”*
    - Examples might include *“Cultural discomfort around certain topics”, “Unsure how to start difficult conversations”.*
  - *“What words or phrases help you feel supported when raising a concern?”*

- Examples might include *“I’m glad you told me”, “Let’s work through this together”, “You did the right thing by speaking up”, “We’ll follow this up appropriately”, “You’re not alone in this”.*

### Step 3: Strengthening shared language

- Invite participants to type one helpful phrase into the chat or add it to a shared document or whiteboard.
- Ask what words or phrases the team could use more often.
- Highlight repeated themes and practical language that supports early action and shared responsibility.

### Step 4: Closing reflection

- Invite participants to complete the sentence in the chat or privately: *“One phrase I feel more confident using when raising a child safety concern is...”*
- Close by reinforcing that shared language strengthens confidence, clarity, and collective responsibility across the service.
- Encourage participants to write down any key takeaways from the session or follow up actions.